



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
Fort Worth, Texas**

February 2006

SOUTHERN TOPICS

Working Together To Save Lives

[Southern Region Home page](#)

[Previous Topics](#)

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

In Memory

Forrest Johns

Forrest Johns passed away Saturday morning, February 25th, shortly after 10:00 am. Forrest was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer one year ago, and had only recently retired from the Fort Smith office this past fall with 50 years of service.

Forrest Johns Career - 50 Years Public Service

United States Air Force 1955 to 1959

Stationed in Korea as a Weather Observer

Stationed with Mobile Weather at Tinker AFB

Stationed in the Air Force Severe Storms Unit in Kansas City Mo

National Weather Service (United States Weather Bureau) 1959 to 2005

Stationed at Shreveport, LA 1959

Stationed at Jackson, MS 1963

Stationed at Shreveport, LA 1964

King Salmon, AK 1966

Little Rock, AR 1968

Fort Smith, AR 1970 to 2005

Became Official in Charge of the Fort Smith office in 1997.

Forrest played an instrumental role in the modernization of the National Weather service. As OIC of the Fort Smith Office, he was the liaison with the local officials, media, and private sector users in NW Arkansas, and especially in Fort Smith, as the NWS transferred service responsibilities from the Fort Smith WSO to the new WFO in Tulsa. Due in large part to his skills in outreach, and his credibility as a spokesman for the NWS in the local community, the transfer was ultimately a success. He will be missed.



Rod Scofield

Rod Scofield passed away quietly on Saturday, February 25th, at 11:55 am. Rod had been very active in the National Weather Association and specialized in the estimation of precipitation from satellite data. With Vince Oliver, he first published the Scofield-Oliver Technique as a NOAA Tech Memo in 1977.

Rod's wife, Joyce, writes: "It was very peaceful with all of us at his bedside. Hospice had been with us the night before preparing us for what to expect. We are feeling the tremendous loss of a wonderful husband, father and just great human being. Rod's funeral was on Friday, March 3rd at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Waldorf, Maryland.

Rod was well known to many of the Southern Region family, especially through his contributions to the science of satellite meteorology. He too, will be missed.

I am sure you join with me in sending condolence to the Johns and Scofield families.

Cline Awards

Congratulations to the following Southern Region 2005 Regional Isaac Cline Award Winners. These recipients were submitted as nominations for the National Cline Awards.

Meteorology – Robert Barritt, Marsha Black, Felecia Bowser, Steven Cobb, Mark Conder, Jerry English Mark Fox, John Holsenbeck, Bill Hopkins, Jody James, Brian LaMarre, John Lipe, Marty Mullen, Gary Skwira, Jose Valdez, Johnny Wallace, Kenneth Widelski – WFO Lubbock, TX

Hydrometeorology – RFC Atlanta, GA

Hydrology – Reggina Cabrera-Garza, Judith Stokes Bradberry, Todd Hamill, Jonathan P. Atwell, - RFC Atlanta, GA

Electronics – William Bennett, Donald J. Burkhardt – WFO Melbourne, FL

Support Services – Marsha Black – WFO Lubbock, TX

Upper Air Observation – WFO Corpus Christi, TX Upper Air Team

Leadership – Jason Burks – WFO Huntsville, AL

Program Management & Administration – Joann Lewis – RFC Fort Worth, TX

Outreach – Marsha Black, Ed Calianese, Steven Cobb, Mark Conder, John Hickman, Carl Hill, John Holsenbeck, John Lipe, Gary Skwira – WFO Lubbock, TX



Local 2005 Isaac Cline Award Winners

OFFICE	CATEGORY	RECIPIENT
WFO Albuquerque, NM	Meteorology	Charles H. Jones
	Outreach	Kerry M. Jones
	Leadership	Kenneth G. Drozd
WFO Amarillo, TX	Outreach	Stephen Bilodeau
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	David Wilburn
RFC Atlanta, GA	Hydrology	Mark Love
	Outreach	Jonathan Atwell
	Program Management & Administration	Thomas Wallace
	Leadership	Reggina Cabrera-Garza
WFO Atlanta, GA	Meteorology	Brian Lynn
	Hydrometeorology	Kent Frantz
	Outreach	Robert Beasley
	Leadership	Richard Black
WFO Austin/San Antonio, TX	Meteorology	Clay Anderson
	Outreach	Larry Eblen
	Program Management & Administration	William Runyon
	Support Services	Norma Jones
	Leadership	Jon Zeitler
WFO Brownsville, TX	Meteorology	Jeffrey Philo, Brian Miller, Bryan Caffrey, Tim Speece
	Hydrometeorology	Mike Castillo
	Hydrology	Alfredo Vega
	Outreach	Jim Campbell
	Program Management & Administration	Jason Straub
	Support Services	Rachel Gutierrez, James Raley
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Robert Wittreich, Alan Del Castillo
	Leadership	Kurt Vanspeybroeck
WFO Corpus Christi, TX	Meteorology	Michael E. Buchanan
	Hydrometeorology	Steven B. Smart
	Hydrology	Gregory E. Wilk
	Program Management & Administration	Jason T. Runyen



	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	William H. Harrison
	Support Services	Manuela Medrano
RFC Fort Worth, TX	Meteorology	Greg Shelton
	Hydrometeorology	Frank Bell, Greg Shelton, Paul McKee, Gregg Waller, Alex Orr
	Hydrology	Paul Greer
	Outreach	Gregg Waller
	Program Management & Administration	Joann Lewis
	Support Services	Tracy Howieson
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Patrick Sneeringer
	Leadership	Paul Greer
WFO Little Rock, AR	Meteorology	John A. Lewis, III
	Hydrometeorology	Paul M. Iniguez
	Hydrology	Steven W. Bays
	Outreach	Joseph C. Goudsward
	Program Management & Administration	Brian D. Smith
	Support Services	Allen S. Adkins
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Allen S. Adkins
	Leadership	Christopher C. Buonanno
WFO Lubbock, TX	Program Management & Administration	Brian LaMarre John Holsenbeck
	Leadership	Jody James, Gary Skwira, Ken Widelski
WFO Melbourne, FL	Meteorology	Arlena Moses
	Hydrology	Peggy Glitto, Bud Dietzmann
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Bill Bennett, Don Burkhardt
WFO Memphis, TN	Meteorology	Jason Beaman
	Hydrometeorology	Doug Vogelsang
	Hydrology	Buzz Merchlewitz
	Outreach	Corey Chaskelson
	Program Management & Administration	Anthony Cavallucci
	Support Services	Virginia Johnson
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Maggie Trippany
	Leadership	Steve Cromer



WFO Miami, FL	Meteorology	Stan Holland, Angela Downing, John Wright, Miguel Sierra- CWSU Miami, FL
	Outreach	Robert Ebaugh
	Support Services	Dorothy Sotus
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Neal Lynch
	Leadership	Pablo Santos
CWSU Miami, FL	Meteorology	Stan Holland, Angela Downing, John Wright, Miguel Sierra – CWSU Miami, FL
WFO Midland, TX	Meteorology	Jack Ciccone, Brian Curran, Alexander Lyster, Greg Murdoch, Eric Platt
	Hydrometeorology	Eddie Brite, Rebecca Gould, Susan Griffin, Michael Young
	Hydrology	Doug Cain, Mike Wrinkle
	Outreach	Todd Lindley, Cody Lindsey
	Program Management & Administration	Greg Jackson
	Support Services	Beverly Martin
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Wayne Patterson, Eddie Whitefield
	Leadership	Jeff Cupo, Pat Vesper
WFO Mobile, AL	Meteorology	Stephen Miller
	Hydrometeorology	Dave Eversole
	Outreach	Gary Beeler
	Support Services	Deborah Burton
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Vaughn Ball
WFO Morristown, TN	Meteorology	Jerry Hevrdeys
	Hydrometeorology	Frank Ferrell
	Hydrology	Tim Doyle
	Support Services	Robyn Malone
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	John Crawford
	Leadership	David Hotz
	Program Management/Administration	Eddie Maynard, Shawn O'Neill, Lyle Wilson, Terry Getz, Brian Taylor, David Hotz, Derek Eisentrout
	Outreach	Terry Getz



WFO Nashville, TN	Outreach	Mark Rose
	Leadership	Michael Davis
WFO New Orleans, LA	Meteorology	Tim Destri, Tim Erickson
	Hydrometeorology	Jacob Herty
	Hydrology	Patricia Brown-Jones
	Outreach	Mary Keiser, Paula Campbell
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Dean Warren, Keith DeArmas, Larry Tennison
	Leadership	Mike Koziara, Michael Shields
	Program Management/Administration	Frank Revitte, Robert Ricks, Leonard Bucklin
	Support Services	James Vasilj, Gary Vaughan, Paula Bolline
WFO San Angelo, TX	Meteorology	Matt Groh, Patrick McCullough, Donnita Gardner, Terry Huber, Scott Overpeck, Jonathan Brassell, Eva Mullen
	Hydrometeorology	Jonathan Brazzell
	Hydrology	Jason Johnson
	Outreach	Les Kiesler, Patrick McCullough, Matt Groh, Jason Johnson
	Program Management	Curt Kockx
	Support Services	Donnita Gardner
	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	Robert Sandifer
WFO Shreveport, LA	Meteorology	John Elmore, Patrick Omundson, Christian Stapleton, William Adams, Michael Berry, Mark Murphy, William Murrell,
	Outreach	Jason Hansford, Steve Griffin, William Parker
RFC Tulsa, OK	Engineering, Electronics or Facilities	William McIntosh
	Leadership	Isaiah Daniels



CLIMATE, WATER AND WEATHER DIVISION

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH

WFO Miami on Target with Critical Winter Weather Forecast. The WFO Miami staff did an excellent job in forecasting a freeze event in South Florida on February 13-14. The staff provided timely, well-written statements and forecasts, including a Freeze Outlook, Freeze Watch, and Freeze Warnings. The freeze outlooks were issued as early as the previous week.

The Palm Beach Post and Naples Daily News had some informative articles on damage from the freeze. The Post article, in particular, is quite sobering with millions of dollars in losses mainly to the corn and bean crop. Also of note from the article, are the temperatures recorded at some of the farms around Belle Glade (26 degrees for several hours at one farm). These temperatures may appear unrepresentative, but if we keep in mind isolated cold pockets and the fact that the black muck that covers most of these farms radiates extremely well, then they don't appear too far-fetched.

The Palm Beach Post article can be viewed at:

http://www.palmbeachpost.com/state/content/state/epaper/2006/02/15/s1a_coldcorn_0215.html

The Naples Daily News reported less freeze damage on the west side of the state, but temperatures were about as cold as in Belle Glade. As a follow-up, the Southwest Florida growers are apparently breathing big sigh of relief a week after freeze. See the Naples Daily News article at:

http://www.naplesnews.com/news/2006/feb/25/crops_survive_freezing_temperatures_and_growers_re/

First Annual Key West Seafood Festival. WFO Key West recently participated in the first annual Key West Seafood Festival at Bayview Park, Key West. The outdoor event, sponsored by the Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association, was organized to celebrate the resiliency of Florida Keys fisheries in the wake of 4 hurricane impacts during the 2005 hurricane season. Senior Forecasters Kennard "Chip" Kasper, William South, and Cliff Brock joined General Forecaster Jim Lee, WCM Jon Rizzo and MIC Matt Strahan in providing information on marine safety, NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio and NWS marine forecast access, and tsunamis. The NWS Key West booth greeted 450 visitors face-to-face, including marina and boat dealership owners, commercial fishermen and several international visitors from Europe.

Lubbock Earns 2005 Fourth Quarter Southern Region Aviation Award. WFO Lubbock earned the Southern Region's Aviation Services Excellence (ASE) Award for the Fourth Quarter of 2005. In particular, the Aviation Team composed of Jody James, Ken Widelski and Gary Skwira spearheaded several important events designed to improve aviation weather services. They organized a local aviation workshop for pilots, conducted an aviation weather program for the local Experimental Aircraft Association, reached out to important aviation weather customers at the FAA Control Tower and at Lubbock



International Airport, and facilitated training by hosting Southwest Airlines' lead meteorologist Rick Curtis and chief dispatcher, Kimberly Parker.

In addition, WFO Lubbock had an outstanding quarter producing excellent TAFs. The office posted a 75% improvement over computer generated TAFs in IFR weather conditions. WFO Lubbock will receive the SR ASE Fourth Quarter Trophy and be its caretaker for one year. Congratulations to WFO Lubbock for their outstanding aviation work.

Southwest Airlines Visits Birmingham. Continuing a trend of SR office visitations which began over two years ago, Rick Curtis, Dispatch Manager for Southwest Airlines, recently visited WFO Birmingham and gave a presentation on how weather affects the commercial airline industry. The meeting was attended by staff members from the Birmingham office, as well as WFOs Huntsville and Jackson. Rick described Southwest's reliance on NWS TAFs and other products for most of their weather information. He also explained how dispatchers use TAFs, and how dispatchers have to plan accordingly for fuel and alternate flight plans when forecasts fall below certain thresholds. Rick thanked the NWS for doing a fantastic job and putting forth great effort in the aviation program. At the end of the presentation, Rick opened the floor to questions and a great discussion followed. WFO Birmingham thanked Rick for taking the time to visit, and expressed appreciation to the Huntsville and Jackson visitors for their attendance. The presentation was recorded on DVD and is available to those who may be interested. Please contact Paul Witsaman or Mark Fox at SRH if you'd like a copy.

HYDROLOGIC SERVICES BRANCH

Chinese Delegation Visit at ABRFC. A Chinese delegation visited the ABRFC on the afternoon of Feb 28. There were four hydrologists and eight meteorologists in the group from the Ministry of Water Resources. The group represented the Bureau of Hydrology as well as three river commissions - Yangtze, Yellow and Huaihe Rivers. China is in the middle of a modernization of their weather services and this group was very interested in the use of radar precipitation estimates for flood forecasting as well as how we approach water resources services in general. ABRFC staff provided the delegation with an overview of RFC forecast operations. The delegation will also visit various offices in Norman in early March.

Water Supply Forecast for New Mexico. The water supply forecast for New Mexico through the spring snow melt season calls for well below normal to near record low runoff according to a coordinated release by the NWS and the NRCS.

Ed Polasko, Senior Service Hydrologist from WFO Albuquerque, reports that forecast flows on the Rio Grande include 26 percent of normal into Cochiti Lake and 10 percent of normal into Elephant Butte Lake. Other forecast flows into reservoirs range from 34 percent of normal at El Vado Lake to 10 percent of normal into Jemez Canyon Reservoir. Inflow to Conchas Lake is forecast to be 30 percent of normal while inflow to Santa Rosa Lake is expected to be 13 percent of normal. Flow from streams originating in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of New Mexico and feeding into the Rio Grande should range from 12 to 31 percent of normal.



Precipitation across New Mexico during February 2006 ranged from well below average to none. Statewide, November 2005 through February 2006 was the second driest November through February period on record; only the 1903 to 1904 period was drier. In Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Taos, November 2005 through February 2006 was the driest November through February period since records began in 1868, 1893, and 1914 respectively.

Surveys by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service indicate that snow pack water content in the Rio Grande basin as of March 1 was 24 percent of normal and 18 percent of one year ago. In the San Juan basin the snow pack water content is 44 percent of normal and 28 percent of the total of March 1, 2005.

Looking at historical March 1 snow pack amounts in the New Mexico portion of the Rio Grande Basin going back to 1995, the current snow pack is far worse than 2000 when the basin average was 43 percent of normal. Snow pack in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of northern New Mexico as of March 1 is only 19 percent of normal and is less than the previous record low set in 1981. The current snow pack in the Upper Gila Basin is the lowest on record for March 1. The previous record low was set in 1999.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

You Make The Call Meteorology Case 16. The latest "You Make The Call" meteorology case (#16) is now available at:

<http://intranet.srh.noaa.gov/ymtc/met/016.html>

The "You Make the Call" section of the Southern Region Intranet is a place where folks try to 'make the call' in a specific scenario as if they were the referee at a football game. This new meteorology case deals with our understanding of meteorological features that appear on radar imagery. Can "You Make The Call"?

Recorded Presentations From AMS Annual Meeting. Highlights and recorded presentations from the AMS Annual Meeting held 29 January–2 February 2006 in Atlanta, Georgia are now available on the AMS Web site:

http://ams.confex.com/ama/Annual2006/techprogram/meeting_Annual2006.htm

Satellite Hydrometeorology Course. The NWS Training DIVISION has released a new course on satellite meteorology. Intended primarily for interns at the WFOs, the goal of the course is to prepare them to use the latest polar orbiting and geostationary satellite data and products in the warning and forecast programs. Taught through a combination of Web-based instruction and teletraining, the course should take approximately 16 hours to complete.

Registration for the course will start on March 6, 2006, with the first course offering on



April 3, 2006. Please note: To register for this course, first send an email to shymet@ssec.wisc.edu and you will be sent setup instructions. DO NOT go to the E-Learning Learning Management System Web site to register until you have reviewed those instructions.

Technical Attachment. We have one Technical Attachment to this month's *Topics*. Written by Todd Lindley and the staff at WFO Lubbock, "Operational Practices During the 12 January 2006 Wildfires and Frontal Passage in West Texas" describes a recent fire weather day when extreme fire conditions combined with a frontal passage. The forecasters on shift that day relayed critical information directly to their customers using some innovative techniques and new technology, namely Instant Messaging and FX-Collaborate.

New Technical Memoranda. Congratulations to Tim Tinsley, Jennifer Salato, and Jason Dunn, WFO Corpus Christi, and Armando Garza, now MIC WFO Shreveport, on the publication of NOAA Technical Memorandum NWS SR-225, "The Corpus Christi, Texas Tornadoes of 24 October 2002." This paper is an examination of a rare event which produced three tornadoes -- two of which were rated as F2 -- that resulted in 26 injuries and one fatality, and property losses around \$85 million. In addition to reviewing the climatology of such events, the authors describe the changes in the environment leading up to this event and, most importantly, discuss warning and situational awareness issues related to this event.

Congratulations to Gregory Wilk, also from WFO Corpus Christi, on the publication of NOAA Technical Memorandum NWS SR-226, "The Temperature And Precipitation Verification Program At WFO Corpus Christi, Texas." In this paper Gregory describes how he used the SOOVER program, and an in-house contest, to help the individual forecasters improve their verification scores.

Electronic copies of these, and all our recent Technical Memoranda, are available at: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ssd/html/techmemo.htm>

SYSTEMS OPERATION DIVISION

UPPER AIR STATS ARE HERE... February 2006 was challenging for Southern Region's upper-air sites with only 14 of 23 SR sites earning scores above the national average of 283.80. Upper-air equipment outages resulted in several SR upper-air sites having low averages this month. WFO Corpus Christi's upper-air staff earned the region's top upper-air ranking score for February 2006 with an excellent score of 298.68 with 300.00 being perfect. Not far behind Corpus Christi were Miami (297.47), Albuquerque (297.34), Nashville (297.15) and Del Rio with an excellent ranking score of 296.71.

CWO Del Rio continues to hold the region's top upper-air 12 month average score with an excellent ranking score of 297.12. This score also ranks them second in the nation. CWO Del Rio's upper-air staff has now lead SR with the best 12 month average score for the past twenty months.

RADIOSONDE REPLACEMENT SYSTEM (RRS)... WFO Corpus Christi was one of



the four upper-air sites in the nation that completed the Operational Acceptance Test (OAT) for the RRS that ended during the first week of March 2006. With completion of the OAT, the national deployment of the RRS has begun. WFO Tallahassee completed all pre-deployment activities, turned off their ART 1 equipment, removed all LRUs, cleaned the conduits, and installed the TRS. Mike Vise (OPL), declared a GPS radiosonde was successfully released and tracked by the new installed RRS.

RRS TRAINING... An RRS training class was conducted by SR's Upper-Air Program Manager, Alton Abernathy at WFO Amarillo on February 28, 2006. Twelve attended the class including the WFO's MIC, IT and OPL. Other offices took advantage of the training and the OPLs from WFO Midland, Eddy Brite and WFO Norman's Forrest Mitchell also attended. Both experienced and new observers gained information from the training event.

UPPER AIR TO GO... While RRS is being installed at an upper air office, the system is down for nearly a week. Due to the critical nature of the NWS mission, the office cannot be without upper air data during impending hazardous weather conditions. Thus, Southern Region has partnered with Weather Service Headquarters to create a "Upper Air in a Box" systems. An box truck has a legacy upper air system ready for deployment anywhere in the country when needed. Larry Pace, Mike Asmus, Mike Hughes and Alton Abernathy spent a few days configuring the box truck and are working on the remote launch system. The system takes advantage of equipment and communications already located at a WFO. Nice work making sure critical observational information still flows even during down times.

MARCH OBSERVATION CERTIFICATES... Southern Region's Surface Program Manager has received 25 requests from the aviation community for new certificates, cancellation, and changes in type of surface certificate. This number could double before the end of March.

COOP MODERNIZATION... Three modernized COOP stations were installed in the WFO HUN CWA during February. This is the result of a partnership between the NERON, NCDC, and the Alabama State Climatologist. The staff at WFO HUN has been instrumental in keeping this project moving forward. Additional stations will be installed in the next few months based on funding provided through the State Climatologist's office.

NERON TRAINING... A training session for NERON site survey procedures was held at WFO BMX during the week of February 20. Representatives from WFO HUN, WFO MOB, WFO BMX, NCDC, and WSH were in attendance. Surveys of the COOP HCN stations will be conducted this spring and modernized equipment will be installed by the end of the year. The training session was a great introduction to NERON

ORDA INSTALLATION... As of week ending March 10th, the region's radar managers, the ROC, and WFO personnel have participated in the successful installation of twenty eight Open Radar Data Acquisition (ORDA) modifications. Early feedback shows the enhancements of the modification have proven beneficial in both the operations and the maintenance arenas. From an operational standpoint, the benefits which have already drawn acclaim are:



Clutter suppression which is more intuitive and less cumbersome since it uses the new Gaussian Model Adaptive Processing (GMAP) technique. An increase in the quality of base data products has also been realized.

From a technical standpoint, the positives are numerous. The receiver cabinet has undergone quite a transformation. Many of the receiver Line Replaceable Units (LRU's) have been removed, especially in the receiver's IF section. A new maintenance interface has been installed. This will make calibrations and system troubleshooting a much less laborious task for maintenance personnel.

The final result is a better performing radar that is more efficient to maintain. Kudos to all those involved this great improvement.

NEXRAD GROUDNING AND DAU HARDENING... Southern Region's radar team has been collectively working with the Radar Operations Center (ROC) from Norman, Oklahoma in attempts to address and resolve ground issues attributed to lightning related events at the RDA. During the latter part of March, the ROC will be sending a team of field engineers to WFO Tallahassee to work with the local electronic staff. Engineering personnel will be addressing and modifying current and existing grounding grids. The team will also be installing opto-isolation technology which will be inserted between the Data Acquisition Unit (DAU) and all external cables. The DAU modification procedure being performed at the Tallahassee site is the first of its kind in the nation, if not the world. The new and highly advanced equipment will lend much needed support to the very vulnerable and weak DAU input circuits. Currently the circuits are very susceptible to external sources of transient energy. Lightning events, which are quite prevalent throughout the year in the Florida panhandle, create untimely and costly equipment outages. Installation of the new hardware, which has undergone extensive testing at the ROC's lightning laboratory testbed, will look to resolve all of the lightning associated matters.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

DIVERSITY

DIVERSITY/EEO AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

WFO Tulsa Judges Science Fair. WFO Tulsa Lead Forecaster Max Blood and MIC Steve Piltz served as judges at the annual Fort Smith Schools' Science Fair. This year's event attracted nearly 150 students. Steve and Max helped to judge approximately a dozen projects each. Max even filled in as a judge in the microbiology division. While not a finalist, the project that caught Steve's attention was from a seventh grader who made a barometer out of a baby food jar and hoped to "pitch" it into a tornado someday. Participation in the Fort Smith Fair is an annual event for WFO Tulsa staff.

WFO San Juan Office Tours. San Juan Forecaster Ernesto Morales conducted an office tour for forty Junior ROTC students from the Western Puerto Rico High School of Añasco.



Ernesto also conducted another tour for forty-five high school students of the Aguadilla town Adventist Academy. Rosalina Vasquez, WFO HMT, conducted an office tour for 45 students of the Francisco Jordan Elementary School from the interior Puerto Rico town of Utuado.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Shreveport Participates in Inaugural Severe Weather and Preparedness Fair.

The WFO Shreveport staff recently partnered with the Shreveport/Bossier OHSEP office to host the first ever Severe Weather and Preparedness Fair at the Bossier Civic Center. The event was an opportunity to help educate the public on weather preparedness and what has been learned from past events. Forecasters Mike Berry and Bill Murrell made presentations on past tornado and thunderstorm wind events across the Arklatex. Bill Parker and Mark Frazier also presented the annual Storm Spotter training class. Some other activities included a Home Depot workshop to make preparedness kits, hazardous weather preparedness for the family by the American Red Cross, and a weather class by Sciport Discovery Center of Shreveport. A variety of other local organizations participated in the fair, which was attended by over 200 people.

New Orleans Levee Summit. WFO New Orleans MIC Paul Trotter and WCM Frank Revitte recently attended a program sponsored by the Southeast Louisiana Business Coalition entitled Levee Summit: Progress Toward Total Storm Protection. The summit focused on current and proposed work to restore and improve storm surge protection to southeast Louisiana. About 75 people, primarily from the business and political communities in Louisiana, attended the meeting. A number of presentations centered on the efforts for additional hurricane flood protection to the region, and general recovery efforts to the region. Colonel Lewis Setliff, who is heading the Corps of Engineers' levee enhancement efforts, expressed confidence that levees will be restored to pre-Katrina levels by the beginning of June 1st, with additional temporary flood gates installed along three canals in New Orleans.

WCM Frank Revitte represented the WFO and gave a 30 minute overview focusing on the development and impacts of Hurricane Katrina in southeast Louisiana and coastal Mississippi. Frank's presentation was well received with several requests for the power point slide presentation. Overall, the summit was well organized and educational. Paul and Frank were pleased that WFO New Orleans/Baton Rouge could be part of this event.

Mexican Delegation Visits Brownsville. WFO Brownsville recently hosted Mexican Congressman Erick Silva Santos. Mr. Santos is a "Diputado Federal" representing a northern district within the State of Tamaulipas, including the City of Matamoros. He serves within the lower chamber of the Mexican Congress, better known as the "Camara de Diputados", similar to our House of Representatives. He was accompanied by two assistants.

Congressman Santos was given a full tour of the WFO, after requesting the visit through an intermediary with the "El Bravo" newspaper in Matamoros. Aware of the Brownsville office's relationship with the Televisa network in Mexico, he was curious about the process by which the WFO produces forecast and warning products. Discussions also centered on



the WFO's relationship with Mexico's CNA (National Water Commission), and how NWS data supports meteorological and hydrologic services in Mexico.

Jackson Provides University Briefings. WFO Jackson has recently begun providing weekly weather briefings to nearby universities with meteorology programs. Using the webbrief tool and conference calls, these 20 minute discussions have included students from Jackson State University, Mississippi State University, and University of Louisiana Monroe. Jackson SOO Jeff Craven has typically led these briefings and provides an overview of significant weather possibilities over the U.S. during the coming week. This has the double benefit of giving the students insight into NWS operations and helps keep the WFO staff proficient in the use of the webbrief tool for emergency manager briefings during high impact weather.

Successful TV Seminar at Nashville. There was a great turn-out at WFO Nashville's coordination meeting with local TV meteorologists (10 of the 12 weather broadcasters at all four Nashville stations attended). WCM Jerry Orchanian, SOO Henry Steigerwaldt, Senior Forecaster Mark Richards, ITO Michael Davis and MIC Larry Vannozzi met with their TV partners to discuss a variety of items. Major topics included Instant Messaging, the debut of Nashville's graphical HWO, web page improvements, a brief overview of gridded forecasts, and the Enhanced Fujita Scale. The meeting was highly interactive with plenty of great dialogue. The WFO received feedback which will help improve services. All parties agreed to make this a regular event.

Alabama StormReady Ceremony. WFO Birmingham MIC Jim Stefkovich and WCM Jason B. Wright joined WFO Huntsville MIC Mike Coyne and WCM Tim Troutman in celebrating a recent major StormReady milestone in north and central Alabama. The group met in Cullman in February at a ceremony recognizing 16 Alabama counties that were recently either re-designated or designated as StormReady. Several local, state and federal government dignitaries were present for the ceremony, including Alabama's 4th District U.S. congressman, Robert Aderholt. After the completion of the StormReady ceremony, WFO Birmingham kicked off Alabama's 2006 Severe Weather Awareness week with a news conference to commemorate the event.

Tulsa Severe Weather Conference. WFO Tulsa and the Tulsa Area Emergency Management Agency (TAEMA) recently hosted their annual day-long severe weather conference. This year's event was attended by approximately 140 people who came from eastern and central Oklahoma, northwestern Arkansas, and southeastern Kansas. The main theme of this year's conference was "working together". Presentations included TAEMA's Director Mike McCool discussing the emergency manager's role in the Integrated Warning System and a media panel discussion in which meteorologists from all four Tulsa television stations were represented. Forecaster Brad McGavock detailed some of the new products and services that can be expected from the WFO this year, including the newly overhauled Decision Support Page (<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tsa/cgi-bin/decisionmaker.php>), which has resulted in considerable positive feedback from emergency managers and the media. WCM Ed Calianese conducted advanced Skywarn storm spotter training and MIC Steve Piltz gave an overview of the new Enhanced Fujita Scale during the conference. The day ended with some of the local storm chasers presenting video they obtained last year from across the Plains.

