

What Kind of Hurricane is Going to Blow Ashore on November 2?

October 5, 2010 By William McKenzie

Maybe you have heard James Carville say this on TV, but today in Dallas he described the coming November election this way: Republicans are going to pick up seats. But what Democrats don't know yet is whether this is going to be a Hurricane 5, 4 or 3. Around Labor Day, he told a National Center for Policy Analysis audience, it looked like a 5. Now, it looks like a 4.

What happens in five or so weeks? No one knows. But he did say Democrats ought to quit talking and let Republicans get the spotlight. The more Democrats talk about themselves, the more the election is about them. The more Republicans talk about themselves, the more it is about them. And Carville thinks that Democrats have a better chance if November is about Republicans.

Carville and his wife, Mary Matalin, were speaking at a NCPA event at the Anatole. They were better than billed, and that's hard given how exposed they are as a couple. Both were disarmingly straightforward, funny and insightful. They are often that way on TV, but sometimes people aren't that way in person. They were. You could tell they do their homework, too.

About the hurricane prediction, NCPA President John Goodman asked Carville to describe what a Hurricane 5 would look like. He responded with a wicked grin, "Hello, Senator O'Donnell."

Carville, of course, was referring to Delaware Republican Christine O'Donnell riding the tea party wave to a Senate seat. That would be disastrous from the Democrats' perspective.

What would a Hurricane 3 look like, Goodman asked. Carville put it in Texas terms: "Hello Governor White."

I took that to mean White rides the anti-incumbent wave, knocks off Rick Perry and gives Dems something to cheer about.

One other point that both made is that Republicans better avoid thinking the angry public is happy with them and mad at Democrats. The restlessness is aimed at both parties, although conservatives are driving it. They are more interested in electing candidates with conservative ideals than they are in electing a Republican who doesn't share all their principles.

All I can say is that November 3, the day after the election, is going to be one interesting day.