

The ArkLaMiss Observer



Winter 2005-2006 Edition

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2005: Year in Review

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By: Ashley Wester
Editor/Meteorologist Intern

The year 2005 will go down in history as an eventful, record breaking year with hurricanes Katrina and Rita among others, as well as tornado events, excessive heat, and drought.

This January was our first in several years to have tornadoes affect our forecast area. This event occurred during the afternoon of January 7th. An F1 tornado hit an area near downtown Jackson in Hinds County, destroying one home. Near Bogue Chitto in Lincoln County, another F1 tornado resulted in the destruction of one mobile home. Finally, an F3 tornado hit areas near Purvis and Hattiesburg, resulting in near \$300,000 in damages.

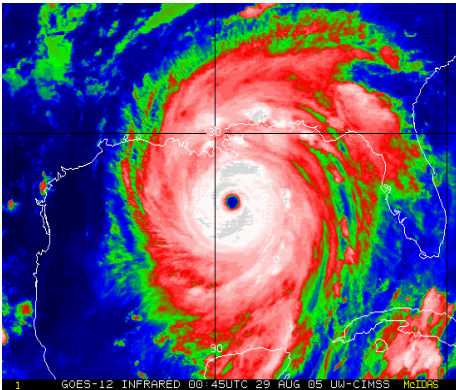
The year of 2005 was also a big hail year. February, March, and April all had at least one

significant hail event to affect some part of our warning area. These events not only produced

large amounts of hail; they had large sized hail, with the largest ranging between golf ball and baseball sized hail.

Everyone remembers the 2005 hurricane season. Tropical Storms Arlene and Bret caused this year to join the 12 previous years since 1851 to have two tropical storms form in the Atlantic in the month of June. The number of named storms to form in the month of July was broken by Tropical Storm Cindy, Hurricane Dennis, Hurricane Emily, Tropical Storm Franklin, and Tropical Storm Gert. Among the five storms that formed in August, we all remember Hurricane Katrina. Katrina goes down as the worst natural disaster in the history of the United States, despite the fact that it was

downgraded to a Category 3 storm at landfall. September also had five named tropical systems. Of those, we have Hurricane Rita. For our warning area, Rita resulted in over 50 tornadoes between September 24th and 25th.



This breaks the record for the number of hurricane related tornadoes to affect our county warning area. In October we had six named storms. Hurricane Wilma broke the record for the lowest pressure ever recorded. Another record was set this month when we had to use the names Alpha and Beta from the Greek alphabet. Tropical Storm Zeta formed on Friday, December 30th. This gives us 27 named storms for the 2005 hurricane season.

Once the hurricane season ended, dry weather sunk

into the area. October was one of the driest on record. The city of Jackson tied with the years 1904, 1924, and 1963 for the driest October on record with an entire month of no rainfall.

The first week in November brought us near record breaking heat, with temperatures rising to the upper 70s to lower 80s.

The year of 2005 was a very eventful year, and will go down as a very unforgettable year for most civilians of Mississippi.

Changes in Staff at NWS Jackson

*By: Alan Gerard
Meteorologist-In-Charge*

Over the next couple of months, we will have some changes in the staff at the NWS Jackson office. **Winston Lynn Gilmore**, a longtime hydrometeorological technician at our office, will be retiring on February 3rd. Lynn has been a technician at our office since 1978, and many of our partners in emergency management and media have been helped by Lynn numerous times over the years. Many of you will also remember Lynn as “the voice” of NOAA Weather Radio when

we still did manual broadcasts – Lynn was well known for his professional broadcast style. We will miss Lynn, and wish him well in retirement!

Also, forecaster **John Gagan** will be leaving the Jackson office in mid-February to take a Senior Forecaster position at the NWS office in Springfield, MO. John has been our Digital Services Meteorologist, and in that role has made a tremendous contribution to products such as our probabilistic hazardous weather outlook and our point and click forecast. John has

also become known to many of our partners as an outstanding briefer on our hazardous weather conference calls. Please join us in wishing John well as he goes on to this new phase in his career.



John
Gagan

Winston
Lynn
Gilmore



Forecaster **Douglas Butts** will also be leaving the office in early March to take a Senior Forecaster position at the NWS office in Shreveport, LA. Doug has recently served as our Education and Outreach Meteorologist, a position in

which he provided our customers with a better understanding of severe weather and how we operate. Doug has previously served as our NOAA Weather Radio Focal Point, where he reconstructed the broadcast for

easier listening. Please join us in recognizing Doug for his contribution to our office, and wishing him well with his new career.



Doug Butts

NEW AVIATION FORECAST PRODUCT IN THE WORKS FOR THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE

*By: Brad Bryant
Aviation Meteorologist*

The Jackson National Weather Service Forecast office is currently in the midst of a process that would ultimately culminate in our issuance of a regular aviation forecast (TAF) for the Golden Triangle Airport. We already issue similar forecasts for airports at Greenville (GLH), Greenwood (GWO), Jackson (JAN), Meridian (MEI), and Hattiesburg (HBG). The TAF (Terminal Aerodrome Forecast) product is a highly detailed forecast for conditions expected at (and in the vicinity of) a specific airport complex for the next 24 hours. The forecasts are generally issued four times a day; at 6 pm CST, 12am CST, 6

am CST, and 12 pm CST. Both commercial and private aviation interests use the latest TAF product covering their arrival and departure points for flight planning purposes. Additionally, the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) may not approve a proposed flight plan if the pilot (or plane) connected with a flight plan is not rated for the expected weather conditions at the proposed arrival or departure airports.

Columbus Air Force Base (CAFB) has been the main impetus behind starting the process to bring our aviation forecasts to the Golden Triangle Airport. CAFB has one of the Busiest airfields within the Air Force, flying more than 80,000

sorties a year. CAFB plans on doing major improvements to their runway complex for several months next year, meaning they would temporarily have to run much of their operations from the nearby Golden Triangle Airport. Also, even after the runway work at CAFB has been completed, they would like to be able to list the Golden Triangle Airport (GTR) as a viable alternate when issuing flight plans and thus be able to take off with less "contingency" fuel. Both of the above tasks can only be accomplished if TAF service is started at GTR. Additionally, several commercial airlines (such as Northwest Airlines and Delta) provide service to GTR and their efficiency of operations

to and from that site would benefit from the product.

Preliminary plans call for us to launch our new TAF for GTR on the morning of 05/16/06. You can watch for this product, or view the TAFs already being

created for other area airports, at the following website: www.srh.noaa.gov/jan/aviation_weather.htm. Please keep in mind that the TAF is a heavily coded product and will therefore be hard for non-aviation interests to decipher.



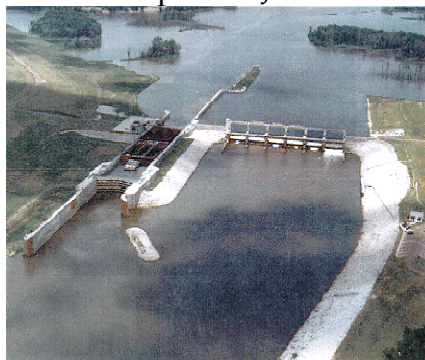
Federal Aviation Administration

ADDITION TO HYDROLOGIC SERVICES

*By: Marty Pope
Service Hydrologist*

The National Weather Service in Jackson and Memphis worked to better serve the public in Clay and Lowndes counties. These counties were transferred on November 2005 from the Memphis Hydrologic Service Area to the Jackson Hydrologic Service Area. This allowed all weather and water related forecasts and services to be issued out of the Jackson

office instead of weather services from Jackson and most water related services from Memphis. Responsibilities for river forecasts on the Noxubee River at Macon in Noxubee County were also switched from Memphis to Jackson.



Emergency Management officials from Clay, Lowndes, and Noxubee counties met together with the National Weather Service and approved the change over. Officials were satisfied that all of the water and weather needs could be handled by a single office. River forecasts for these points are produced at the Southeast

River Forecast Center in Peachtree City, Georgia. The forecasts are now relayed to the National Weather Service in

Jackson, Mississippi and then issued to the public.

The following is a list of the river forecast points that were transferred:

Tibbee Creek at Tibbee (Clay County)
Stennis Lock and Dam (Lowndes County)
Luxapallila Creek at Columbus (Lowndes County)
Noxubee River at Macon (Noxubee County)

40th Anniversary of the Candlestick Park Tornado

By: Alan Gerard
Meteorologist-In-Charge

On March 3, 1966, one of the most devastating tornadoes in Mississippi history occurred. This tornado would come to be known as the “Candlestick Park” tornado, named after a shopping center in south Jackson which was totally destroyed by the tornado. One of only two documented F5 (the most violent on the Fujita scale) tornadoes to strike Mississippi in the 20th century, this tornado carved a path of destruction across central and east central Mississippi. The worst damage occurred in parts of Hinds, Rankin, Scott, and Leake counties, where a total of 58 people were killed and over 500 were injured.

This was the deadliest, most damaging, and longest track (202.5 miles) tornado in central Mississippi during the 20th century. To commemorate this event and help remember those who were affected by this tragic tornado, the National Weather Service in Jackson will be holding a Candlestick Park tornado commemoration week

the week of February 27th. Each day, the NWS will be working with our partners in the media and emergency management to publicize an aspect of the Candlestick Park tornado and tornadoes in Mississippi. This week will then culminate with a commemoration ceremony on March 3rd, the 40th anniversary of the tornado.

Tentative Schedule

Monday, February 27:

Candlestick Park Tornado: The Impact

Tuesday, February 28:

Socioeconomic Changes Along the Tornado’s Path: 1966 to 2006

Wednesday, March 1:

Weather Technology: Then and Now

Thursday, March 2:

Other Violent Tornadoes in Mississippi History

Friday, March 3:

The 40th Anniversary: Remembering March 3, 1966 (Ceremony to be held at Candlestick Park)

For more information regarding this event, please contact Alan Gerard or Jim Butch at the NWS in Jackson at 601-936-2189. If you are a Candlestick Park survivor and would be interested in sharing your memories of the Candlestick Park Tornado, please call us or send an email to sr-jan.webmaster@noaa.gov.

FUN STUFF FOR THE KIDS!!

FUN FACTS!

- A 1917 F4 tornado in Connecticut picked up a jar of pickles and dropped it, unbroken, in a ditch 25 miles away.
- Harry Norris was apparently a sound sleeper. A tornado threw him out of his bed, through a window, and into the street while he slept.
- In Canada, a tornado picked up a baby girl from her buggy. After a 10-hour search, the girl was found safe and asleep two miles from where the buggy had been.
- The record for the item carried farthest by a tornado is a personal check that traveled 223 miles from Stockton, Kansas to Winnetoon, Nebraska in an F3 tornado in 1991.
- A cumulus cloud half a mile wide, half a mile long and half a mile high weighs about 1.5 billion pounds.
- Although it seems much wider, the electric current channel of a typical lightning bolt is only about the size of a pencil.
- Roy Sullivan, a U.S. park ranger, was struck by lightning seven times during his life and lived to tell about each of those strikes!

Weather Jokes!

Q: Why did the woman go outside with her purse open?

A: Because she expected some change in the weather!

Q: What is a tornado's favorite food?

A: Funnel Cake

Q: Why don't mother Kangaroos like rainy days?

A: Because their kids have to play inside.

Q: Why was there thundering and lightning in the lab?

A: Because the scientists were brainstorming!

CAN YOU FIND THESE WORDS?

TORNADO

LIGHTNING

FLOOD

THUNDERSTORM

HURRICANE

F	P	E	R	H	W	C	U	I	B	E	T	A
L	M	T	A	X	Q	I	R	M	E	C	H	U
O	I	M	S	T	Y	U	N	B	V	Z	U	O
O	S	G	M	H	G	V	B	N	P	Q	N	W
D	L	R	H	E	T	I	U	M	E	P	D	K
L	K	J	U	T	O	R	N	A	D	O	E	W
S	P	Q	R	G	N	V	C	I	L	P	R	W
L	E	Z	R	P	N	I	T	G	N	L	S	R
M	I	N	I	L	A	Y	N	P	Z	X	T	B
V	C	E	C	P	G	H	O	G	X	P	O	Q
L	A	M	A	O	P	P	W	L	G	X	R	S
G	H	P	N	L	G	X	Z	Q	A	M	M	T
P	O	I	E	U	Y	T	R	E	W	Q	X	C

Pop Quiz:

Which of these is the #1 weather related killer in the United States?

Outreach: Our Efforts to Reach Out to You!

We don't spend all of our time in the office! We also do school talks, storm spotter training, work booths, and even participate in Chick-Fil-A Family Fun Nights! If you are interested in seeing us at your local event, scheduling us for a school talk, or if you just want to come out to the office and see what we do, please feel free to call and schedule an event. You can contact our office by calling (601) 936-2189.



From Left to Right:
Mr. Cow, Meteorologist-In-Charge Alan Gerard, Forecaster Doug Butts, Meteorologist Intern Ashley Wester, and Forecaster John Gagan participate in Chick-Fil-A's Family Fun Night

Forecaster Eric Carpenter gives a school talk to 6th graders at Brandon Middle School



Calendar of Events

- Monday, February 27 through Friday, March 3:
Candlestick Park Tornado Week
- Friday, March 3 through Saturday, March 4:
Mississippi State Southeast Severe Storms

Thank You!

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Contributors: Ashley Wester, Meteorologist Intern
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Brad Bryant, Aviation Meteorologist/General Forecaster
Marty Pope, Service Hydrologist