

# Who's the better hurricane predictor?



Hurricane expert

A gibbon

Trance medium

Dart thrower

News reporter

At the beginning of the storm season, they made predictions. See how they fared

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## Who's the real storm guru?

We asked back in June:



And now we have the results

The lineup:



The psychic medium?



The guy throwing darts?



The newspaper reporter?

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*The Post and Courier*

Well, the gibbon didn't make a monkey out of me.

Back in June, against the hurricane predictions by three of the highest-profile, super computer-driven forecasters, *The Post and Courier* staked predictions by Whoop Whoop the white-handed gibbon, trance medium Elizabeth Baron, a dart thrower in a bar and a lame reporter — me.

Meanwhile, nearly half the readers who voted in an online poll predicted the ape would be the most accurate.

The idea was to tweak the noses of weather experts spewing out a slew seasonal predictions that many people dismiss as little more than educated guesses.

Boy, are their noses sore. The season ends today, and for the second year in a row it was milder than the "experts" called for. Among our select group, the only one who came close to getting it

right was...was...wait for it...

The trance medium. Baron, of Goose Creek, never doubted, she said. "Because I prayed. I've been very fortunate that the Holy Spirit gives me this stuff."

She nailed the number of hurricanes that formed — six. She came within two of the number of storms that became intense (having winds more than 110 mph.); there were two; she

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### On the Web

To see video coverage, go to [www.charleston.net](http://www.charleston.net).



### Inside

Find out the results of the contest, and see what the public had predicted.

## Medium predicts best

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predicted four. Everybody else predicted more. Whoop Whoop's banana-grabbing predictions were lower than only those of Frank Wilcox, the dart thrower.

Wilcox, who threw in the Windjammer bar on Isle of Palms, was disappointed. He hoped he'd at least do better than the gibbon, he said. But he didn't think much of "expert" predictions when he threw the darts, and he doesn't think any more of them now.

His dart came the closest to predicting how many hurricanes would make landfall on the East Coast. He popped "1." Gabrielle was the lone strike, brushing the Outer Banks in North Carolina as a tropical storm near hurricane strength.

"I think it's all a matter of who has the most skill," Wilcox said, laughing. "The only thing I'm good at is breaking things at work."

Whoop Whoop didn't have much to say for himself when he heard the results. He slouched down on the wire mesh of his cage at the International Primate

Protection League in Summerville, perched his hand under his chin like *The Thinker* and gazed forlornly away.

The other gibbons didn't help, taunting, "Whoop whoop! Whoop whoop!" with their sing-song calls.

Baron, who makes a profession out of making predictions, didn't mind the spoof.

"I'm not always right because the world has its limitations. We're not perfect," she said.

In my defense, the forecasters who called for a busier than usual season were surprised by cooler than normal temperatures and persistent shear winds. I quote from my June prediction, "The waters off the Lowcountry shore stayed cooler longer this year, and spring storms kept coming out of the Northeast."

So to the readers who voted 10-to-1 that Whoop Whoop the white-handed gibbon would be more accurate than I and more than 5-to-1 that the ape would out-predict Baron —

C'mon, who's your daddy?

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