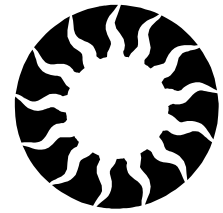


# The Weather Watcher

## of the Inland Northwest

[www.wrh.noaa.gov/Spokane](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/Spokane)



### Republic Cooperative Observer receives NWS Award

**R**ichard Slagle of Republic, Washington, received the **John Campanius Holm Award**, a national honor for his dedication to observing and reporting weather for almost 46 years. The award ceremony was held at the Republic Community Library on June 12th. The National Weather Service Western Region Deputy Regional Director, Jim Campbell traveled from Salt Lake City to make the presentation. Officials from the Spokane National Weather Service forecast office also attended, including John Livingston, Robert Bonner and Rose Tibbitts.

Store with his brother until 1985. Through the years, he has been a civic leader, involved in the local chamber of commerce and the Boy Scouts. His involvement with the local historical society has earned him acclaim throughout the region.

Measuring and recording the weather has become more than a hobby for Mr. Slagle. In August 1957, when he agreed to take over from Mr. Tom Pittman, he said he would try the job for a while and see if he liked it. Now, Mr. Slagle is recognized as a local expert having observed a wide

range of interesting weather. When asked about the most interesting events he had witnessed, he recalled the flooding of May 1998 when nearly 3 inches of rain fell in 24 hours, and all but one of the roads into Republic were washed out.

“Dick has provided dependable and timely weather observations that have helped define the climate and rainfall patterns

near Republic for almost 46 years,” said John Livingston, Spokane Meteorologist in Charge. “From the heat waves of August 1967 and July 1994 to the big snows of January 1969, Dick has always understood the importance of good, accurate weather observations.”

The Cooperative Weather Observer Program is a nationwide network of 11,000 volunteers, who record temperature and precipitation each day. The information becomes part of the nation’s historical weather and climate archive. Please visit <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/coop/index.htm> for more. ☀ *John Livingston.*



(L to R) NWS Deputy Regional Director, Jim Campbell, Richard Slagle & NWS Spokane MIC John Livingston at the ceremony.

“We are pleased to recognize Dick Slagle as one of the nation’s top cooperative weather observers,” said Campbell. “His award was only one of 27 Holm Awards presented nationally this year. This is a great honor and we salute his years of service to the agency.”

Mr. Slagle was born in Republic on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in 1919. He graduated from Washington State University in 1942 with a degree in pharmacy, and served in the Army from 1942-1945 as a medic and pharmacist including a tour of duty in Europe. Upon returning to Republic after the war, Mr. Slagle ran the Republic Drug

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#### Editor's Notes

Summer is the peak season for one of the nation’s deadliest weather phenomena—lightning. Each year, an average of 73 people are killed by lightning in the US. Many more are struck but survive with long term effects such as memory problems, sleep disorders and muscle spasms. **National Lightning Safety Week** is June 22-28th, where the campaign is to teach lightning safety, in order to lower lightning death and injury rates. Wise safety tips can be found on the back page.

If there is something you would like to see in the next newsletter or if you have comments or questions about a previous issue of the *Weather Watcher*, please contact Robin Fox or Ken Holmes (509) 244-0110 extension 223.

The main purpose of this publication is to keep our readers informed about our services and programs, and to recognize those who help us accomplish our mission, including weather spotters, coop observers, media and emergency management.

All articles are written by the NWS staff. A special thanks to Ron Miller & John Livingston.

## An End to An Era



**S**enior Forecaster and Fire Weather Guru, Gary Bennett has decided to hang up his hat and plans on retiring after 35 years of federal service on June 30th. He has spent the last 20 years of his NWS career in fire weather, including being an Incident Meteorologist, running the Wenatchee office, and teaching national fire courses. His future plans will be spending more time with his family, golfing, and touring in his corvette. Good Luck Gary!

## More Staff News

General Forecaster, Andy Haner has left for greener and wetter pastures, literally speaking. He transferred to the Seattle National Weather Service office in March where he is working as a fire weather forecaster. A new forecaster, John Werner, is expected to arrive from Florida in early July. He has spent some time in the Inland Northwest, when he was stationed at Fairchild Air Force Base. Good Luck to Andy and Welcome John!!!

The NWS Spokane "Upper Air Team" was presented the National Isaac Cline Award on June 11th by NWS Western Region Deputy Director, Jim Campbell. They were recognized for their accurate and timely performance during the year 2002, while using one of the oldest upper air systems in the country!

New digital and graphical forecasts are available online. The NWS Spokane forecast staff has been producing weather gridded products for public and fire weather. Visit [www.wrh.noaa.gov/spokane](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/spokane) and check out the left hand menu. ☼ Robin Fox

## Spotter Corner

**A**n active spring thunderstorm season has begun with many areas seeing heavy rain, large hail, strong winds, and even a tornado. Thanks to all the spotters who were busy relaying their reports. A special thanks goes to a select few.

**Bob Lutz**—Spokane #16 in Otis Orchard for promptly emailing pictures of 1-2 inch size hail from the storms on June 10th and for his monthly and annual weather summaries.

**John Danforth**—Latah #11 east of Troy, ID who gave several updates on accumulating snow that took place on March 7th.

**Ken Anderson**—Nez Perce #1H in Lewiston, ID for his detailed accounts and images of thunderstorms, mammatus clouds and mixed precipitation.

**Eleanor Root**—St. Maries, ID cooperative observer, S72 for her service after 11 and a half years. She plans on relocating to Seattle.

A spotter training session was held in Coeur d'Alene on May 19th with folks traveling as far as Spokane and Pullman. Additional training sessions will be scheduled in the near future. Please check the spotter resource page for further details.

New developments with the online spotter report form. It is still discontinued due to security problems, but only temporarily. A new program is being devised to fix the problem ☼ Robin Fox



(L to R) Milt Mass, Deputy Regional Director Jim Campbell, Irv Haynes, Verne Ballard, Bob Bonner, Bob Cummings, Merri Wallace & Rob Sumpter with the Upper Air Team Award presentation.

# A Seasonal yet Stormy Spring in the Inland NW



Hail measuring one and half inches in diameter (ping pong ball size) observed in Otis Orchard on 6/10/03 by Bob Lutz.

**MARCH** After our mild El Niño winter, the spring of 2003 was a little on the cool and wet side. The month of March started off with a distinct cool spell, including some lowland snow in a few areas. Spokane airport picked up measurable snow on 3 of the first 9 days of the month, including a 1.2" snowfall on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Then the flow aloft quickly switched to the southwest and temperatures warmed rapidly. On the 13<sup>th</sup> highs were in the mid 60s and even lower 70s. The remainder of the month was a typical mixed-bag of weather. On the whole though, March was a bit warmer than normal, continuing the warm trend that existed since October 2002.

**APRIL** The warm trend reversed for the remainder of the spring. April exhibited the normal spring pattern of quick warm spells followed by a cool showery period. The first 5 days were cold, with lots of snow showers. A whopping 0.7" of snow fell at Spokane on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April. On average measurable snow falls on Spokane in April only about 1 every 3 years, but recently it's happened 4 out of the last 7 years. The month ended with another cool spell. Wenatchee picked up 0.43" of rain on the 24<sup>th</sup>, which was nearly half of it's monthly total. Rainfall in April for most sites was less than March, but still above normal. The temperatures for the month were cooler than normal. In fact for both Lewiston and Wenatchee, the warmest day in March was warmer than the warmest day in April.

**MAY** May continued much like April. Cold spells throughout the first half of the month were somewhat offset by a warm Memorial Day weekend. The coolest weather was in the middle of the month with daytime temperatures remaining in the 50s and running 10-15 degrees below normal. The warm weather arrived just in time for the holiday weekend. Lewiston topped out at 93 degrees and Spokane reached 91 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, which was about a 15 degree jump from the previous day. This was just ahead of a Pacific cold front that was moving into the area. Severe thunderstorms occurred over the northeast part of Washington that evening. The weather cooled considerably for the rest of the weekend. In the end though, May was again cooler than normal. Thankfully for most locations, the wet trend continued. For the entire wet season (Oct-May), the Inland Northwest was wetter than normal by 2 to 4 inches.

Spring Weather Statistics				
Wenatchee Airport	Mar	April	May	Total
Avg High Temp	55.5	60.5	70.0	62.0
Departure from Norm	+1.9	-2.4	-1.5	-0.6
Avg Low Temp	35.1	40.4	48.0	41.2
Departure from Norm	+1.5	+0.4	+0.7	+0.9
Total Precip	0.38	0.95	0.08	1.41
Departure from Norm	-0.30	+0.48	-0.53	-0.35
Lewiston Airport	Mar	April	May	Total
Avg High Temp	54.7	59.8	68.6	61.0
Departure from Norm	+0.9	-0.8	-1.4	-0.4
Avg Low Temp	37.5	40.0	46.2	41.2
Departure from Norm	+1.9	-0.7	-0.8	+0.1
Total Precip	2.17	1.56	2.10	5.83
Departure from Norm	+1.05	+0.25	+0.54	+1.84
Spokane Airport	Mar	April	May	Total
Avg High Temp	49.5	54.7	64.8	56.3
Departure from Norm	+0.9	-2.7	-1.4	-1.1
Avg Low Temp	32.3	35.5	41.7	36.5
Departure from Norm	+1.9	0.0	-1.0	+0.3
Total Precip	2.13	1.41	1.49	5.03
Departure from Norm	+0.60	+0.13	-0.99	+1.61
Total Snowfall	2.0	0.7	T	2.7
Departure from Norm	-1.6	-0.2	-0.2	-2.0

**Summer Outlook** for the Inland Northwest is for seasonal to near normal temperatures and precipitation. ☀ *Ron Miller*

**Trivia answer: According to the Storm Data, 4 inch size hail (grapefruit size) fell in Condon, OR on 7/9/95. On that same day, 3 inch size hail fell in Umatilla and 2 inch size fell in Pomeroy.**

## Remember your Summer Spotter Checklist

### Tornado

*look for debris cloud*

### Funnel Cloud

*not touching ground*

### Strong Winds

30 mph+ or damage

### Hail

*pea size or larger*

### Heavy Rain

*1/2" in one hour*

### Flooding

*Of any kind*

## Any Comments?

The National Weather Service is always interested in your feedback, comments and concerns on our products and services. Feel free to contact MIC John Livingston or WCM Ken Holmes at any time with your input. There is also a national effort underway to seek customer feedback. It would be greatly appreciated if you would take a few minutes to take the survey. The web site can be found at <http://www.cfigroup.net/cfisurvey/cgi-bin/qwebcorporate.cgi?BWT2W8>

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## Lightning Safety



*Lightning over Washington State University on June 10th.  
Courtesy of Tyler Mode.*

### When lightning strikes nearby...

- Postpone outdoor activities promptly. Don't wait for the rain.
- Be the lowest point. Don't stand under trees. Lightning hits the tallest object.
- If you hair stands on end, immediately leave the area and find safe shelter.
- Get out of the water. Avoid metal. Both are a great conductor of electricity.

Visit <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov/> for more information on lightning.

## The Weather Watcher Of the Inland Northwest



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**Trivia: What is the largest hail stone reported in the Inland Northwest?**