

History Has Been Made!

By George Porter

On the evening of Nov. 16 the CBS Evening News with Connie Chung And Dan Rather, made manufactured housing history. Tropical storm Gordon had spawned a tornado on the east coast of Florida and had destroyed a large part of a manufactured housing community there. My wife and I were watching the news to see what was reported about the damage. This was a tornado or maybe even more than one and no building or home is built to stand up to one of these things. The only safe place in a tornado is under ground but we were anxious to see how it was reported.

After Hurricane Andrew several years ago our housing had a tough time with the press and were expecting the same thing again. Why is it when a poor little manufactured home is attacked by absolutely irresistible forces of nature such as class 5 hurricanes and tornados, all the damage is blamed on the home? Well we were tuned in and ready to see the industry get another undeserved bashing but we were surprised.

First of all it was not the lead story, a piece on the economy began the news. It was not until after the first commercial break that the disaster in Florida came on. It discussed how people had lost everything; one person was killed, and showed shots of the destroyed homes. It was a terrible thing to see, it was like a piece of Hurricane Andrew had come back to haunt Florida again. The story lasted several minutes, when it ended and the next news item began my wife and I looked at each other in absolute amazement. They had not used the word trailer in their reporting! Not even mobile home or even manufactured home! They had made no reference whatsoever to the type of homes and in fact simply called it a retirement community! They in no way inferred that the home had anything to do with the problem. While of course this makes sense to you and me I believe it is the first time I have ever seen this display of intelligence on national television. Thank you CBS, Connie, and Dan. You have made history by treating Manufactured Housing fairly.