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NWS Focus

February 24, 2009

Television meteorologist Veronica Johnson (center) with NBC-4 TV in Washington, DC, addressed NOAA Silver Spring, MD, employees on February 11 on the importance of inspiring young people's interests in environmental or science-related careers. Pictured with Johnson are Vickie Nadolski, National Weather Service Deputy Director on left, and Chris Vaccaro, of NOAA NWS Public Affairs on right. The presentation was a part of NOAA's Heritage Week and Black History Month celebrations. Click to hear Nadolski present Johnson with a NOAA Weather Radio receiver, and to hear an excerpt from Johnson's remarks.

From Jack Hayes

NOAA's Deputy Under Secretary Mary Glackin announced in her February 2 all-hands e-mail the appointment of Tom Karl as the Director of all of NOAA's climate services and Chet Koblinsky as Deputy Director.

Understandably, many of you are wondering what operational impact NOAA's increased focus on climate services will have on the National Weather Service.

So far, the answer is "no impact." As Mary said, "NOAA's climate services organizational framework will focus on aligning and harmonizing internal climate efforts, understanding and responding to service demands, and improving understanding of climate change while establishing leadership positions for national and international engagement." At this time, while options are still being explored, no realignment of offices or people will take place.

Also, keep in mind that NOAA is waiting for the confirmation of a new Administrator. Things may change once the new Administrator is on board. In the meantime, be assured that the National Weather Service's interests are well represented on NOAA's Climate Services Development Team.

As I get more information, I will share it with you.

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Deirdre Jones: Center Director Oversees AWIPS II Architecture

As Director of the Systems Engineering Center (SEC) at the National Weather Service (NWS) Headquarters' Office of Science and Technology (OST), **Deirdre Jones** is spearheading the design and production of AWIPS II, which will soon be the foundation for the delivery of more effective and accurate weather information.

Deirdre Jones is Director of the NWS Systems Engineering Center. Her office is leading the design and production of AWIPS II

Jones is making sure that all the objectives for migration from AWIPS to AWIPS II are met. AWIPS II is a huge undertaking, and is said to be "a significant step forward for NWS."

According to Jones, "Our goal is to replicate the look and feel of the legacy AWIPS software. Users won't feel much of a difference; however, internally the system will operate differently." The hardware will not look any different. The difference will be in the "guts" beneath.

Field Notes:

Daniel Nietfeld is the Science and Operations Officer in WFO Omaha-Valley, NE, one of the Operational Test and Evaluation sites for AWIPS II. He's been working closely with the Raytheon programmers and test engineers.

While watching his office's Service

Early testers seem to like the screen refresh using tiling as well as graphic rendering with video card capability (see **Field Notes** sidebar). The system also has the potential to zoom from global to state scale in a snap.

Asked why there was a need to alter the software

Hydrologist test Hydroview in AWIPS II, he was extremely impressed with how the new system zoomed with just rolling the scroll wheel on the mouse.

"Keep in mind that for several years the user had to go through a series of mouse clicks and cursor placements to perform a basic zoom function, and now the functionality is performed with a quick and simple mouse wheel scroll," said Niefeld. "To see our operator's face light up was edification that I did not expect, nor did the test engineer!"

architecture of AWIPS, Jones explained that the "NWS Corporate Board agreed with a checkpoint analysis completed by the OST that showed the software for AWIPS was in need of attention."

As Center Director, Jones was closest to AWIPS' problems during the OST analysis. "I felt like we were in damage control mode all the time. We couldn't anticipate the impact of one little change to the software to the overall software or system," said Jones

As a quality assurance specialist, Jones is always looking at defect statistics. According to Jones, "the stats were never good enough. I'm hoping with the AWIPS migration, we have a better handle on the interdependencies within the system and can do a better job of maintaining the software."

Jones grew up in Bradbury Heights, MD, and had an early interest in engineering.

"My Mom still shakes her head when she talks about how I was always curiously fingering and poking electronic and other mechanical items as I tried to figure out how they worked. The next time she looked, the item would be in multiple pieces and I would be struggling to put it back together again," said Jones. "When we went to visit relatives or friends, she would tell me, 'Don't touch anything when we go in there!'"

Jones took a few detours on her way to her current position. After graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in Troy, NY, with a degree in Electrical Engineering, she worked for Vitro Corporation in Silver Spring, MD. At Vitro, she worked on the Ground Launched Cruise Missile Program. From there she transferred to Oklahoma City to support Vitro's contract with Tinker AFB.

It was while in Oklahoma that Jones learned about the NWS Operational Support Facility which provides maintenance support for the Nation's Next Generation Weather Radar (NEXRAD). After working for Frontier Engineering for one year in Quality Assurance (QA), she joined the NWS Radar Operations Center in Norman, OK, in 1992. She graduated from the Senior Executive Service Candidate Program in 2000. In January 2001, she became SEC Director.

At her 20th high school reunion, one of Jones' friends said, "You always wanted to be an engineer and now you are, Wow!"

It is as an engineer that Jones is able to ensure that AWIPS II meets its objective to deliver improved weather information.

"I am proud of the work our staff and contractors are doing to make AWIPS II a reality," said Jones

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Buffalo Bills are first StormReady® Supporter NFL Team

The Buffalo Bills have become the first National Football League (NFL) team to become a StormReady® Supporter. With this designation the Bills are better prepared for severe weather and to make fans and spectators at Ralph Wilson Stadium aware of such events.

Judith Levan, Warning Coordination Meteorologist of the National Weather Service Buffalo Weather Forecast Office (WFO), worked with the Bills organization to meet rigorous StormReady® guidelines.

This included developing severe weather safety plans, actively promoting severe weather safety through awareness activities, and conducting safety training.

"The StormReady® Supporter program was designed to help non-government organizations improve communications and safety skills needed to protect lives while strengthening partnerships with NOAA's NWS and local emergency management," said **Mickey Brown**, Deputy Director of NWS Eastern Region. "The Buffalo Bills really scored a touchdown by being the first National Football League team in the country to be a StormReady® Supporter and creating a safer environment for all Buffalo Bill fans."

At a recognition ceremony at Ralph Wilson Stadium on January 13, Joe Frandina, Vice President of Stadium Pperations for the Bills, said "The Buffalo Bills are honored to be the first NFL team to achieve the StormReady® Supporter status. We feel this is another important step in making our stadium as safe as possible for our fans."

Weather Service personnel get a tour of Ralph Wilson Stadium. From left: Thomas Niziol, Meteorologist in Charge, WFO Buffalo; Bob Shatz, Assistant Director of Stadium Operations; and Mickey Brown, Deputy Director, NWS Eastern Region.

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Hawaii Weather Forecasts to Help Restore Island Ecosystem

The Honolulu Forecast Office provided critical 7-day spot forecasts in support of a rodent eradication operation on Lehua Island, Hawaii. Lehua is a small uninhabited island next to Niihau and about 20 miles west of Kauai and serves as a State Seabird Sanctuary.

The sanctuary provides habitat for 16 species of seabirds, as well as endangered Hawaiian monk seals, native coastal plants, and insects. The island's native species are threatened by rats that are eating bird eggs, native plant life, insects, and even intertidal organisms like crabs and limpets. The spot forecasts aided the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the aerial eradication project whereby poison pellets are dropped by helicopter into rat territories.

"The rats are voracious predators and are well adapted to survive," said Chris Swenson, coordinator of the Offshore Island Restoration Committee. "Even if one female rat is left, the island can be repopulated in short order. The weather forecasts play a vital role in scheduling operations."

The forecasts of winds, weather, swell and precipitation began on January 1, and were issued once a day. Rodenticide bait is applied to the island during favorable

Brown Booby parent and chick on Lehua Island, Hawaii, a

weather conditions - 5 days and nights without significant rainfall (less than 12mm) and low winds. The aerial broadcast can not occur in sustained winds greater than 35 mph.

state seabird sanctuary. NWS is providing weather forecast support of rodent eradication operations on the island. Photo courtesy of Island Conservation.

"The Forecast Office previously supported the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by providing spot forecasts for monk seal operations in the Papahanoumokuakea Marine National Monument," said **Ray Tanabe**, Warning Coordination Meteorologist. "We are pleased to work with our Federal partners again and have a small role in saving this ecosystem."

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COMET Web Page Tracks Model and Analysis Changes

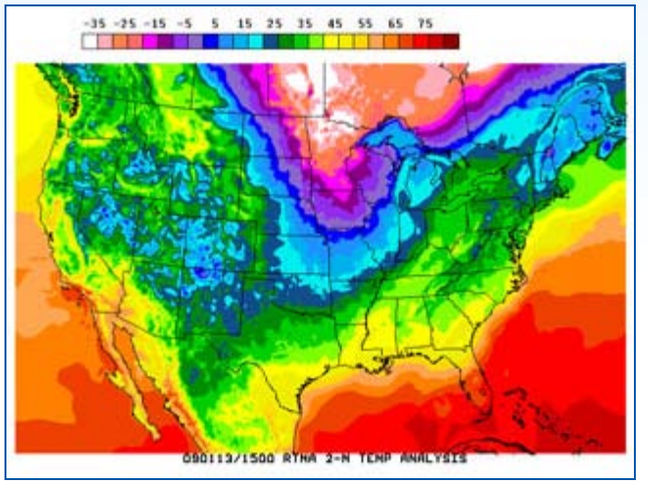
Where can forecasters learn about recent enhancements to the North American Mesoscale (NAM) Model and the Real-Time Mesoscale Analysis (RTMA)? The Cooperative Program for Operational Meteorology, Education, and Training (COMET) Operational Models Matrix web page provides updated information on major changes to the numerical models and analyses NWS forecasters rely on for their operational duties.

The Operational Models Matrix page allows forecasters to view anticipated forecast impacts in the "New!" section at the top of the page, and obtain more detailed information on models and analyses via links from the large table. Forecasters can also share their experiences and ask questions on models and analyses, and interact with the COMET numerical weather prediction (NWP) team on the COMET NWP forums.

Forecasters are encouraged to use the COMET NWP forum to discuss their experiences with RTMA performance and use in their operations. A new list server, aor-rtma, has been established for communication about the RTMA to facilitate information exchange on training updates and the use and evaluation of the analyses. To join this new listserver, go to http://infolist.nws.noaa.gov/read/login, select "All Forums," then find "aor-rtma" on the list and click "Subscribe."

These recent enhancements are just the latest developments in a series of upgrades. The NAM upgrade, implemented on December 16, 2008, resulted in forecasts of large-scale feature evolution closer to that of the Global Forecast System forecasts than before. According to Stephen Jascourt, COMET training expert, it provides among the most consistent error reductions of any National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) model implemented in recent years.

The RTMA upgrade, implemented on December 9, 2008, also provides enhancements over the Continental U.S. from a better first guess provided by the Rapid Update Cycle, for which improvements were implemented in November 2008. These recent RTMA changes were a result of a long period of collaboration and testing involving NCEP scientists, university scientists, operational forecasters, and the NWS regional Scientific Service Division (SSD) staffs.



According to **Joshua Watson** of Eastern Region (ER) Headquarters, "Forecasters at all NWS Eastern Region Weather Forecast Offices have been evaluating the RTMA since the spring of 2008, providing continuous feedback to ER SSD and NCEP

on the quality of the analyses. Our recent emphasis has been on the land-water interface, given the plethora of lakes, bays, reservoirs, and irregular shape of the coastline. These areas present unique forecast challenges and often lack of observations, highlighting the importance of a robust analysis scheme."

RTMA Temperature Analysis for 1500 UTC on January 13 depicting an Arctic air mass over the Northern Plains with improved feature resolution over the higher terrain.

Especially noteworthy is the improvement in the RTMA quality control procedures for elimination of questionable observations from substandard observing platforms, which reduces systematic errors in the analyses. Watson affirmed that "together, those changes enable an improved, more representative RTMA to be produced."

Dave Myrick of Western Region Headquarters added that "the terrain is no longer smoothed when calculating the background error covariance, so the resulting temperature analyses are more representative in mountainous regions because the analysis increments follow the terrain more closely."

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Shift Worker's Corner:

Living with Shift Work – Staying Updated and Sharing Ideas

Editor's Note: Shift work is a unique and necessary element of the NWS work culture. While shift work is part of the job, there's no doubt it impacts the professional, personal, and family lives of employees. The information passed along in "Shift Worker's Corner" can help employees with the impacts of shift work, and can help improve the wellness and work life of all NWS employees.

According to this month's featured article, nearly 20 percent of employees in industrialized countries are employed in shift work, which requires them to drastically change their sleep habits weekly or even daily.

The article comes from the *Sleep Channel – Your Sleep Community*, a physician-developed and monitored web site features information on many types of sleep disorders including those related to shift work. Stay updated, share ideas, and take steps now to improve your situation. Read the complete article by following this link.

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Employee Milestones

- Click here to see NEW APPOINTMENTS/TRANSFERS to NWS in January 2009.
- Click here to see RETIREMENTS/DEPARTURES from NWS in January 2009.
- Click here to see NWS EMPLOYEE AWARDS for January 2009.

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Click here to take a look at NOAA-wide employee news, as posted in the latest issue of ***NOAA World*****.**

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Send questions and comments to NWS.Communications.Office@noaa.gov or mail to:

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NOAA Heritage Week Features Television Meteorologist

Television meteorologist Veronica Johnson with NBC-4 TV in Washington, DC, addressed NOAA Silver Spring, MD, employees on February 11 as a part of NOAA's Heritage Week and Black History Month celebrations. Johnson, holder of the American Meteorological Society Broadcast Meteorology Seal of Approval, began her broadcasting career at The Weather Channel, and later moved to the Baltimore/Washington area where she has worked for the past six years. With a degree in atmospheric science from the University of North Carolina at Asheville, Veronica has contributed to local radio shows, programs on *The Discovery Network*, and *Bob Ryan's Guide to the Weatherwise*.

Vickie Nadolski:
What we would like to do is present Veronica with a small token of our appreciation from NOAA's National Weather Service, and it is a NOAA Weather Radio. And I'm not going to embarrass her by asking her if she already has one….

Veronica Johnson:
Of course!

Vickie Nadolski:
All right! That doesn't surprise me. I'm happy to hear that you have one. So what I would ask is that you, perhaps, give this radio receiver to someone who might be able to use it and benefit from it. Over the past couple of years, we have actually sent radio receivers out to all the public schools across the country as well as private schools and universities. So it would be a great tribute to us if you would put this in the hands of a needy person. Thank you.

Veronica Johnson:
Thank you.

Listen as Johnson speaks on the importance of mentoring young people in environmental

or science-related careers.

The presentation was a part of NOAA's Heritage Week and Black History Month celebrations, part 2.

Veronica Johnson:
To inspire, to engage, to support our students in science, we have to find more mentors. Mentors that will encourage students to develop to their fullest potential. The future of sciences is in the hands of our young people. And it really is up to all of us to be able to cultivate the next generation of scientists. Just an hour or two that we can give them can make a huge difference in giving a young mind a chance to grow.

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NWS Focus

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November 20, 2008

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Jack Hayes presents Vice Admiral Lautenbacher with a token of appreciation from the National Weather Service at the VADM's October 16 retirement ceremony. Read more about the VADM's farewell at NOAA World. (Photo, NOAA Communications Office)

From Jack Hayes: NWS Technology Infusion

This past week California has faced another series of devastating wildfires. Hundreds of homes have been lost, people displaced, and the threat to the burned areas is only beginning. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger asked for federal assistance this week based in large part on National Weather Service climate, weather, and debris flow forecasts.

In a letter to President Bush, the Governor said, "Given rainfall trends and National Weather Service projections for heavy rainfall in the burn-affected areas, these communities are likely to sustain additional, ongoing damages as a direct result of the wildfires. Therefore, I request that your declaration address anticipated flooding, mud flows and debris flows for the burn areas."

The NWS is maintaining a close watch on this area and will continue to work with the Governor's office to provide whatever decision assistance they need to manage the catastrophe that is continuing to unfold there. The future of the NWS depends on our abilities to provide this level of personalized assistance during high-impact events. In the months ahead we'll continue to highlight our capabilities

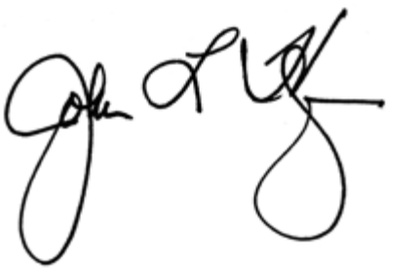
and expertise in helping others make decisions.

A new tool on the horizon that will be vital in our collaborative efforts with the weather enterprise is AWIPS II. Hopefully you've heard a thing or two about the capabilities AWIPS II will bring to your offices. In this issue of *NWS Focus* we have the first of a series of articles on AWIPS II, one of a number of technical infusion projects that will make the NWS more responsive to customer needs.

When AWIPS II is fully deployed, it will be a vital step in energizing the collaboration between NWS, the research community, and the entire weather community.

And just as with the modernization, in order for the AWIPS II transition to succeed, national headquarters, regional headquarters, and field offices must all work together.

I'm counting on your help to make these great things happen.



AWIPS II: Coming Soon to a Workstation Near You

Editors Note: This article is the first in a series that will introduce the overall AWIPS II development process, timeline, and the people behind the scenes deploying the software.

Soon, the National Weather Service will begin deploying AWIPS II, the foundation for many enhancements to our operations.

AWIPS is the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS). It is the information processing, display, and telecommunications system that integrates all meteorological and hydrologic data, and all satellite and radar data, and enables our forecasters to prepare and issue timely, accurate weather forecasts and warnings. AWIPS was initially fielded in the NWS during the modernization of the 1990s and was declared operational in the summer of 2000.

Managers are calling the current transformation of AWIPS software to AWIPS II a significant step forward for NWS. But in terms of service improvements, what are we going to see when we are done?

Here are just a few things we will see. AWIPS II will make the NWS more responsive to customer needs. It will cut down the development time for new products by 50 percent. It will give our forecasters the technology to have direct and integrated visual collaboration with emergency managers. It will allow streamlined generation of products in industry-standard formats. It will allow the NWS to move beyond the text world of the 1950's, to exploit the internet, and most importantly, to take advantage of the emerging technology standards to allow external customers to benefit from the range and volume of data and information we produce.

"We are going to energize the weather community with AWIPS II, both outside and inside the NWS by allowing for more rapid infusion of new science and applications into operations."

Don Berchoff,
Director of the NWS Office of Science and Technology

"We are going to energize the weather community with AWIPS II, both outside and inside the NWS by allowing for more rapid infusion of new science and applications into operations." said **Don Berchoff**, Director of the NWS Office of Science and Technology (OST).

AWIPS II will become a force multiplier for science infusion because there are many more developers in the field and the labs, by a factor of four or five to one, that can contribute. "We want to leverage the full range of software talent within the weather service to get new science, new applications, and new ideas into the baseline quicker," said Berchoff. "And we aren't going to stop there."

"We want to open this up to NOAA labs and start engaging partners such as NASA and academia to establish a community of contributors by giving them the tools to develop applications in the new environment. If they're doing science and applications within the AWIPS II architecture, their work will transition into operations faster and at a much lower cost."

According to Berchoff, there's more good news. "The transformation will not include the same steep learning curve forecasters experienced going from the Automation of Field Operations and Services (AFOS) system, since only the underlining software architecture is changing." Though the AWIPS II User Interfaces will be very similar to those in AWIPS, the guts underneath will be entirely different, and the migration is seeking to preserve the current look and feel. The intention is not to alter current forecast operations when AWIPS II is deployed. The biggest difference forecasters will experience are improved displays due to greater sharing of data between applications.

The AWIPS II Software Development Process

For the development of the baseline software, the NWS is taking a stepwise approach with 6 to 9 month Task Orders focused on specific topics. Eight software development tasks have been executed so far. The final development task order will be Task Order 11. It is to be delivered in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2009.

With each Task Order, the government runs the software through a series of increasingly detailed tests. Initial side-by-side testing of the system will be conducted at several locations over the next year. Prior to national deployment, the NWS will run a formal six-month Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E).

In addition to the baseline software, many local AWIPS applications have been developed by Weather Forecast Offices, River Forecast Centers, and National Centers to satisfy unique user requirements. Migrating these applications into the new system is a regional responsibility with support from OST and the National Core Local Application Development Team (NCLADT), a team composed of developers from field offices. The NCLADT will develop a library of functions that can be used across all local applications.

AWIPS II Training

Training for AWIPS II will be undertaken in several phases. Currently, the NWS is training local application developers with distance learning and hands-on exercises. Training modules will be developed for application focal points. Additional focal point training will also be developed and made available online after the final software delivery. The focal point training is centered on the configuration and localization of baseline applications in AWIPS II and will be delivered in time to support the field sites during the AWIPS II OT&E.

AWIPS system administrator training will be developed once the AWIPS II system is completed. System administrators will be provided developmental learning experiences on the AWIPS II system as incremental software builds are available. System administrator deployment training will be available to support field OT&E sites starting in October 2009.

OS&T is publishing information about AWIPS II development through several avenues: the AWIPS Technology Infusion web site, the *AWIPS II Topic of the Week* (to join the mail list send an e-mail to Frances.Curnow@noaa.gov), presentations at regional conferences, and, now, through a series of *NWS Focus* articles.

NWS Focus will include new articles on AWIPS II as the project reaches significant milestones. In the meantime, keep up with information on the AWIPS evolution by visiting OST's AWIPS Technology Infusion site.

Field Notes: Interested in writing a field perspective note or story for *NWS Focus*? Contact *NWS Focus* Editor John Skoda.

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Hayes Delivers Keynote Address at NWA Annual Meeting

by Sean Potter
NWS Communications Office

National Weather Service Director **Jack Hayes** presented one of two keynote addresses at the 33rd National Weather Association (NWA) Annual Meeting, held October 11-16 in Louisville, KY. In keeping with the theme of this year's meeting, "Utilizing Our Past to Improve Our Future," Hayes discussed the evolution of NWS services by comparing recent operational successes during high-impact events with similar events from the past. For example, the Great Galveston Hurricane of 1900 killed between 6,000 to 8,000 people during an era with no satellites, radars, or wireless communications from ships at sea. As Hayes said, "the ability of the Weather Bureau to accurately forecast such storms and warn residents was drastically impaired. By contrast, Hurricane Ike, which struck the Gulf Coast near Galveston, TX, in September of this year, resulted in fewer than 100 deaths in the U.S." While Ike dealt a devastating blow to the Gulf Region, we know it could have been much worse without accurate and timely warnings by the NWS.

More recent advancements in science and technology have also led to dramatic improvements in our ability to save lives and property. When the so-called Super Outbreak of tornadoes—the largest in our Nation's history—ravaged 13 states from the Great Lakes to the Southeast during a 16-hour period on April 3, 1974, NWS forecasters were able to detect the telltale hook echoes of the tornadoes on radar and issue warnings, but often not until the tornadoes actually touched down. Despite the best efforts afforded forecasters in the field at the time, limitations in the technology available meant that the 148 tornadoes that touched down that day resulted in 330 fatalities and more than 5,000 injuries.

Fast-forward to February of this year, when the Super Tuesday Tornado Outbreak struck some of the same areas that were hit in 1974. Due to advances in technology—from ASOS to AWIPS to NEXRAD—the average warning lead time for the 63 tornadoes that occurred was 17 minutes, several minutes above the national average at the time. Although 57 people lost their lives in the event, the number killed was much lower relative to the number of tornadoes than the 1974 event.

Looking ahead to the future of weather, water, and climate services, Hayes emphasized that continued advancements in science and technology are key to keeping pace with the demands on NWS services due to increasing populations, especially in vulnerable areas such as coastal regions, an increasingly-crowded National Air Space, and climate change.

The address and Hayes's participation in the meeting in general were well-received by those attending, according to **John Gordon**, Meteorologist-in-Charge, at Louisville and NWA Program Committee Chair. "I heard good comments, especially about the historical comparisons of 1974 and Super Tuesday and where the NWS is headed," he said.

Several NWS employees and partners were honored with NWA awards at the meeting. NWA awards recognize individuals and groups who perform day-to-day tasks of providing meteorological information and support services to the public. See the winners on the NWA's web site as well as in an article in NWS's Southern Region News.

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Open House Held at Grand Forks, ND

by David Kellenbenz and Geoffrey Grochocinski
Lead Forecaster and Intern Meteorologist, NWS Grand Forks, ND

Teaming up with the local American Red Cross and Salvation Army, the atmospheric sciences department at the University of North Dakota (UND), the UND American Metereorological Society (AMS), the local Amateur Ham radio club, and others, the Grand Forks, ND, Weather Forecast Office (WFO) opened its doors to the public on a cool Saturday morning for its first open house since 2000.

The WFO offered a glimpse of weather, and meteorology's pervasiveness within society. Technical Sergeant Jack Minor of the Grand Forks Air Base's Air Force Weather Unit presented a tactical weather station, and area storm chasers showcased one of their chase vehicles. Even Marcy Douglas, the city administrator of Northwood, ND, came to highlight how far the town has recovered from the tragic effects of an EF4 tornado that nearly destroyed it last year.

Visitors were welcomed by National Weather Service employees and their partners who were staffing booths outside in the office's parking lot. The Salvation Army provided free food and drinks, including refreshing lemonade for one of the last days of summer. Kids flocked to the "Weather Corner" booth to check out the tornado machine, gather reading material, snatch color changing pencils, and fill their own helium balloons. The storm chasers showed off their tricked-out vehicles and shared stories. Several teenagers appeared to pay extra attention to UND's atmospheric sciences program and AMS student program. Posters highlighting the many services NWS provides to the public were available for visitors.

The Grand Forks, ND, WFO held their first open house since 2000 on September 20. The mayors of Grand Forks and Fargo were among the attendees.

Tickets were distributed for an indoor tour consisting of an NWS overview and demonstration of the Weather Event Simulator (WES) of the Northwood, ND, August 26 EF4 tornado. The tour then moved into the operations area, where operations staff gave brief demonstrations of AWIPS, showing how data is used to make a forecast. Visitors were also guided into the electronics area where the Electronic Systems Analyst and Electronic Technicians gave a presentation about many of our different technological systems. The Data Acquisition Program Manager finished the tour by showing the equipment to report precipitation and temperatures.

The NWS provided tours to about 225 people through the mid-afternoon, including the mayors of Grand Forks and Fargo, the two largest cities served by the WFO.

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Grand Junction, CO, Office Exhibits at Air Show

by Jim Pringle, Warning Coordination Meteorologist
Grand Junction Weather Forecast Office

Thousands of visitors attended the Grand Junction Air Show from September 26-28. The Grand Junction Air Show is a spectacular air show held at the Grand Junction Regional Airport. The U.S. Navy's Blue Angels and other military and private aircraft gave aerobatic and aeronautic displays.

At their display tent at the Air Show, the Grand Junction, CO, Weather Forecast Office (WFO) provided information on weather safety and National Weather Service services. Sixteen WFO members worked at the NWS display tent during the air show along with former Data Acquisition Program Manager **Dio Musquiz**. Nine visitors signed up to be volunteer weather spotters.

WFO staff members provide NWS materials to visitors to the Grand Junction Air Show.

The NWS exhibit was extensive, with several hands-on activities. Visitors saw a tornado simulator, a "pet tornado," live NWS Internet using a laptop and large monitor, severe weather videos, weather safety brochures, and other handouts. A Central Region Headquarters NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards display was on view, as well as upper air sounding equipment, and Federal Aviation Administration aviation-weather safety brochures.

Air show security officials were kept updated on the potential impact of nearby thunderstorms by WFO forecasters using radar and other weather resources from the live NWS Internet display in the NWS tent.

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VIDEO: Why is CFC Important to Me?

Click on the above image to watch the video.

Marie Lovern (NOAA National Weather Service): Hi, I'm Marie from the National Weather Service and I'm talking about the Combined Federal Campaign today. I'm here with Gracie, who's also from the National Weather Service. Hi Gracie.

Gracie Wylie (NOAA National Weather Service): Hi, how are you?

Marie: Good, thanks. Tell me why the CFC is important to you.

Gracie: The CFC is important to me because it's a way for me to give back a little bit. I like helping people and it makes me feel good that I can do that. And I'm sure that it will help other people just as much to get that help from us.

David (NOAA Office of the Deputy Under Secretary): I like to spread it around. I like to take some of the national charities, especially some of the heath care-related ones: cancer, leukemia--things that I think benefit the nation in general. Then I try to take some local ones so I that I see some local benefit in the community where I live and work.

Mayra (NOAA Office of the Administrator): It's important because I find that it's always better to be on the giving end than on the receiving end. Because, bottom line is, people that need to receive, it's because they are not doing as well as you are, those that are giving.

Ajith (NOAA Marine Fisheries Service): CFC gives such a wonderful organized opportunity to help people. I often see people who need help and never take time to think about it. But CFC really organizes it for me. I can pick and choose, and quickly deliver help.

Marie: Thanks, Gracie, David, Mayra, and Ajith for supporting CFC. Thanks to all of you for doing the same and for helping NOAA reach its annual goal.

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The End of Summer Snapshots?

We've enjoyed your summer snapshots here at NWS Focus and we hope you've enjoyed seeing them as well.

Today's batch is the last we have. But remember us if you want to share an interesting photo from vacations, weekends, or just your day-to-day adventures. Send it to us at NWS.Focus@noaa.gov along with an explanation or 3 or 4 sentences. We'll share it in NWS Focus.

See our final Summer Snapshots by following this link.

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NWS Milestones

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- Click here to see RETIREMENTS/DEPARTURES from NWS for October 2008.
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New Appointments/Transfers as of 01/31/2009

NAME	OFFICE	TITLE	EFFECTIVE DATE	NOTE
Abeyta, Amanda	WFO Albuquerque, NM	Intern	01/04/2009	New hire from SCEP program
Allen, Eddy J.	Alaska Region HQ, Anchorage, AK	Maintenance Mechanic	01/20/2009	Local hire - Anchorage, AK
Baron, Dennis	WFO Tucson, AZ	ESA	01/04/2009	New appointment
Bloemer, Matthew	WFO Eureka, CA	Met Intern	01/05/2009	New appointment
Brown Edler, Barbara	W/OSx1, Silver Spring, MD	Resource Manager	01/05/2009	Most recently with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Carlisle, C. Nicole	WFO Tampa Bay Area, FL	Intern	01/04/2009	New hire from SCEP program
Clark, Joseph	WFO Eureka, CA	Met Intern	01/05/2009	New appointment
Doody, Matthew	WFO Caribou, ME	MET Intern	01/23/2009	New hire
Fickenscher, Peter	RFC Sacramento, CA	Senior Hydrologist	01/04/2009	Promotion
Fish, Aimee	WFO Burlington, VT	Senior Forecaster	01/18/2009	Selection from Alaska Region Headquarters
Hosenfeld, Nanette	WFO Salt Lake City, UT	Met Intern	01/04/2009	Promotion
Jackson, Bryan	WFO Sterling, VA	General Forecaster	01/04/2009	Promotion from WFO Wakefield, VA
Jolliff, Susan	WFO Boise, ID	ASA	01/18/2009	Promotion
Klein, Jared	WFO Sterling, VA	Meteorologist	01/04/2009	Promotion on Station
Koch, John	Eastern Region HQ, Bohemia, NY	Deputy Chief, MSD	01/04/2009	Promotion from WFO Upton, NY
Lewis, Tamara	W/CFO-CAO, Silver Spring,	CFO2 Budget Analyst	01/05/2009	New appointee

	MD			
Lindaman, Edan	WFO Las Vegas, NV	Met Intern	01/18/2009	Promotion
McGuire, Scott	WFO Reno, NV	HMT	01/04/2009	Promotion
Meyers, Jenna	W/OS4, Silver Spring, MD	Physical Scientist	12/11/2008	Selection from Western Region HQ
Michels, Arnold B.	CWSU Albuquerque, NM	Meteorologist	01/20/2009	Reinstatement
Mueller, Lora	Eastern Region HQ, Bohemia, NY	Systems Meteorologist	01/04/2009	Selection from WFO Midland, TX
Nield, Patrick	W/CFO-CAO, Silver Spring, MD	CFO1 Director	01/18/2009	Selected
Schoening, Eric	WFO Salt Lake City, UT	Forecaster	01/18/2009	Promotion
Stachelski, Christopher	WFO Las Vegas, NV	Forecaster	01/04/2009	Promotion
Strager, Christopher	WFO Pittsburgh, PA	Meteorologist-In-Charge	01/04/2009	Selection from Alaska Region Headquarters
Sugden, Kelly	WFO Medford, OR	Met Intern	01/04/2009	Promotion
Vasilj, James	CWSU Auburn, WA	CWSU Meteorologist	01/04/2009	New appointment

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Retirements/Departures as of 01/31/2009

NAME	OFFICE	TITLE	EFFECTIVE DATE	NOTE
Allen, Milan W.	NOHRSC, Chanhassen, MN	Hydrologist	01/03/2009	Retirement
Ballard, Verne	WFO Spokane, WA	HMT	01/03/2009	Voluntary retirement
Beeler, Gary A.	WFO Mobile, AL	Warning Coordination Meteorologist	01/03/2009	Retirement, 33 years of Government service
Berger, Myron	W/OS, Silver Spring, MD	Meteorologist	01/03/2009	Retirement
Berman, Thomas	WFO Gray, ME	Meteorologist	01/03/2009	Retirement, 35 years of Government service
DiCarlo, Vincent	WFO Greer, SC	Meteorologist	01/03/2009	Retirement, over 36 years of Government service
Funderburk, Connie "Gene"	WFO Wilmington, NC	Observing Program Leader	01/02/2009	Retirement, 43 years of Government service
Heyse, Christina	W/CFO-CAO, Silver Spring, MD	CFO1 Program Analyst	01/05/2009	Transfer to NESDIS
Jacobs, David L.	WFO Melbourne, FL	DAPM	01/03/2009	Retirement, 34 years, 5 months of Government service
Jorge, Vivian	NCEP TPC, Miami, FL	Admin. Officer	01/03/2009	Retirement, 32 years of Government service
Kaplafka, James P.	NWSTC, Kansas City, MO	Electronics Technician Instructor	01/02/2009	Retirement
Kennedy, Michael	WFO Houston, TX	ESA	01/03/2009	Retirement, 35 years, 7 months of Government service
Kiser, C. Scott	W/OS, Silver Spring, MD	Meteorologist	01/03/2009	Retirement
Marciniak,	NCEP TPC,	Student	01/21/2009	Assignment expired

Jessica	Miami, FL			
McDaniel, Bobby G.	WFO Nashville, TN	Lead Forecaster	01/03/2009	Retirement, 39 years, 5 months of Government service
McLeod, Robert J.	W/OS5, Silver Spring, MD	Supervisory Hydrologist	01/03/2009	Retirement
Mitchell, Kenneth	NCEP EMC, Camp Springs, MD	Meteorologist	01/03/2009	Retirement, 30 years of Government service
Moller, Alan	WFO Fort Worth, TX	Lead Forecaster	01/03/2009	Retirement, 34 years, 5 months of Government service
Parrish, Terry	WFO Pittsburgh, PA	Hydrometeorological Technician	01/03/2009	Retirement, 40 years of Government service
Phelps, Norman	WFO Tucson, AZ	ET	01/03/2009	Voluntary retirement
Reid, Michael J.	WFO Little Rock, AR	Hydrometeorological Technician	01/03/2009	Retirement, 33 years, 5 months of Government service
Ryman, William F.	NWSTC, Kansas City, MO	IT Specialist Instructor	01/02/2009	Retirement
Saunders, James	WFO Sterling, VA	Port Meteorological Officer	01/03/2009	Retirement, over 42 years of Government service
Stucky, Bobby E.	RFC Slidell, LA	DOH	01/03/2009	Retirement, 36 years, 2 months of Government service
Swank, Scott W.	Alaska Region HQ, Anchorage, AK	Computer Program Manager	01/03/2009	Resigned
Swann, Douglas	WFO Sacramento, CA	ESA	01/03/2009	Voluntary retirement
Valdez, Jose O.	WFO Lubbock, TX	Forecaster	01/01/2009	Retirement, 26 years, 6 months of Government service
Waldron, Howard	WFO Morristown, TN	Warning Coordination Meteorologist	01/01/2009	Retirement, 35 years, 10 months of Government service
Webster, Robert	PMO Long Beach, CA	PMO	01/04/2009	Voluntary retirement
Zimmerman, Jeffrey	W/OS, Silver Spring, MD	Supervisory Hydrologist	12/06/2008	Retirement

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Employee Recognitions Earned as of 01/31/2009

NAME	OFFICE	TITLE	DATE RECEIVED	AWARD
Bloomer, Mark	WFO Caribou, ME	Meteorologist	01/19/2009	Length of Service Award: 10 years
Chillag, Charles	MARFC State College, PA	Hydrometeorologist Analyst	01/30/2009	Length of Service Award: 20 years
Custer, Kimberly	WFO Juneau, AK	Electronics System Analyst	11/09/2008	Length of Service Award: 35 years
Dunham, Timothy	WFO Upton, NY	Electronics Technician	01/17/2009	Length of Service Award: 20 years
Fitzgerald, Kevin	WFO State College, PA	Meteorologist	01/10/2009	Length of Service Award: 15 years
McClure, Dawn	W/OS, Silver Spring, MD	Lead Program Analyst	01/09/2009	Earned an Associates Degree in Applied Science
Montgomery, Brian	WFO Albany, NY	Meteorologist	01/19/2009	Length of Service Award: 10 years
Puustinen, Arthur	WFO Juneau, AK	Electronics Technician	01/14/2009	Length of Service Award: 30 years
Schmit, Lisa	WFO Twin Cities/Chanhassen, MN	Meteorologist	12/13/2008	Master of Arts in Management, University of St. Scholastica, St. Paul, MN
Strauss, Neal	WFO Taunton, MA	Meteorologist	01/10/2009	Length of Service Award: 15 years

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