

linoleum would later become “a giant bubble, with water underneath.” Waves battered the structure.

The noise of the water and wind was not the only sensory input affecting Pulliam and Williams. As the eye approached, barometric pressures plummeted, causing ears to “pop” in a manner similar to ascending in an airplane.

A five-gallon water cooler in the house began to bubble. The strange calm of the hurricane’s eye lasted about 30 to 40 minutes.

“The wind slowed and it got quieter,” Pulliam said. “All you could hear was water under the house. We realized we’d both lost our cars (which were floating out front), but that didn’t bother us. We thought we were lucky to be alive.”

They also believed the worst was over.

“I thought, well, the house made it through the first part of the storm, and the second part can’t be as bad.”

As anyone who experienced the storm, even hundreds of miles inland, discovered, this was not the case.

“In the first part of the storm, the wind came from the front of the house,” said Pulliam, “and blew the water from the house. When the wind changed direction, it blew the water toward the house. The house started shaking and water started coming in through the sliding glass door. There were serious prayers going on in the kitchen.”

He recalled that the darkness was overwhelming: “I

looked out the window. The houses are only 20 feet apart, but I couldn’t see my house. I thought it was gone.”

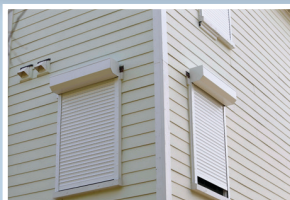
The young men realized a critical decision was in order. Should they risk a retreat to the volatile third floor or take their chances with the tides on the second floor?

“I went to the front door and opened it to see how high the water was,” Pulliam said. With Williams holding onto his shoulder, “I stuck a foot out the door. The wind sucked us out and the porch collapsed. It was like white water rapids. You don’t sink in water like that; you’re just carried along.”

Pulliam didn’t recall how long they lay face down on the roof of the one-story house a block away – maybe an hour he said. At approximately 3 a.m. “you could start to barely see again, and then the water went out as fast as it went in.”

As dawn broke at the still-standing Pulliam house, Michael recalled the scene of destruction: “There was a piano and furniture in the front yard which I thought at first was ours. There were appliances on the beach. It was like there was no civilization and you were alone. It was hard to imagine the peninsula was still there and functioning.”

When Hugo made landfall on the Isle of Palms, the two young men felt the storm in life-threatening dimensions but did not understand the full reach of its power. Hugo hit in the darkness of night, and sight was useless. Understanding, if it came at all, would not begin until morning. 🍍



## BE PREPARED FOR HURRICANE SEASON



- Raised Panel Colonials
- Louvered Colonials
- Board & Batten Colonials
- Bahamas
- Roll Downs
- Accordion Shutters
- Fabric Shields
- Lexan Aluminum & Steel Panels

Come visit our show room at:  
488-C La Mesa Dr.  
Mt. Pleasant, SC

*Elegance, Style & Protection*

843-822-5519

[www.lowcountryshutters.com](http://www.lowcountryshutters.com)  
[info@lowcountryshutters.com](mailto:info@lowcountryshutters.com)

SC Income Tax Credits · Insurance Premium Discounts · Custom Colors · Service Contracts · Licensed & Insured · Free Estimates · Quality Installations