



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

November 2003

SOUTHERN TOPICS

Working Together To Save Lives

[Southern Region Home Page](#)

[Previous Topics](#)

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

It is a pleasure for me to note that staff at two unique Southern Region offices were recognized by the National Weather Association for outstanding accomplishments during 2003. Also receiving NWA recognition were two of our partners. The awards were presented at the NWA's Annual Meeting which was held last month in Jacksonville, Florida. The individuals and offices are:

Operational Achievement (Group) Award. Tim Garner, Tim Oram and Richard Lafosse, NWS/NASA Spaceflight Meteorology Group, were honored for the exceptional support they provided to NASA following the tragic break-up of the shuttle Columbia. The entire SMG staff played a key role in the inter- and intra-agency support to NASA as the event investigation unfolded. The individuals cited were called upon in particular to demonstrate leadership and technical skills which went far beyond the norm, even as they were personally affected by the tragedy as members of the shuttle operations team.

Aviation Award. The NWS staff at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City was recognized for its sustained outstanding service in support of pilots nationwide through the training they have provided to FAA specialists at the Academy over many years. Marco Bohorquez accepted the award on behalf of fellow staff members.



Walter J. Bennett Public Service Award. The Medina Electric Cooperative, Inc., which was nominated by WFO Austin/San Antonio, was honored for its efforts which resulted in several additional NOAA Weather Radio transmitters in a 17-county area of South Texas, as well as their work to increase public awareness of NWR and provide radios to their customers. As a result, NWR coverage was greatly increased and NWS warning capabilities to Texas citizens were significantly enhanced. This is simply an outstanding example of public/private partnership.

Broadcaster of the Year. John Toohey-Morales in Miami was recognized for his many years of exceptional service as a meteorologist with Univisión. John, a former NWS forecaster at WSFO San Juan, and the National Hurricane Center, was the first degreed meteorologist on Spanish-language television in the U.S. when he joined the Univisión Network in 1992. Following Hurricane Andrew, he won an Emmy for *48 Horas Antes de la Tormenta*, an information oriented program detailing steps to save life and property during a hurricane emergency.

Special Achievement Award. As part of their award ceremony the NWA provided special recognition to the developers of the Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN), acknowledging the significant role FAWN has played in advancing meteorology and service to the citizens of Florida. FAWN is managed out of the University of Florida, and is a growing network of 32 automated surface weather observation sites which have become important data sources for NWS operations. We were pleased to play a role in achieving this special recognition for Larry Treadway, Project Coordinator, John Jackson, Jr., Multi-County Extension Agent, and Andy King, FAWN Website and Database Administrator.

NOAA BRONZE MEDAL AWARDS. It is also a pleasure to note the following individuals, groups and offices which were recently honored with the Bronze Medal, NOAA's highest level of recognition for exceptional service:

Kandis Boyd (CWWD Hydrologic Program Services Manager) was a member of the inter-regional group recognized for developing a standardized hydrologic forecast system database across the entire National Weather Service.

All NWS Incident Meteorologists were honored for the on-site fire weather support they provided which helped ensure the safety of nearly 33,000 firefighters during the 2002 wildfire season.

WFO San Angelo was recognized for providing outstanding severe weather and hydrologic warnings, as well as other critical weather information, during the record-setting spring severe weather season in 2002.

The **Spaceflight Meteorology Group** and the **NWS Southern Region Headquarters** were two of the groups who shared recognition for their rapid and innovative actions in collecting, archiving and analyzing weather radar data to assist in the Shuttle Columbia accident investigation.

IFPS

IFPS GRAPHICAL FORECAST FEEDBACK. Your IFPS forecasts are making a positive impact on our customers. Here are a couple of recent comments on SR graphical forecasts:

"This is great. The more time I spend exploring your new experimental sites, the more good information I find. I've used the information just now for planning a weekend fun trip and a Monday business trip. This is what the Internet is for. Thank you very much."

"Just wanted to let you know that I really like the Experimental Graphical Forecasts. It looks like a massive project. Good luck and I hope it stays."

CLIMATE, WATER AND WEATHER DIVISION

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH

GIS WORKSHOP DECEMBER 10. SRH will host a workshop on December 10 to accelerate efforts in processing IFPS grids in GIS format. We have received several requests over the past year from partners and customers seeking our forecast grids in GIS format. This workshop will focus on that to meet the needs of our regional, state and federal partners. If you are interested in participating, please contact Mike Coyne at (817) 978-1100 x153 or mike.coyne@noaa.gov.

POLYGON VERIFICATION. Work is underway to produce verification statistics on the polygon portion of short-fused warnings. An entirely new scoring system is being devised to evaluate not only the accuracy of the warning, but also its usefulness to our customers. Preliminary results were released to the MICs at the MIC/HIC conference in early November. If you have comments or questions, please contact Mike Coyne.

WARNING ERROR TRACKING PROGRAM. The WETP is back online after a hiatus to reconfigure data sources for the program. For 2003, Southern Region has achieved a success rate of over 90 percent for all warnings issued, an increase of 70 points since the program began in early 2002. So far this year, five WFOs - San Angelo, Shreveport, Lubbock, Midland and Tulsa - have produced an error rate of less than one percent. Congratulations to all of the offices for their hard work in this effort.

FIRE WEATHER

WFO Corpus Christi Fire Weather Outreach. Mike Buchanan gave a presentation on fire weather to new employees of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The talk was held at the Welder Wildlife Refuge located near Sinton, Texas, and covered basic and complex weather patterns that affect south Texas, along with detailed temperature, humidity and wind comparisons for several locations. Mike also included a discussion of the many fire weather products and services provided by WFOs.

WFO Tampa Bay Provides Fire Weather Outreach. In early October, forecaster Rick Davis gave a fire weather presentation at the Central Florida Prescribed Fire Council meeting. The meeting was held at the Hardee County Civic Center in Wauchula, Florida. The talk pertained to all general and fire weather products and services provided by the NWS on a daily basis. Internet is an important source of fire weather products and services produced and provided on a daily basis from the NWS, NOAA and our local partners. There were nearly 200 participants from various local, state and federal land management agencies including Florida Division of Forestry, National Parks Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

WFO Austin/San Antonio Fire Weather Outreach. Last month Monte Oaks visited the Capital Area Wildfire Academy near Bastrop, Texas, to assist in teaching Fire Weather Course S-290. The course was led by Carl Schwope of the US Fish and Wildlife Service who was assisted by Charles Maxwell of Predictive Services. Thirty students participated in the class.

National and Regional Fire Weather Program Managers Meet in Fort Worth. SRH hosted the national and regional fire weather program managers last month. The group conducted their annual review of NWSI 10-4 series. National Fire Weather program manager Rusty Billingsley led the meeting along with the national fire weather operations manager, Larry VanBussum. Southern Region Fire Weather program manager Paul Witsaman hosted the participants which included other regional fire weather program managers and field representatives. Southern Region representatives included Bill Adams from WFO Shreveport and Joe Harris from WFO Fort Worth.

In addition to making modifications to NWSI 10-4 for the next fire season, the group also identified issues to improve fire weather services. The need for a national fire weather budget received the most attention. A fully-funded budget would guarantee IMET equipment maintenance and upgrades for the NWS Spot Program allowing it to be incorporated into AWIPS.

WFO Birmingham Develops Fire Weather Index Software. WFO Birmingham senior forecaster Mark Rose and ITO Greg Machala collaborated to develop a program which calculates the Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) for all ASOS sites in Alabama. The KBDI was developed in 1968 to measure moisture in the duff and upper soil layers. The KBDI is a net effect of evapotranspiration and rainfall. It is a simple calculation that uses daily rainfall and maximum temperatures. In conjunction with relative humidity and surface winds, the KBDI is used to determine if a Fire Weather Watch or Red Flag Warning is needed. The index is used extensively in the southeast United States by forestry control personnel. In the past, the only KBDI values available to Birmingham forecasters were from the five Remote Automated Weather Stations operated by the U. S. Forest Service.

Fire Weather/fire Prevention Week at WFO Morristown. In cooperation with the Tennessee State Forestry, Cherokee National Forest and the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, WFO Morristown fire weather program leader David Hotz and WFO Nashville fire weather program leader John Cohen developed daily fire weather awareness statements for the first ever Fire Weather Awareness Week. This was overlapped with the Forestry's Fire Prevention Week held October 6-10. Daily topics included: general fire weather, how weather affects fire behavior, drought and its effects on wildfires, red flag warnings-extreme fire behavior, and a look at our primary and secondary fire weather seasons. These topics coincided with the Forestry's safety tips: fire safe your property, campfire safety, debris burning, children and fire safety, and arson. The vision of the daily statements was to increase fire weather awareness and fire prevention. Comments from the state and federal forestry agencies indicated we should do this again next year.

AVIATION

WFO Birmingham Aviation Activities. On September 16, program leader Jason Wright provided an introduction to NWS aviation programs along with an aviation weather brochure to pilots associated with the National Air Tour 2003, who landed at Bessemer Municipal Airport earlier that day. This tour consisted of 25 vintage aircraft which toured 26 cities as a recreation of air tours originally flown from 1925-1931.

Later in the month Jason made a presentation about Metars, TAFs, cloud types, K-Index, and limitations of automated observations at an FAA safety seminar sponsored by the Alabama-Northwest Florida Flight Standards District Office. He was assisted by ESA John Peruzzo, a certified pilot.

Aviation in Memphis City Schools – First Annual Career Week. Last month the NWS and FAA were represented among aviation professionals speaking at elementary, middle and high schools throughout Memphis. Selected schools were targeted for this Aviation Career Week initiative coordinated and promoted by the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. A total of 40 schools and over 10,000 students were visited during the week.

Memphis ARTCC meteorologist Larry Boatman and other aviation professionals went to assigned schools in groups and spoke to students regarding meteorological/aviation careers and the need for education to ensure future career success. Doug Boyette, manager at Memphis ARTCC, was instrumental in setting up the weather booth for the Career Day event at the Tennessee Technology Center, and also covering shift work to enable Larry to participate in most of the week-long event. The weather booth depicted cloud code charts and meteorological facts. Weather brochures were made available and a tornado video was shown. The cloud code charts and the tornado video were definitely crowd magnets which attracted and fascinated both adults and youth.

All types of aviation professionals participated including pilots, aircraft mechanics, flight attendants, air traffic controllers, gate agents, airport police and firefighters, and military personnel. Various aviation-related organizations were represented.

WFO Birmingham Earns 2003 Third Quarter Southern Region Aviation Award. WFO Birmingham earned the Southern Region's Aviation Services Excellence Award for the third quarter of 2003. In particular, the aviation team led by aviation program leader Jason Wright provided excellent customer service, began two new TAFs, began Airport Weather Warning services for an area airport, hosted an aviation open house, and conducted an aviation safety seminar. Other members of this outstanding team include: Patricia Atwell, Faith Borden, John De Block, Michael Garrison, Kristin Hurley, Darone Jones, Bob Kilduff, Mark Linhares, Chris Liscinsky, Kevin Pence, John Peruzzo, Mark W. Rose, Brian Peters and Jim Westland. The office will receive the traveling trophy cup to display until next year's third quarter award winner is chosen.

WFO Huntsville Aviation Outreach. WFO Huntsville participated in the 3rd Annual Cullman Wings and Wheels Car and Air Show held on October 4 at Folsom Field Airport near Vinemont, Alabama. Over 5,000 people attended the event. The Huntsville booth was staffed by senior forecaster Matt Zika, forecaster Brian Carcionne, and Cullman County EMA director Phyllis Little. The staff handed out severe weather safety brochures, promoted NWR, and responded to weather-related questions from the show attendees who stopped by the NWS booth. Many individuals offered praise on WFO Huntsville's efforts during the past year and are thrilled to have a new WFO in North Alabama.

MARINE

Kudos To WFO New Orleans. The vessel *Subsea* and its owner Halliburton had real concerns about making it into Port Fourchon last month because of channel depth. The operation of the temporary NOAA tide station at the port and the recently completed hydro surveys (to update the charts of the area and the port) performed by WFO New Orleans allowed NWS to get the ship and the pilot the channel surveys and water level heights in time for them to come in without incident. The pilot estimated the ship value at about \$100 million and a day rate of approximately \$110,000, not counting fuel and additional manpower and equipment. Kudos to WFO New Orleans for their timely hydro surveys and great customer service.

SEVERE WEATHER PREPAREDNESS AND OUTREACH

University Students from Laredo Visit WFO Corpus Christi. Two earth science students from Texas A&M International visited WFO Corpus Christi to tour the facilities, shadow the forecasters during an entire shift, and collaborate on the expansion of the South Texas Mesonet. A proposal has been initiated to purchase six new Campbell weather stations and SOO Andy Patrick provided input on the placement of these systems.

WFO Corpus Christi Hosts Meetings. WFO Corpus Christi hosted a media luncheon with local television weather personalities from Victoria, Corpus Christi and Laredo. After lunch WCM John Metz discussed IFPS and NDFD, the new Advanced Hydrologic Prediction System (AHPS) Website, NWR expansion in South Texas, and community preparedness. Afterward the NWS recognized all attendees for their dedication in providing continuous weather updates during hurricane Claudette. The luncheon concluded with a tour of the WFO. All attendees agreed to have these meetings on a bi-annual bases.

The WFO also hosted a Coastal Bend Emergency Management meeting in which over 20 emergency managers from south Texas attended. WCM John Metz discussed ways to improve the local EMC conference calls during hurricane events, and showcased the new AHPS Website. EMCs were encouraged to participate in the StormReady program. The city of Corpus Christi recently submitted their StormReady application.

Hurricane Preparedness. WFO Corpus Christi WCM John Metz led a hurricane preparedness seminar at the Aransas Pass Yacht Club. Over 50 mariners from across the Coastal Bend attended. John demonstrated the impact of Category 1 hurricane Claudette on the Port O'Connor region just a month ago and described what a major storm could do to the coastal bend. John teamed up with the marina director for the city of Corpus Christi and Aransas Pass and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. Mariners were shown how to protect their homes, businesses, and boats when a storm approaches.

WFO Corpus Christi Visits the Border. SOO Andy Patrick and WCM John Metz visited Texas A&M International in Laredo to examine their newly developed meteorology program, to tour their expanding Mesonet, and to give a presentation on the climatology of South Texas.

WFO Nashville at the Zoo. WFO Nashville staff spent two of their September weekends at the NWS outreach booth display at the Nashville Zoo. Nearly 375 attendees visited the NWS booth and chatted with staff members regarding weather-related topics. The creative staff provided onlookers a demonstration of how to make a tornado in a jar and handed out numerous brochures on thunderstorms, lightning and flash floods. They also answered questions about hurricane Isabel.

Jackson Office Greets Fair Goers. WFO Jackson staffed a booth at the Mississippi State Fair from October 1-12. They used the new popup display with posters prepared by the staff at Jackson and had a continuous running presentation that included videos and information of every weather hazard that affects their area. Locally prepared handouts were available to provide information about hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding/flash flooding, thunderstorms and lightning, and NOAA Weather Radio. Two different weather radios were displayed to give live NWS broadcasts. Nearly 3000 pencils with our Web address and 2000 balloons were given out to a diverse group of people from children to senior citizens.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources "Coastfest." The Southeast RFC and WFO Jacksonville teamed up to staff a booth at the 2004 Coastfest. This year's event was held at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Headquarters in Brunswick, Georgia. Hydrologist Rick Ullom demonstrated hazards related to river flooding utilizing a portable model, while Jacksonville WCM Al Sandrik discussed hurricane preparedness and coastal Georgia's storm surge threat. The booth was visited by a large number of teachers stopping to discuss weather and flooding hazards.

Southside Estates Elementary School Science Fair. WFO Jacksonville forecaster Angela Enyedi was a judge at the Jacksonville Southside Estates Elementary School Science Fair. The fair was open to students in grades 3-5 with approximately 200 projects submitted. Projects ranged from very creative inventions such as "A Solar Powered Marshmallow Roaster" and "A Schoolbox Alarm" to more traditional experiments such as "Which Household Liquid Shines Pennies the Best?" and "Which Cheese Molds the Fastest?" Angie was able to get a sense of elementary science education in her local community, and had the opportunity to interact with local science teachers. Plans are underway for Southside Elementary science teachers and their students to visit WFO Jacksonville in the near future.

WFO Goes to the Zoo. WFO Brownsville DAPM Jim Campbell provided a weather presentation on NWS operations and weather history to the docents and staff at the Brownsville Gladys Porter Zoo. Approximately 40 people were in attendance. WFO Brownsville also supported the Zoo's annual "Boo at the Zoo" event on Halloween, which draws thousands of parents and children.

Project Impact Community Awareness Day in Jefferson County, Alabama. Linn Park in the middle of downtown Birmingham was the site of Community Awareness Day in Jefferson County. Started under Project Impact, Community Awareness Day brings together a diverse group of agencies concerned with helping citizens prepare for disasters. MIC Ken Graham and WCM Brian Peters serve on the steering committee which has been planning and executing the event for four years. This year Birmingham staff members Faith Borden, Jason Wright and Dave Wilfing assisted with the NWS booth. Over 1,100 fourth and fifth grade students from across Jefferson County attended along with several hundred teachers and chaperones. The NWS display featured a hurricane toss which attracted a lot of attention after recent hurricane events.

Fall Severe Weather Awareness Day a Hit in North Alabama. WFO Huntsville MIC John Gordon and WCM Tim Troutman completed a series of media interviews and visited several radio stations to promote north Alabama's first annual fall severe weather awareness day. Due to the significant secondary severe weather season that generally occurs during the months of November and December across the Tennessee Valley, a supplementary "fall" severe weather awareness day was developed to reinforce the annual spring severe weather awareness campaign safety messages.

Safety Awareness Day at United Space Alliance. WFO Houston/Galveston WCM Gene Hafele staffed a booth at the annual United Space Alliance (USA) Safety Day. USA is the primary contractor to Johnson Space Center for support to the space shuttle program. Over 750 people visited and obtained information at the NWS booth. A "Turn Around Don't Drown" road blockade was displayed to attract attention to the booth. The road blockade was built and donated to the Houston/Galveston office by the city of Houston Public Works Department. Publications on thunderstorms and hurricanes were available along with pens with the WFO Website address printed on them.

Students Learn about the Weather. WFO Brownsville DAPM Jim Campbell and HMT Alfredo Vega gave a weather presentation to the entire science classes from the seventh and eighth grade at Eddie Lucio Middle School in Brownsville. Approximately 360 students attended the all day session, which elaborated on NWS operations and weather that affects the Rio Grande Valley.

Old Fashioned Festival and Severe Weather Safety Meet. WFO Birmingham was invited to participate in the Loachapoka Syrup Sopping Festival in Lee County in east-central Alabama on October 11. The festival has been held for several years and features as the main event turning raw sugar cane into finished syrup. This community event includes local arts and crafts, entertainment, a petting zoo, lots of great eating, and at least one informational display. That was the role assumed by the Birmingham office as WCM Brian Peters arrived at daybreak to set up a display with weather information. One of the highlights of the display was a 2-foot square laminated image of hurricane Isabel when she was a Category 5 storm. This item attracted much attention and resulted in a number of conversations. The festival drew over 10,000 people this year, more than a thousand of whom stopped by the NWS display.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATION

Tennessee WFOs Team up to Brief New TEMA Director. WFO Nashville MIC Derrel Martin and WCM Jerry Orchanian, Morristown MIC Jerry McDuffie and WCM Howard Waldron, and WFO Memphis MIC Jim Duke met with the new Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) director James Bassham and other TEMA officials. The team of Tennessee MICs familiarized the new TEMA director with NWS products and services provided to the public and local emergency managers. Bassham found the presentation to be very informative and looks forward to working with each NWS office.

EMWIN Workshop Draws Interest from Four States. WFO Birmingham WCM Brian Peters planned and carried out the fourth Alabama EMWIN Workshop on October 22. The workshop focuses on EMWIN and how to effectively use the software currently available. It attracted participants from Arkansas, Florida, Tennessee and Alabama. About half of the 30 participants were from Alabama, with a strong contingent from Tennessee thanks to promotion by Huntsville WCM Tim Troutman. A surprise visitor to the workshop was CWWD WCM Walt Zaleski who happened to be passing through the area while on vacation. A similar workshop was held on October 7 in Pensacola Beach with 32 participants mainly from the Florida Panhandle and south Alabama.

Puerto Rico EMs Get a Lesson about NWS Hydrological Products. WFO San Juan WCM Rafael Mojica and senior forecaster Andy Roche visited with emergency managers from the northwestern municipalities of Aguadilla and Aguada to discuss WFO hydrologic products. During the visit the NWS duo surveyed the Culebrinas River and other small stream, low-lying and flood prone areas. Based on the emergency managers' feedback, WFO San Juan has modified the areal extension of flash flood and flood warnings for that region of Puerto Rico. The emergency managers were also briefed on which WFO Internet products to monitor during flood events, how to interpret the USGS river level reports, and the upcoming AHPS Web page.

MEDIA/PUBLIC EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Instant Messaging a Hit with Media. Baron's Services (Huntsville, Alabama) held it's bi-annual training seminar for TV meteorologists from across the nation September 26-28. WFO Birmingham forecaster Darone Jones partnered with chief meteorologist David Neal of the Birmingham Fox affiliate in giving a presentation on Instant Messaging. The 20-minute presentation turned out to be an hour and 15 minute question and answer session where most of the 50 television meteorologists in attendance asked how they could start Instant Messaging with their local offices. Bob Baron, president of Baron's Services, gave a very positive public response to the Instant Messaging presentation, and offered some nice words of praise to the outreach efforts of WFOs Birmingham and Huntsville in respect to their media relations. Also attending were WFO Huntsville SOO Tom Bradshaw and senior forecaster Matt Zika. Darone stressed during the presentation that with Instant Messaging, the entire professional community can work together in "real-time" to save lives.

WFO El Paso - UTEP Explores Atmospheric Sciences Relationship. Members of the WFO El Paso area staff met with a group from the University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP) Department of Geology to discuss an emerging relationship based on UTEP's expanding emphasis in environmental science. UTEP's interest with the NWS stems from a NOAA grant recently awarded to their Department of Geology, and will necessitate a broad appreciation for, and understanding of, the way weather and climate affect environmental issues. WFO El Paso will serve as a resource to help develop an undergraduate curriculum in the fundamentals of weather as it relates to the non-technical (education majors) and technical (science and engineering) students. As time permits, the NWS staff may also provide facility tours, visiting instruction, and serve as subject matter experts on specific aspects of meteorology (hazardous weather, environmental response to airborne hazards, pollution, dispersion, etc.). UTEP intends to begin instruction in basic weather and climate during 2004.

Deaf Oklahomans to Receive Weather Alerts via Alphanumeric Pagers. Deaf and hearing-impaired Oklahoma residents will receive hazardous weather information directly from the NWS through pagers, cell phones and other devices as part of a new program called OK-WARN (Weather Alert Remote Notification). A federal grant will support a system to serve the deaf and hard-of-hearing community statewide, expanding a pilot program started in 2001. The NWS joined its partners - the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management, State of Oklahoma Rehabilitation Services and Weather Affirmation - to announce the program in a news conference on October 15. OK-WARN is believed to be the only program in the U.S. that directly relays NWS alerts through pagers to people who are hearing-impaired.

For more information regarding the program, go to <http://www.odcem.state.ok.us/okwarn.htm>.

WFO New Orleans Collaborates in Risk Analysis of Lake Pontchartrain. Staff from Solutient Inc. visited WFO New Orleans to gain a better understanding of how the NWS utilizes static models, such as SLOSH, to determine storm surge vulnerability for the southeast Louisiana coast and Lake Pontchartrain. Solutient Inc. was hired by local emergency management to perform a risk analysis for St. Tammany Parish. WFO New Orleans SOO Mike Koziara, explained the concept of Hurrevac software, provided an overview of the SLOSH model, and discussed how basin topography, barriers and bathymetry affected model output. Representatives from the company left the WFO with a better understanding how Lake Pontchartrain and coastal southeast Louisiana responded to tropical cyclone impacts.

WFO Hosts Media Workshop. WFO Melbourne hosted a weather workshop for Orlando area broadcast meteorologists. The weathercasters spent the day at the WFO learning about the latest forecast preparation processes from forecaster Matt Hirsch, the WFO's mesoscale weather modeling program from forecaster Pete Blottman, and a review of NWS radar techniques for warning operations from forecaster Scott Kelly. SCEP student Justin Mosely prepared certificates of recognition for each participant. The event reaffirmed the excellent one-to-one working relations among Orlando weathercasters and WFO Melbourne.

Puerto Rico Relies on Local WFO for Support. WFO San Juan WCM Rafael Mojica has partnered with Puerto Rico's Air Group, a multi-disciplinary task force to help evaluate and improve Puerto Rico's air quality monitoring system. The Air Group, which represents local and federal agencies, including universities, collaborate to ensure the most efficient placement and use of network air quality sensors. WFO San Juan provided significant expertise in the areas of local climate.

Climate Office Close to Reality in Puerto Rico. WFO San Juan has partnered with the Department of Natural Resources and local academia in an effort to establish a Climate Office for Puerto Rico. WFO San Juan MIC Israel Matos and hydrologist Eloy Colon met with representatives from those groups to conceptualize such an office under the umbrella of the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources. The group's efforts are supporting a bill that is being drafted for submission to local legislature.

NOAA WEATHER RADIO

Press this Button for NWR. WFO Lake Charles recently installed a NOAA "Push to Listen" Weather Radio post at the newly opened Calcasieu Point Landing facility (supported by a NOAA grant) at the Port of Lake Charles. This radio broadcasts for approximately four minutes, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. An example of how this new installation will provide weather information to the recreational boater community using this facility is at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lch/prep/outreach.htm>

HYDROLOGIC SERVICES BRANCH

WESTERN GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION INITIATIVE. WFO Albuquerque MIC Charlie Liles participated in the first meeting of the Western Governors Association initiative to develop a national drought information system. Charlie and approximately 40 other representatives from various agencies and occupations worked on developing a plan to better monitor and mitigate drought in the U.S. In June 2004, activities will culminate in a final document calling for the creation of a national drought monitoring and information system to be released by the WGA to the nation's governors in Albuquerque.

SOUTHERN REGION EXTENSION WATER QUALITY CONFERENCE. Charlie Liles also participated last month in the Southern Region Extension Water Quality Conference. Approximately 400 cooperative extension faculty from Southern State Land Grant universities across 13 states from Florida and the Carolinas westward to New Mexico congregated in Ruidoso for this three-day conference. Charlie spoke on drought basics, the difficulties of defining drought, and the relationships between impacts and a changing planet.

LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE. WFO Lake Charles WCM Roger Erickson and senior service hydrologist Montra Lockwood attended the October Local Emergency Planning Committee meeting for Hardin County, Texas. Montra took the opportunity to inform those attending about the new Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service (AHPS) Web page. Several emergency management officials liked the new product, and appreciate having information on river levels and potential flooding at their fingertips.

PEARL RIVER COORDINATION MEETING. WFO Jackson hosted a meeting on September 23 to bring together all agencies with water resource activities in the Pearl River Basin to discuss their activities, programs and flood events from the 2003 winter and spring flood season. Twenty-three representatives from four agencies participated, including: LMRFC, WFO Jackson, Pearl River Valley Water Supply District (PRVWSD), U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Vicksburg District (USACE MVK) and Mississippi Valley Division, U. S. Geological Survey Mississippi District (USGS), and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).

Each of the agencies reported on their activities within the Pearl River Basin. An agreement was reached to keep the current coordination conference call criterion. The conference call between the USGS, USACE MVK, LMRFC, WFO Jackson, and PRVWSD will be initiated by the WFO Jackson when inflows into or discharges out of Ross Barnett Reservoir exceed 30,000 cfs. It was agreed that a second conference call will be initiated after the coordination call to brief area emergency managers and MEMA. Several action items were also agreed to, such as data sharing, future meetings on gauge funding, and sharing of forecasting tools.

ONGOING DAM SAFETY SUPPORT. WFO Albuquerque senior service hydrologist Ed Polasko has traveled from Native American pueblos through parts of the Navajo Nation and across northern New Mexico in support of Safety of Dams programs this summer and fall. Since the end of June, Ed has assisted in the design of tabletop and functional exercises to evaluate Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) for USBR (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation), the Navajo Nation, and Santa Clara Pueblo. The exercises bring together federal, tribal, state, and local emergency management and other assisting agencies to fine tune EAPs for specific high hazard dams in New Mexico. The four tabletop exercises brought all participants together in the same room (a made-to-order captive audience for his in-depth weather briefings), while the functional exercise on the Santa Clara Pueblo had players "in place" throughout the canyons and venues where people would normally be, requiring the assistance of HAM radio organizations for reliable communications. Each high hazard dam's EAP will list WFO Albuquerque phone numbers for Stage 2 and 3 situations, and the WFO Albuquerque Website address for monitoring forecasts as well as real-time weather radar, satellite, and other observations. The Pueblo of Zuni is also providing WFO Albuquerque with dial-up access to their Safety of Dams real-time rain gauge network in the Zuni Basin on the western fringes of the Albuquerque WSR-88D.

Oh yes, all this "water work" in the midst of the driest July statewide on record, while the just concluded 2003 water year averaged only 78 percent of normal across New Mexico. Given his recent experiences, Ed's spelling has also benefitted due to his exposure to the Hajiilee, Tschicoma, and Asaayi dams in northern New Mexico.

WFO TALLAHASSEE HOSTS INTERNATIONAL VISITORS. Last month WFO Tallahassee hosted two visitors from Vietnam who are upgrading their operational river forecast system. WFO staff demonstrated obtaining Doppler discharge measurements at Dowling Park on the Suwannee River, from aboard the USGS boat. After lunch, they visited Mission Springs, headwaters for Ichetucknee Springs. Later that afternoon Tom Mirti from the Suwannee River Water Management District gave a presentation on SRWMD operations. The next day the Vietnamese visitors were briefed on WFO operations by Joel Lanier. The visitors then provided a presentation on Vietnam's river forecast operations to Prof. Henry Fuelberg and research associate Harry Cooper from the FSU meteorology department. They will be visiting the Southeast RFC and also obtaining some training from the NWSTC while working on NWSRFS over the next few months.

SURVEY GRADE LEVEL TRAINING AT WFO TALLAHASSEE. On September 24-25 WFO Tallahassee hosted survey grade level training. The training included several hours in the classroom as well as field work and was conducted by Ronnie Taylor and Randy Wagner from the National Geodetic Survey. The training included techniques for calibrating the equipment which is required before taking measurements, as well as general equipment handling techniques. Class graduates included Jim Bolden, Alan Baker, Bob Duggan, Mike Vise, and Joel Lanier from WFO Tallahassee, and Parks Camp and Michael Mcallister from WFO Jacksonville.

WFO TALLAHASSEE DEVELOPS SPATIAL DATABASE ENGINE. WFO Tallahassee also hosted a meeting on September 25 to discuss how to set up a Spatial Database Engine (SDE) in Tallahassee, so that multiple government agencies can share and have direct access to a variety of GIS database datasets without having to download by Web page. David Stage and Steven Hodge from the Florida Resources and Environmental Analysis Center (FREAC), Jerry Wood, supervisor for the Mapping/GIS Section of the state of Florida Property Tax Administration, Charles Russel and George Beatty from the Florida Department of Revenue, Ronnie Taylor from the National Geodetic Survey (NGS), Harry Cooper, research associate from the FSU Department of Meteorology, and Joel Lanier, service hydrologist WFO Tallahassee attended. Additional meetings are planned and will include coordinating another GIS database workshop in Tallahassee in the near future.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH FOR GIRL SCOUT LEADERS. WFO New Orleans senior service hydrologist Patricia Brown visited the Girl Scouts U.S.A. campground near Independence, Louisiana to participate in the train-the-trainer workshop for Girl Scout leaders. This presentation was part of the Leaders Retreat, which lasted an entire weekend. Patricia's presentation, Girls do Math and Science!, was done in two parts. The first part emphasized how parents, teachers, and leaders might encourage girls to stay in a course of study that included mathematics and/or science. The second part emphasized meteorology and hydrology education using JETSTREAM.

LMRFC DEVELOPS SHARE. Eric Jones and Amanda Roberts, senior hydrologic forecasters at LMRFC, have made excellent progress on the development of Simulating Hydrologic Activities During Real-Time Events (SHARE). All scripts and procedures have been set up on the LX2 Linux computer on AWIPS to archive data on the RFC Archive (AX) computer via a mounted directory. An archive case file with seven days of data can be created with the necessary SHEF data, NWSRFS files, and XMRG and DPA data to do a simulation on the RFC Weather Event Simulator (WES). This archive case file can be ftp'd to the WES or placed on a CD/DVD and loaded on the WES. NWSRFS, MPE and all software to support RFC forecast operations have been loaded on the WES. The Informix database was rebuilt with a newer version of Informix, and the AWIPS text database and the WHFS database were established. Scripts will transfer the archive case file to the WES-DRT local drive. Multiple 7-day case archive files can be stored on the WES. Before the simulation starts, past data can be decoded to populate the WHFS database. The simulation can start anytime during the 7-day period when NWSRFS files were stored in the case archive file. Once the simulation is started, SHEF-coded products will be decoded, posted to WHFS, processed for Stage 3/MPE, and transferred to NWSRFS in simulated real-time. NWSRFS batch runs will be made based on the simulated cron. Hydrologic forecasters can run applications such as IFP, XNAV, XDAT, XSETS, MPE and other operational software.

The LMRFC has developed the initial draft of an Implementation Guide and User's Guide. These will be available for review along with the initial version of the software and procedures by the end of the month. This project is of interest to all RFCs and eventually to all WFOs. With additional effort, HydroView and Site-Specific can be simulated in SHARE.

HSD MEETING. HSB chief Ben Weiger attended a national HSD meeting the week of October 13. The meeting included discussions about Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Services and the new programs, planning, and budget system being implemented. Some of the highlights from the meeting include the following:

- A new WFO flood warning (site-specific/areal based) verification system will be implemented at the WFOs in FY05. A new draft implementation plan will soon be distributed to the regions for comment.
- Two new hydrology training courses will be developed in FY04 at COMET. One will focus on basic hydrologic ensembles and the other will be an advanced hydrologic science course. The courses will be available starting in FY05. Further information about these courses will be made available at a later date. Matt Kelsh, in collaboration with a new hydrologic science training program manager, an instructional designer, and several UCAR employees, will make up this new hydrologic training team at COMET.
- The Weather Channel (TWC) is developing a video on hydrology in collaboration with the NWS. The NWS will be able to use the video after a six-month copyright period. TWC plans to release the video in the spring of 2004.

- NWSH is contemplating some changes in the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals for flash flood warnings (FFW). This includes developing FFW lead time goals based on previous 4-year running averages of FFW lead times and introducing new FFW GPRA goals such as percent of warnings with positive lead time and number of flash flood events with a positive lead time.
- NCEP plans to conduct verification of the WFO QPF grids sometime in calendar 2004. The National Precipitation Verification Unit, physically located at the HPC, plans to conduct this verification. They currently compute RFC QPF verification statistics on a monthly basis.

Further information about the NPVU is located at the following URL:

<http://www/hpc.ncep.noaa.gov/npvu>



TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN UPDATES. Last month Southern Region Hydrology program manager Kandis Boyd and WFO San Angelo WCM Hector Guerrero gave Turn Around Don't Drown™ presentations to delegates at the National Weather Association Annual Meeting in Jacksonville and at the National Hydrologic Warning Council's session on Flood Warning Systems, Technologies and Preparedness in Dallas. The TADD campaign is a public educational awareness effort designed to help reduce the number of flood-related deaths. The picture above is courtesy of the Moore County (Oklahoma) emergency manager.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

NASA/NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COLLABORATION. NASA researchers at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville have been collaborating with NWS forecasters at Huntsville and other WFOs on ways of improving short-term forecasts and warnings. Efforts have largely focused on integration of NASA lightning, satellite and modeling products into WFO operations. To that end the NASA and WFO Huntsville staff have visited nearby WFOs to provide familiarization and training on the NASA datastream. Following up on a similar visit to WFO Birmingham a couple of months ago, last month WFO Huntsville ITO Jason Burks worked with the WFO Nashville ITO Mike Davis and ESA Steve Clark to complete the NASA ingest at the Nashville office. Jason and WFO Huntsville senior forecaster Chris Darden, who is also the WFO's NASA liaison, along with three NASA researchers then visited the WFO. Each of the NASA visitors gave a short presentation to the WFO Nashville staff on various aspects of the new data sets and their applicability to NWS forecast operations, followed by a short live-data demonstration in the WFO's operations area.

To reach a wider audience, the Huntsville/NASA collaborative team hopes to conduct "virtual road shows" utilizing Visitview teletraining. The NASA datasets have already proven useful for short-term forecasting and warning operations at WFOs Huntsville and Birmingham, and the goal is to gain more experience by sharing this unique resource with a wider audience within the NWS operational community.

S&T COMMITTEE MEETS AT SRH. On October 29-30 the Southern Region hosted a meeting of the NWS corporate board subcommittee on Science and Technology. OS&T director Jack Hayes chairs the subcommittee, which includes the SR director and several other board members. The agenda included reviews and status briefings on several issues, including COMET and CSTAR support for collaborative research, WWA and next-generation AWIPS/IFPS warning tools, distributed modeling, downscaling model output for IFPS initialization, and a report on the Internet Mapping Services pilot project conducted this hurricane season. Also, issues assigned to or developed by the SOO IFPS Science Steering Team (ISST), which was initiated by the S&T subcommittee last spring, came in for considerable discussion. That team, headed by WFO Seattle SOO Brad Colman, will be an integral partner in the activities of the S&T subcommittee. Andy Patrick (WFO Corpus Christi) is the current SR representative on the team.

MEDIA TRAINING AT MOBILE. Last month WFO Mobile hosted a day-long Crisis/Media Response Seminar at the Airport Clarion Hotel. The guest speaker was internationally recognized media expert Richard Brundage from the Center for Advanced Media Studies. His specialty is improving techniques for providing interviews during times of crisis. Mr. Brundage provides similar training as part of the NWSTC management classes. In fact, during the past year he has also provided local seminars at SR NWS offices in Huntsville, Birmingham and Melbourne. In all nearly 30 participants were involved in the Mobile session, including ten from the WFO, along with local emergency managers, city of Mobile officials, U.S. Coast Guard, Mobile County Public School System and Gulf Power. The seminar was very well received and Mr. Brundage noted it included an outstanding mix of local community leaders. He added that the benefits of receiving training alongside those with whom you interact in a crisis situation can provide lasting benefits.

JSU INTERACTIONS. On October 7, WFO Jackson MIC Alan Gerard and SOO Jeff Craven met with members of the Jackson State University meteorology program to discuss plans for the next year of PDAS-RAP. “Promoting Diversity in Atmospheric Science through Research, Application, and in Partnership with the NWS” is a NOAA-sponsored collaborative program, the purpose of which is well described by the name. Currently, four JSU students are in the program. Activities include shadowing forecasters, issuing practice forecasts, launching upper air balloons, and completing comprehensive research projects in conjunction with forecasters to enhance knowledge of local climatology. In addition, the WFO hosts a SCEPT student from the Storm Prediction Center. All five students gave oral or poster presentations of their work at the recent NWA annual meeting in Jacksonville. In further support of the program WFO Jackson has created a one-unit course in operational/professional meteorology that is being taught this fall for 15 JSU students. Jeff Craven, the primary adjunct meteorology instructor, is assisted by the WCM Jim Butch, senior forecaster Eric Carpenter, and senior service hydrologist Marty Pope in providing the instruction.

DISTANCE LEARNING AVIATION COURSE OPEN TO ALL. The Distance learning Aviation Course (DLAC1) course (<http://meted.ucar.edu/dlac/website/index.htm>) is officially open to all NWS forecasters. Feedback from the approximately 30 students who have already completed the course has been extremely positive. Each participant must register using the online form at: <http://meted.ucar.edu/dlac/website/form2.htm>.

Each participant must also register for each of three teletraining sessions. The first session is selected on the registration form. Participants can sign up for the second and third sessions using the calendar at: <http://meted.ucar.edu/dlac/website/nws.htm#cal>. In order to not overwhelm the COMET capabilities, if more than one forecaster from a particular office plans to take the course, COMET asks that they try to schedule their teletraining sessions at the same time. Each session is limited to about 15 offices, but more than 15 individuals per session can be accommodated if several are at the same office.

Download information for each teletraining presentation is sent to the participants three to five days before each session. The COMET is using the VISITView software for the teletraining, but the materials are being distributed as ZIP files rather than self-extracting executables. Since the presentations are continually being updated, participants should ensure that they have the most recent version (as specified in the e-mail with the download instructions).

NWS/COMET OUTREACH PROGRAM RFP. The Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education and Training (COMET) has announced its 2004 Outreach Program Request for Proposals (RFP) for Cooperative Projects. Draft proposals should be coordinated with SSD no later than January, and final versions must be submitted to the COMET Outreach Program by March 15, 2004. More information about submission requirements can be found online at: <http://www.comet.ucar.edu/outreach/coop.htm>.

EL NIÑO WEBCAST AVAILABLE. The COMET Program has released a new Webcast entitled: "The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Cycle" by Dr. Vernon Kousky. This presentation was given as part of the ongoing Climate Variability workshops that are part of the NWS Climate Professional Development Series. This version of the presentation has enhanced graphics and has been modified to include an introduction to the newly established "Operational Niño Index" (ONI). The Webcast is 30 minutes long and is available at:
<http://meted.ucar.edu/climate/enso/>.

The Webcast requires the Macromedia Flash 6.0 player to provide the audio and accompanying animation sequences. The most recent versions of both Internet Explorer and Netscape will have the Flash 6.0 player plug-in installed. However, if you do need to install the Flash 6.0 player, follow the directions in the Tech Notes. For further information on this Webcast, please contact: Pat Parrish, Managing Instructional Designer: pparrish@comet.ucar.edu, or Wendy Schreiber-Abshire, Meteorologist: abshire@ucar.edu. For Technical Support for the Webcast contact: support@comet.ucar.edu.

The COMET Program welcomes any comments you may have regarding the content, instructional approach, or use of these expert lecture Webcasts.

INPUT REQUESTED FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF NCEP PRODUCT SUITE. The Annual Review of the NCEP Operational Forecast Systems will be held on December 9 and 10. As your representative to that review, Bernard Meisner (SSD) is soliciting the input from SR field offices concerning the NCEP operational forecast modeling systems. He recently sent a questionnaire to all the field offices, asking that you respond no later than Friday, November 28, so he will have time to include your responses in the presentation he will give. (Last year's presentations are available at: <http://www.emc.ncep.noaa.gov/NCEPreview2002/index.htm>).

In particular, Bernard is interested in your opinions of each NCEP model's performance during the past year, including any material (text, imagery, etc.) from any particular case when the models' performance was especially useful (or not) to your office. Bernard is also soliciting any comments or requests your office might have concerning new or existing model guidance products. Note, however, that the NCEP is not directly responsible for what is placed on the AWIPS Satellite Broadcast Network. Their primary responsibility is "production" and we work closely with them and the WSH staff to help ensure "delivery."

SOUTHEAST WINTER WEATHER OPERATIONS MEETING. We're approaching the first winter weather season in which the Interactive Forecast Preparation System (IFPS) will play a dominant role in local forecast operations. WFO Huntsville will be hosting a Southeast Winter Weather Operations Meeting December 2-3 at the National Space Science Technology Center building where the WFO is located. They have invited SOOs, IFPS focal points, winter weather focal points, and other interested representatives from all WFOs in the Southeast U.S. to attend. Meeting participants will discuss winter forecasting methodologies in the context of IFPS and AWIPS.

This meeting format is planned to be a hybrid between the classical winter weather workshop (where emphasis is placed on case studies of forecast technique), and an IFPS methodology workshop (where the focus is isolated on the IFPS process). There will be sufficient time in the agenda to allow for a thoughtful discussion of the issues surrounding winter weather forecasting in the dawn of the IFPS era. Some of the topics they would like to cover (not necessarily in order of importance) include:

- 1) Collaboration philosophies prior/during winter precipitation events;
- 2) Use of various IFPS and AWIPS tools pertaining to winter weather;
- 3) Any new (or existing, but overlooked) forecast techniques that show promise for improving our ability to predict precipitation type or assessing reliability of model output;
- 4) New techniques for conveying hazardous winter information to the public (IFPS-generated graphics, text products, instant messaging, etc.), and
- 5) Philosophies behind winter weather criteria.

Interested individuals should contact Tom Bradshaw (SOO, WFO Huntsville) for more details.

WEATHER EVENT SIMULATOR VERSION 1.3. Version 1.3 of the Weather Event Simulator (WES) software was shipped to all sites in late October. This version includes: 1) AWIPS Open Build 2 functionality, and 2) an easy to use scripting language to support the appearance of non-AWIPS (e.g. spotter reports, requests for information, supplemental data, etc.) data during a simulation.

With the Informix-free version of WES, you can now install this version on multiple machines. Non-government collaborators can also request WES1.3 cost-free, although the current WES support structure is not available to those outside the NWS. However, this does not prevent you from collaborating with groups outside the NWS. (If you want to share data outside the NWS you will need to remove the lightning data due to the proprietary nature of those data.)

The next version of the WES software, to be released in December-January, will include support for the Flash Flood Monitoring Program.

SEMI-ANNUAL SEASON CHANGE OF MOS EQUATIONS. The Model Output Statistics (MOS) season officially changed on October 1 for most elements. You may have seen some changes in the availability of temperature guidance for some sites which did not report reliably during our cool season development sample. Thunderstorm and severe thunderstorm guidance equations were changed on October 16. For a list of the seasonal breakdown of the MOS equations, see <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/tdl/synop/faq.htm#eqns>.

TRAINING FOR RADAR PRODUCTS GENERATOR SOFTWARE BUILD 4. The Warning Decision Training Branch (WDTB) has prepared training materials to provide operational training support for Radar Products Generator (RPG) Build 4. Unlike the tri-agency funded Radar Operations Center, the WDTB is funded by a single agency, the NWS. Thus the WDTB training materials are designed to support the NWS mission. For example, the radar product display interface that is used in WDTB's materials is the AWIPS workstation. However, there are elements of the WDTB's RPG Build 4 training that are relevant for users from all three agencies. For example, changes to the windows within the RPG Human Computer Interface (HCI) that affect operations would likely be of interest.

The operationally relevant features of RPG Build 4 are:

1. Mesocyclone Rapid Update Algorithm*
2. Changes to the RPG Product Generation Table
3. Enhanced Echo Tops*
4. The removal of several legacy products, with impacts to
 - a. Selectable Product Parameters window
 - b. Product alert pairing choices
5. Precipitation Processing System corrections
 - a. Truncation error correction
 - b. Changes to allow for faster update rates of new VCPs

*AWIPS must have Operational Build Two (OB2) or later to display these products.

The WDTB invites users of WSR-88D data from all three agencies to access the RPG Build 4 materials from the WDTB Web site at: <http://www.wdtb.noaa.gov/modules/RPGIndex.html>. This page can be used to reference the training materials for each RPG Build, and the RPG Build 4 materials can be accessed from the RPG 4.0 link.

The type of training materials available will vary from build to build and all users may download materials that are of interest. For example, documents are available in PDF format for download. Presentations, some with recorded voice and annotations, may be downloaded for review and playback. If teletraining sessions are offered, which utilize the WDTB instructor staff, enrollment for these sessions is limited to NWS employees. Otherwise, access to downloadable materials is unrestricted.

In the case of RPG Build 4, additional copies of the materials can be downloaded, as well as a recorded VISITView teletraining session, which can be played at your convenience. The VISITView session, `rpgbuild4play.exe`, must be downloaded, stored and expanded. It is then ready for playback. The session has both audio and annotations accompanying each slide in the presentation. There are two options for playback:

1. The “visitplay.bat” file initiates a playback mode where each slide is selected by the student.
2. The “visitauto.bat” file initiates a playback mode that is continuous.

In continuous playback, this training session will take about 30 minutes. When viewed by a group with discussion between slides, this session would still likely take less than one hour. We encourage everyone to participate, whether individually or in groups.

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

SYSTEMS INTEGRATION BRANCH

AWIPS. Operational Build 2 has been installed at all but one Southern Region site this month.

MR OB2.1. MR OB2.1 has been installed at all but four offices. MR OB2.2 should be made available for national installation on November 12. Some of the more important fixes accompanying this maintenance release include:

1. HWR: Extraneous space character in product causes errors for the HWR broadcast.
2. Eta 12 surface and BL through 84 hrs.
3. GFS additional levels at 80km Sfc, BL (0-30,30-60,60-90,90-120, 120-150, 150-180) 1000-500 x 25 mb, 500-100 x 50 mb (Z, T, u, v, RH) through 168 hrs.
4. WWA: Editable xmit text widget and no more popup editors and other WWA fixes.
5. LocalCitiesInfo.txt file not being read. LSR: practice WMO headers incorrect. Summary vs. Correction.
6. WFOA: Discontinuities in GOES satellite imagery loops.
7. LDAD not ingesting incoming products.
8. HWR: NWR product faults when station substitution occurs for any station.
9. IFPS forecast verification data is not getting into the AWIPS verification matrix.
10. RiverPro crashes on Linux, under certain product generation instructions.
11. ECMF grids are failing to decode.
12. SSH/SSL: CERT advisory CA-2003-26 compliance.
13. Update acq_pattern for TPC hurricane model 54 hr and 66 hr only.
14. Problem displaying All Tilts when using Previous Run option.

OB3 STATUS. The Alpha Build will be installed at Southern Region Headquarters on November 19. A prerequisite for OB3 is that the offices have the new Linux workstations installed which will occur at SRH on the 13th of the month. OB3 is on schedule for deployment in late February.

LINUX WORKSTATION STATUS. Installation scheduling has begun for the new Linux workstations in anticipation of approval to deploy nationally. November scheduling has already been completed and additional scheduling will be done on a monthly basis.

Upgrades to, or replacement of, LX1 and LX2 will need to be done on the scheduled date. The remaining compliment of workstations at your office can be replaced as time allows. More information will be coming out as soon as we progress into national deployment.

WSR-88D. ORPG Build 4 software is progressing nicely in the region. As of the end of October, approximately half of the NWS radars had been upgraded to the new build.

LEVEL II PROJECT STATUS. The NWS Level II project is in full swing with circuits being ordered and installed and new servers will be installed at SRH and initial WFOs. A successful test was completed in Central Region with the new regional server and WFO server from WFO Pleasant Hill sending Level II data to NCDC's central collection site. A similar test will be conducted at Southern Region Headquarters and WFO Fort Worth in November. All NWS radars should be sending Level II data to the NCDC central server around the beginning of the new year along with a few DOD sites.

MIGFA PROJECT IS UNDERWAY. The Machine Intelligent Gust Front Algorithm (MIGFA), developed by MIT Lincoln Labs, is being tested using WSR-88D Level II data from San Antonio and Albuquerque. The testing is being done to evaluate the performance of MIGFA in dryer climates as well as for potential future inclusion in the WSR-88D baseline.

NWR WEATHER RADIO EXPANSION CONTINUES. October kicked off the new fiscal year in grand style in the NWR arena in Southern Region. Two new sites, Oktaha, Oklahoma and Russell Hill, Tennessee went on the air this month. The Oktaha site, which serves the Muskogee and vicinity listening area, receives its audio from WFO Tulsa. The Russell Hill site serves the north-central part of Tennessee and has its audio originating from WFO Nashville.

NEW ORLEANS NWR IS TO RECEIVE MUCH NEEDED EMERGENCY POWER. Last month SRH staff members, including NWR program manager Mike Mach and regional systems specialist Joe Villescaz, visited with management personnel from the Marriott Hotel in New Orleans. The purpose of the visit was to see if an agreement between the two parties could be reached so that emergency power could be provided to the NWR equipment which is currently located atop the Marriott Hotel. The meeting was successful and an agreement was reached to procure emergency power to a system that provides NWR audio to an area that is prone to hurricanes and subsequent flooding.

UPPER AIR. There is good news. QC at NRC has inspected eight out of ten reference generators received for the ART-2 and they are now in the supply system. Two sites in Southern Region, WFOs Shreveport and Brownsville, missed flights due to equipment failure this month.

ASOS. The new single CPU with ver. 2.7B-6 software and dewpoint sensor is currently being installed at Clines Corner, New Mexico; Guymon, Oklahoma; Mount Ida, Arkansas and Oak Ridge, Tennessee. We are continuing to press ahead with the AWAPG installation. The Key West location may be a concern because installing the wind shield may require drilling into coral for anchoring.

IT SECURITY. Much is taking place in the IT security program. We have started the new NOAA certification and accreditation process. Working with the NWS OCIO and, based on work done by WFO Austin/San Antonio ITO Mark Oliver, we have developed a standardized template for an IT security manual for each office. We will soon be sending out templates and documents to fill this manual. All offices will get a Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) document to complete. Due to the complexity of the questions we will be holding teleconferences to discuss the terminology and go over the document. This will become one of many items that will need to be kept in the local office IT security manual.

We have received the template for the IT contingency plans which Gary Petroski is working to tailor to Southern Region offices. He will then send them to the field offices for completion. Several other documents will follow, including risk assessment templates, rules of behavior templates and the new IT security plans.

We recently received the licensing information from NOAA to distribute the Harris STAT scanner software. This will be our primary tool for conducting vulnerability testing and patch management on our LANs. We are waiting on Web-based training for the product and the pre-developed configuration file before moving forward with any scans.

We will be working with the NOAA CIRT to see how they are doing Network Intrusion Detection (NIDS) monitoring and what hardware/software they are using. We will be setting up a similar system at SRH to monitor our WAN, and to determine the use of NIDS in network monitoring and logging.

OBSERVATIONS AND FACILITIES BRANCH

GALVESTON COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT FACILITY. A contract has been awarded for the construction of the Galveston County Emergency Management Facility. The new building will support joint operations with the Houston/Galveston WFO and Galveston County Office of Emergency Management. A ground breaking ceremony is scheduled for November 21 at 3:00 p.m. Construction is expected to last 12-13 months with a completion date of January-February 2005. Relocation to the new facility should begin in March 2005.

NORMAN FUEL TANK TEST FAILURE. The underground storage tank (UST) at WFO Norman failed the state corrosion test for sacrificial anodes and will be modified by the building owner at no cost to the NWS. WFO Norman is a leased facility and the building owner is responsible for maintenance on the UST. The only other UST is at WFO/RFC Tulsa, which is also a leased facility. All previous NWS-owned USTs have been removed or transferred to local government ownership.

NWR FUEL TANK REGISTRATIONS. Some fuel tanks for the NWR generators may require NEPA permits. An inventory for all Southern Region NWR sites with generators will be prepared and reviewed for permit requirements, and applications will be made where necessary.

WASTEWATER PERMIT RECEIVED FOR WFO MIAMI/NHC. Miami-Dade County Environmental Resources Management issued the annual permit for the WFO/NHC wastewater lift station after receiving our application with last year's questionnaire and sewage meter readings.

NOAA-REQUIRED SAFETY TRAINING IN SOUTHERN REGION. Four Southern Region employees were recently trained as STAR trainers by NOAA safety director Tom Altvater. These new STAR trainers will now go back to the field and train the safety focal points from each SR office in their respective geographic areas. All STAR training in SR is expected to be complete before January 1, 2004. The DuPont Safety Training for senior managers was completed by November 5.

HAZARD PAY FOR HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL WORK. At the request of SR FETs, who perform testing of UPS batteries at their respective WFOs and RDAs with exposures up to 480V, a query was made to MASC-HR regarding the status of hazard pay while doing this work. According to MASC Human Resources, hazard pay is specifically defined by federal regulations and as yet does not apply to any high voltage work.

NOAATECH 2004. Last month John Duxbury, chief of the Observations and Facilities Branch, demonstrated the new Interactive Voice-Remote Observation Collection System (IV-ROCS) at the NOAATECH 2004 Conference. The demonstration followed a short presentation on the history of NWS automated collection systems and the design characteristics of the new IV-ROCS.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT DIVISION

DIVERSITY/EEO AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

WFO Shreveport DAPM Marion Kuykendall and meteorologist Jason Hansford provided an office tour and interview and were filmed by Bossier City Community College as they described operations of an NWS office. Included were a Doppler radar, AWIPS, hydrology and upper air demonstrations.

WFO San Juan WCM Rafael Mojica visited the Fort Buchanan Antilles High School to talk to 40 eleventh grade students in the earth science class about meteorology as a career. The students had completed their units on weather topics and practiced being a meteorologist in front of the camera.

WFO San Juan HMT Jesus Figueroa visited the University of Puerto Rico Elementary School and lectured 25 students and teachers on weather forecasting and the science of meteorology.

WFO San Juan staff conducted three office tours for 65 elementary school students from Puerto Rico's public school system.

WFO Tallahassee EEO/Outreach program remained active during October. In commemoration of National Disability Awareness Month, senior forecaster Ron Block lectured on weather safety, focusing on handicapped seniors at two senior citizens facilities in the Tallahassee area. At a workshop for state employees literature was dispensed on careers in meteorology focusing on opportunities for the physically challenged. Ron discussed careers in hydrology and meteorology with a focus on minorities at the FSU, African Students Association's "Celebrating Africa" festival. He also participated in helping several boy scout troops earn their weather merit badges and served as a career day speaker at an area middle school.

WFO Brownsville DAPM Jim Campbell gave a presentation for the gifted and talented group of students at Garcia Middle School in Brownsville. There were about 30 students and two teachers in attendance. Jim made a presentation elaborating on NWS operations and weather that affects the Rio Grande Valley.

WFO Brownsville DAPM Jim Campbell and HMT Alfredo Vega gave a weather presentation to the entire fifth grade at Derry Elementary School in Port Isabel after one of the teachers found a radiosonde in her back yard. Ironically, Mr. Vega had done the release three days earlier. The presentation elaborated on National Weather Service operations and weather that affects the Rio Grande Valley.

WFO Brownsville senior forecaster Matt Lorentson and HMT Tony Abbott gave a tour to approximately 40 students from Faith Christian Academy in Brownsville. The students were in the third through fifth grades and were accompanied by teachers and parents. There were approximately 50 people total. The attendees were split up in two groups and given a slide show regarding NWS operations, a weather briefing in the operations area, and a weather balloon demonstration.

WFO Brownsville DAPM Jim Campbell and HMT Alfredo Vega gave a weather presentation to the seventh and eighth grade science classes at Eddie Lucio Middle School in Brownsville. There were approximately 360 students who attended the all-day session, which elaborated on National Weather Service operations and weather that affects the Rio Gande Valley.

WFO Austin/San Antonio WCM Larry Eblen provided an interview on recent and expected weather to bilingual radio station KHER in Crystal City, Texas. Senior service hydrologist Nezette Rydell provided an office tour to Texas State University student Sandra Thomas and discussed the possibility of a summer aid position for Sandra at the office.

WFO Austin/San Antonio WCM Larry Eblen presented numerous Skywarn Spotter Program talks to various groups, including the Texas Conference of Municipal Employees, Regional Amateur Radio Summerfest in Austin, medical planners and responders from the greater San Antonio area, Lake Travis School District near Austin, Uvalde County spotters and firefighters, and approximately 60 Department of Public Safety communicators from across Texas.

WFO Austin/San Antonio WCM Larry Eblen provided a 2-hour weather safety talk to students and staff from the Texas School for the Blind. Around 70% of the audience had some sight disability and over half of those were completely blind.

SOUTHERN REGION WORKFORCE TRANSACTIONS			
<u>OCTOBER 1 - 31, 2003</u>			
<u>Southern Region Losses</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>From (Office)</u>	<u>Action/Transfer</u>	<u>From Title/Grade</u>
Paul D. Rogers	WFO BRO	Transfer to WR	El Tech, GS-11

<u>Southern Region Gains</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>To (Office)</u>	<u>Action/Transfer</u>	<u>To Title/Grade</u>
Matthew Kramar	WFO JAN	New Hire	Meteorologist, GS-7
Melody M. Jacobs	WFO TBW	New Hire	ASA, GS-7

<u>Within Region Transfers/Actions</u>			
<u>Name</u>	<u>To (Office)</u>	<u>Action/Transfer</u>	<u>To Title/Grade</u>
Cynthia Abelman	FAA OKC	Promotion from FWR	MIC, GS-14
Edward Tirado	WFO SJU	Reassign from SJU	ITO, GS-12
Brad Diehl	WFO SJU	Promotion from SJU	Meteorologist, GS-13