

## A Man for All Seasons

Written by Kim Ogren, BT Contributor  
October 2019

---

### Meet the everyman of Florida weathermen



Florida's No. 1 hurricane hobbyist, known to his nearly 900,000 Facebook followers, friends, and family as Mike, is a breath of fresh air.

Mike's Weather Page (spaghettimodels.com) is where you can find some of the best, most useful, up-to-the-minute assessments of current tropical conditions. His Facebook feed of the same name utilizes information compiled on his website, which he created for his personal use following the 2004 hurricane season that brought us Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Matthew in a span of a few months.

"I was surfing the Internet looking for spaghetti models and graphics, and got so frustrated trying to find any," Mike Boylan tells the *BT*. "So I started the page to place them on one easy spot."

The website and his multiple daily Facebook posts and live videos are fueled by early childhood experiences of watching weather reports for approaching hurricanes. His lifelong obsession has turned into a full-blown suite of services that take government agencies, broadcast media, and scientists to fill. The 45-year-old refined his personal interests, a degree in marketing, and training as an IT professional as the ultimate side hustle that can deprive him of sleep for days on end if conditions warrant.

## A Man for All Seasons

Written by Kim Ogren, BT Contributor  
October 2019

---

“Things can change fast in the tropics,” he reminds us.

Mike is authentic. His lived experience helps followers navigate the conflicting emotions we Floridians understand intimately but don't always admit it to: the excitement and anticipation of storms, the sense of community they evoke, the desperate need to prepare efficiently, and our brewing terror from recent experiences. He guides you to a pragmatic, light-humored, and objective understanding and appreciation of what you might be in for. And while he stops short of telling you what to do, he enables you to make decisions for yourself.

Fans tell him all day long how much he's appreciated. “I have been a huge fan of yours for years,” a Boca Raton supporter posts. “You are informative, detailed, straight-no-hype delivery, empathetic, dedicated, and a huge calming force with prevention and caution at the forefront...and...don't forget HUMOR, your sweetly funny. I sent you a painting that I made...a small token of our appreciation.”

His timing is perfect. As storms have slowed down and behave less predictably, impulsive ticks seem to shoot like fireworks from the mouths of professional broadcasters. They're wired to provide new information even when there isn't any. The resulting speculation can kill a person's adrenal system, as was the case with Irma's painfully slow slog that had a potential cone of impact reaching from Havana to Savannah. But Mike doesn't have to fill air time. If there isn't news, he'll tell you so, and suggest a cold beer. He has that hyperlocal relevancy the Weather Channel wishes it had.

Along with the changes in the climate, storms, and the media landscape, the government's role and capacity to help are devolving before our eyes. I wrote about this in an October 2018 column. NOAA layoffs and privatization have occurred as predicted, and FEMA's budget has been slashed and rerouted.

We are all realizing we're on our own. Just ask the victims of Hurricanes Michael and Dorian. Oh, and by the way, Mike's warnings about Michael's potential proved more accurate, earlier, than local news. Agency professionals appreciate and coordinate with him. After all, it's their data Mike utilizes. There's plenty of evidence of this throughout his posts in photos and testimonials. Emergency operations centers rely on him. Another post: “The Emergency Management Manager of Hilton Head Island recommended your site to us at a pre-season seminar years ago!”

## A Man for All Seasons

Written by Kim Ogren, BT Contributor  
October 2019

---

You learn about the world around you when you watch a live broadcast. It's like there's a climate literacy effort under way being led by a citizen scientist from a spare bedroom in a house in Oldsmar, at the northern tip of Old Tampa Bay. Half a million people better understand the relationships between African dust, deep-sea upwellings, and steering currents. They can tell you about the state of the Gulf Stream. His thinking out loud even teaches you how to think for yourself, which is far more valuable than telling you what to think.

The song "Back in the Cone Again" plays during the moments before his reliably scheduled live broadcasts. No wonder his popularity is growing. He's the perfect antidote in a perfect storm. Mike transcends two sensibilities -- self-determination and universalism -- that in any other context would create a breeding ground for conflict.

"We all need to hear something to feel like we're not alone," he says. He's at once special and regular. He's as surprised and is delighted as anyone that he's building this community while avoiding any real criticism -- a feat unto itself. He takes what comes at him in stride with a little excitement and pleasure for being helpful.

We should be thankful for Mike as we weather today's storms. He's earned our trust and become a Florida Man we can actually be proud of.

Feedback: [letters@biscaynetimes.com](mailto:letters@biscaynetimes.com)