



Cultural Diversity

National Weather Service
Alaska Region Newsletter
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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Frank Kelly

Still Serving

As I watch the response the United States provides to disaster situations, I am reminded of the service provided by our Armed Forces to our national security and to maintain our national prosperity. We have to thank people who have served in the military and, probably, even more to those who are "Still Serving".

Many of our co-workers in Alaska are among those who are "still serving" their country through civilian service after some form of military service. We have people who have served in all the branches of our Armed Forces and some in more than one branch. As I was appropriately reminded, many of those still in government service started in the military. Fortunately for the Alaska Region (AR), training and education in weather career fields afforded through the military is almost directly applicable to what we do in the National Weather Service. The military teaches how to support a mission, how to work on a team, how to accomplish goals, how to organize efforts, and how to put service above self. Here are just a few facts about those "Still Serving" here in AR:

- Of the 230 or so members of the AR, over 110 have some form of military service in their history; that's almost half of us!

- Of those with prior service in the military, their collective experience amounts to well over 500 years of knowledge and experience.

- These people have served on all continents, on, in or over all oceans and within almost as many climates as we have just in Alaska!

- Many of our co-workers retired from military service after distinguished careers and felt compelled to continue their government service with us in protecting lives and livelihoods.

The expertise brought to the Region by former military members helps us all to better understand the needs and operations of the Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard units currently operating within Alaska and adjacent waters. The know-how that comes with experience is invaluable in helping us all to meet specific needs of our customers here in the Alaska Region.

The bottom line is we owe a sincere "Thanks" to those "Still Serving". ❖

AFC'S 2ND ANNUAL COOKIE CONTEST

By Alberta Vieira



First Place Winner - Dave Stricklan

Last October, Employees at the Anchorage Forecast Center (AFC) worked hard to make the best cookies while vying for the title of Best Baker of Cookies.

Twelve entries were judged in two categories - taste and presentation. HIC Robin Radlien supervised the judging of the cookies. Five judges, from the different agencies in the AFC, tasted each of the entries and scored them accordingly.



Second Place Winner - Becky Perry



Third Place Winner - Kathleen Cole

Dave Stricklan took first place with his Peanut Butter Brownie cookies. Last year's winner, Becky Perry, took second place this year with her Orange Chocolate Chip cookies, while Kathleen Cole placed third with her Brownie cookies.

Dave chose not to receive the cash award, but donated it along with the money from the sale of the cookies. The cookies were sold to those in the office. The money was then to be sent to the charity of Dave's choice. He and his wife chose to donate the \$125 to Wish Upon a Northern Star, a group that grants wishes to children with life-threatening illness in Alaska.

Congratulations to Dave Stricklan, the Best Baker of Cookies at the AFC. ❖

WFO FAIRBANKS

In November, WFO Fairbanks collected three boxes of food and money for the local food bank.

The office donated \$427.00 to an Angel Tree Family that they adopted through the Salvation Army. The Angel Tree program provides underprivileged children (ages 12 and under) and seniors (ages 62 and older) with holiday gifts and proof that someone cares. ❖

ANDEAN EXPERIENCE 2008

By Michael Richmond
WFO Fairbanks

Part III: Bolivian Side Trips

Potosi, an old Bolivian mining city at 14,000 feet and a current population of approximately 121,000, is the highest city in the World. The bus ride from Uyuni to Potosi was a classic Bolivian journey, 9 hours over a mix of paved and dirt road, winding up and down passes as high as 16,000 feet, with two stops in small villages, to give us a chance to stretch our legs, get a snack, and, most important, find a rest room. Potosi is dominated by the terrible and amazing history of Cerro Rico, an innocuous looking 16,500 foot "hill". Out of this mountain came untold billions of dollars in silver, which financed the Spanish empire from 1550 until Bolivia's independence in 1821. It is estimated that one-half to one million indigenous people died in the mines during those years, when they were forced by the Spaniards to work in them. Thousands of miners continue to work the shafts in Cerro Rico.

Walking up and down the steep narrow streets of Potosi, I definitely noticed the altitude, and it was interesting to think that in the middle of this city, I was higher than most of the terrain in the entire U.S. I enjoyed viewing the numerous, beautiful old churches and cathedrals dating back as far as 1550 as well as the National mint, which processed the silver from the mines into ingots and coins.

Despite all the beauty in Potosi, I found the mine tour to be the most interesting part of my visit. About half of Potosi's current population works in some facet of the mining industry. Mining is done by small groups of miners in cooperatives working in rough, dirty, and dangerous conditions for 10 to 12 hours at a time. The technology and techniques used are equivalent to what was used in the 1920s or 1930s in this country. They chew the coca leaf continually during their shifts for energy and endurance, and often do not even take meal breaks.



Potosi mine entrance

Before reaching the mine, we had to suit up in protective gear, and buy some supplies to give to the miners as is the custom for mine tour groups. We bought dynamite (anyone in Potosi can just buy it in a store!), snacks, and a bag of coca leaves. The mine entrance, as you can see, is fairly small, and after disbursing our gifts to the miners, we headed in. We walked for almost a kilometer into the mine. It was cool and damp with standing water in many areas. Strange stalactites of salts and minerals were hanging off the ceilings. Some of the reddish ones we saw were composed of sulfuric acid. Sometimes the mine shafts were only 4-5 feet high, so this is definitely not something for the claustrophobic. It gave me a good idea of what those miners have to go through every day, and our guide said most of them can only end up working in there for 10-15 years, before health problems force them to find other work.

I left Potosi that night on the only bus back to La Paz - a 10 hour overnight trip. I was able to sleep most of the way and got back to La Paz in good shape. It was good that I was rested because the centerpiece of my entire trip was to begin the next day. ❖



Girl Scouts: Women in Science
By Kristine Nelson



Carrie Haisley (left) and Kristine Nelson (right) demonstrate pressure of heated air.

Kristine Nelson and Carrie Haisley from the Anchorage CWSU participated in the Girl Scout sponsored Women in Science Event hosted by UAA, Anchorage, February 6, 2010. Three sessions, with about 20 K-3 grade girls each, participated in our “Weather Under Pressure” presentation. During each session, we conducted a pressure experiment using a balloon topped pop bottle and hot water, then we walked the girls through making their own homemade barometers using baby jars, balloons, and Popsicle sticks. Carrie also brought in some interesting severe weather and winter storm photos for the girls to look at if they finished early. We also had fun with a hand-held “tornado in a bottle”. All the girls took home their very own homemade barometer, a packet of NWS goodies, and a new appreciation of “Weather Under Pressure”. ❖

Valdez Elementary School Science Fair
By Peggy Perales

On March 5, Peggy Perales, OIC at WSO Valdez, participated in judging the Annual Science Fair at Herman Hutchins Elementary School. Two of the entries that she judged received 2nd place for their efforts.



“Whey Cool” (shown above) involved comparing the decay rate of homemade sauerkraut to store-bought sauerkraut. The student also compared the fermentation rate at 64°F, 75°F, and 83°F.

“EWWW...Grease” (on the left) compared different chips of the same brand to see which had the most grease. She used chips that were similar in content, based on the nutrition label. ❖

My Trip to Barrow By Rebecca Schwab

In August 2004, Anne Barnes and I flew to Barrow to do an Admin review and also check on the housing. Being born and raised in Anchorage, I have visited places by car like Kenai, Sterling, Soldotna, Palmer, Wasilla, Houston, and Fairbanks, but not other cities in Alaska like Cold Bay, Bethel, Juneau, Kodiak, Nome, etc. I would like to go to these other places someday. Anne had taken others in the ADMIN group to places like Juneau and Fairbanks, and now it was my turn. When she told me I would be traveling to Barrow with her for a few days, I was so excited!

I have never been to Barrow before and I wasn't sure what to expect. I was told the weather in the month of August was not summer-like because Barrow is located near the Bering Sea. In fact, average high temperatures for the end of August are in the low 40s. I made sure to pack my winter coat and gloves. I was glad I did.

The first day of our trip, Dave Stricklan gave Anne and I a tour of the town. I noticed the houses were built on stilts. I had never seen houses on stilts before and Dave explained the reason they were on stilts is to keep them from melting the permafrost which would then cause the homes to sink. As Dave drove Anne and I around town, I saw this black, long tube and asked Dave what it was and he said that it is a double Utilidor. He said one part works for the water and the other part works for the sewer.

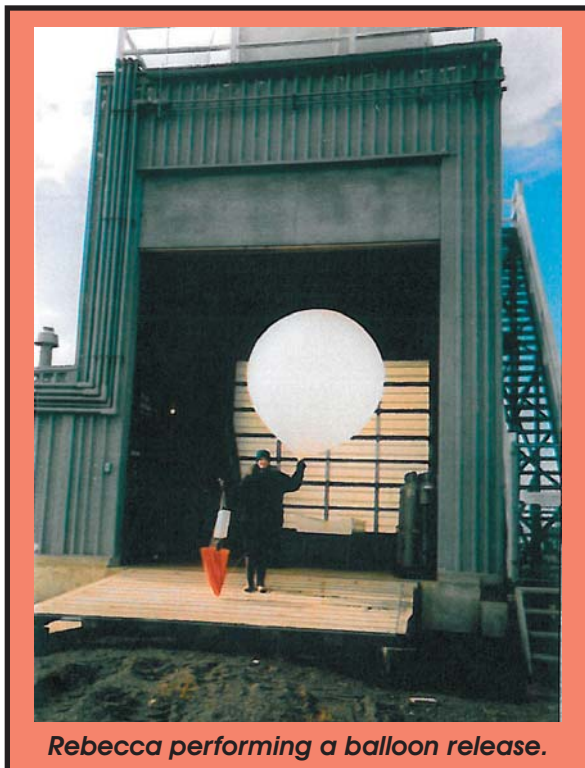
The second day of my trip to Barrow, I went to the office with Anne to see Dave

and the other employees, Gina Sturm and Brad Herold, who were working at the time. Gina showed me some weather statistics for Barrow. For example, in February they can get down to -32 degrees - that's really cold to me. At 10 o'clock, Brad did his Radio Report. Then it was time to check on the employee housing with Anne.

We walked through the employees' house and Anne recorded things that needed to be replaced. Afterwards, Anne and I went back to the office. We also went around a couple of little areas to take a couple of pictures of me in front of the library and also by the Whale Jaw Bones. When we returned to the office, Dave took me to the Upper Air Building where I got to do a Balloon Launch. It was fun holding

that Balloon. It was very heavy and you have to hold it very tight before you let it go in the air. I watched the balloon for a while and after it was long gone, Dave and I went back in the office.

The third day of my trip to Barrow, Dave Stricklan took me with him to do a Sea Measurement. Dave walked in the water and took this instrument to get some water to take back to the office. Dave poured the water into a machine that gives you a measurement of the sea that day. This is done every day and the numbers are always different.



Rebecca performing a balloon release.

It was very interesting to learn about the work the Barrow WSO performs everyday and statistics such as sea level measurements and how many weather balloon launches were successful and missed. I now have an understanding of the work Met Techs and their Supervisors perform. I am so glad I got to travel to Barrow and it was fun, but it's also good to be back home. ❖

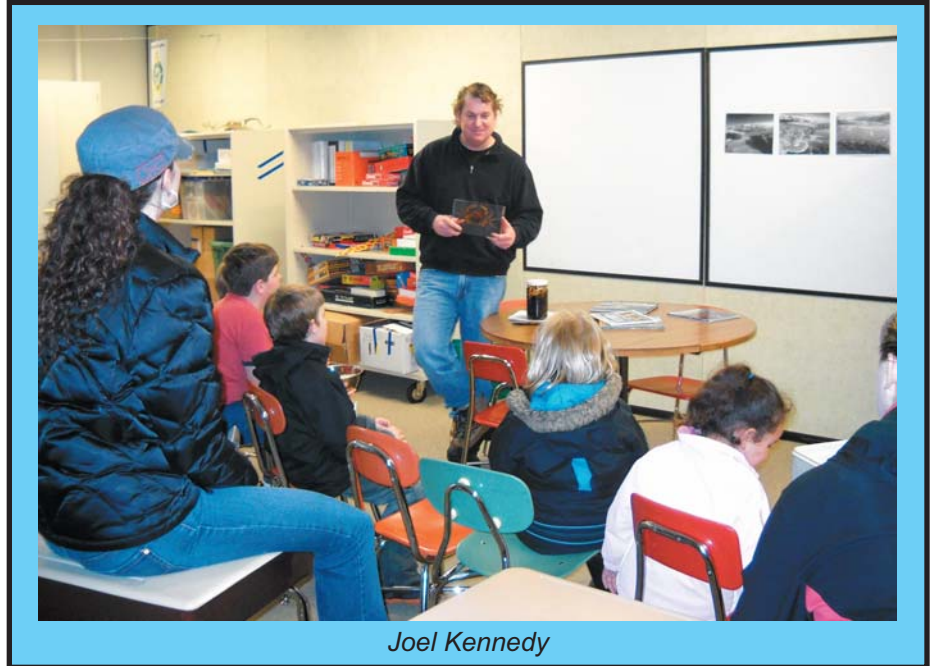
1st Annual Science and Technology Symposium in Valdez

By Peggy Perales

On March 6, the Valdez Weather Service Office (WSO), in partnership with the Valdez School District, hosted the 1st Annual Science and Technology Symposium in Valdez for all 2nd through 6th grade students. Battling competing events from numerous Jr. High and High School events, and the kickoff for the Winter Carnival "Frosty Fever", the event still pulled in 30 students from public, private, and home school classes.

The symposium consisted of four - 30 minute sessions for each group of 6 - 8 students. The presenters were:

1. Joel Kennedy with the Regional Citizens Action Committee (RCAC). Joel talked to the students about the habitat of Prince William Sound and the delicate balance of the ecosystem. The students were able to touch and play with glacier ice, and smell the pungent oil that travels in Prince William Sound oil barges many times a day. In addition, Joel talked about the tenuous hold the green crab has on its survivability and how we can help it to survive.



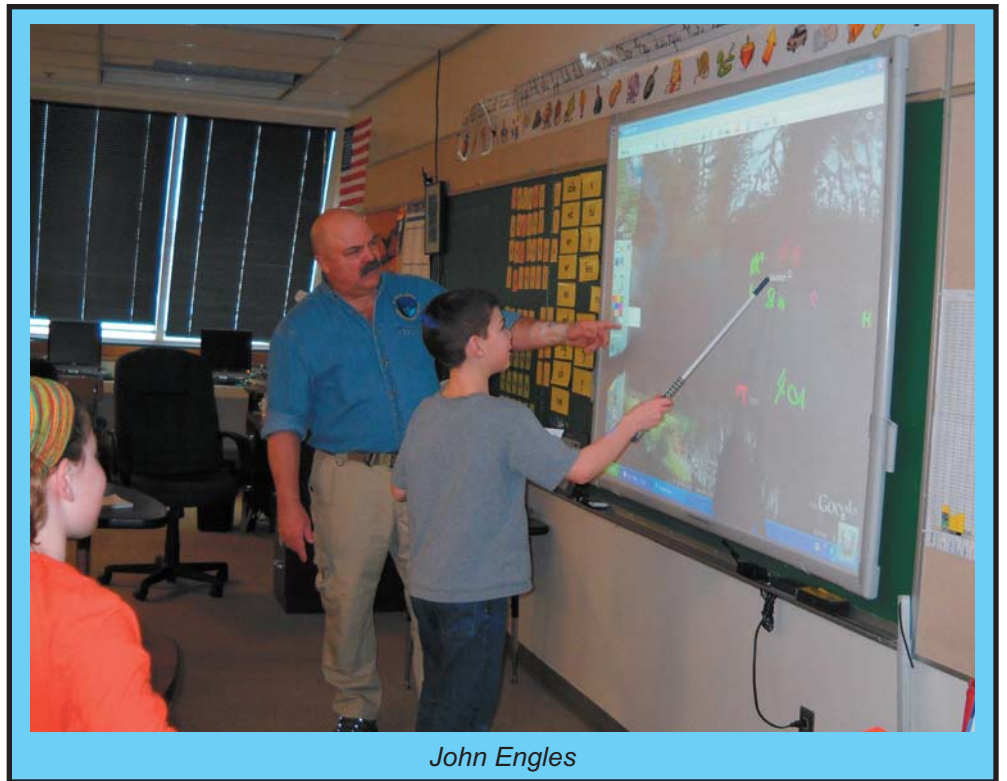
Joel Kennedy



Sarah Carter

2. Sarah Carter with the Alaska Avalanche Information Center (AAIC). Sarah talked about the formation of avalanches and how they can differ from each other, in addition to the conditions to look for before you travel into the backcountry. The students then built their own snowpack to study the angle that avalanches occur, using sugar, flour, and cornstarch. Completing her presentation was an introduction to the following equipment that you should have when traveling into the backcountry: a snow probe, transceiver, shovel, and high visibility marker.

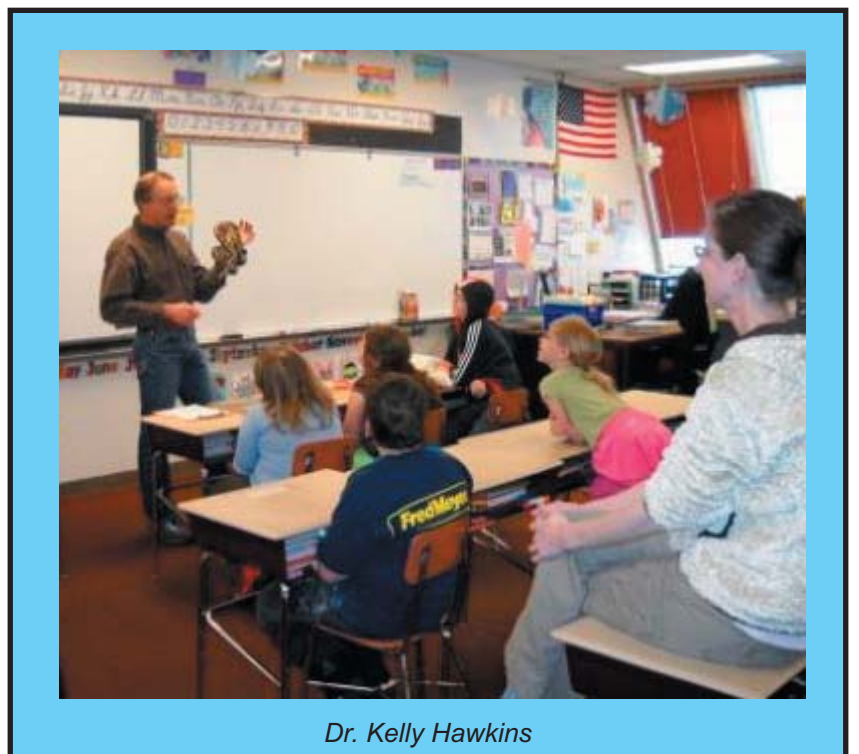
3. John Engles from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). John combined Science and Technology into his presentation for the students by showing how they do environmental observations for Prince William Sound (using a floor layout) and then having the students annotate on the promethium board (high tech digital chalk board) what they saw and where. DEC monitors the health of the environment including animals throughout the area.



John Engles

4. Dr. Kelly Hawkins with the Valdez Veterinary Clinic. He may treat our furry friends, but Kelly's passion is for the sliders – snakes that is. Presenting "Snakes on Parade", Kelly and his friend SID, the Ball Python, were a great hit with the students, parents, and presenters alike. Describing Sid's habitat, habits, likes and dislikes, in addition to allowing the students to touch the reptile dispelled any myths there were about all pythons being dangerous. Sid, at 17 years old, is fully grown at 3 - 4ft long.

Ruthie Knight, a Valdez teacher, was of invaluable assistance to Peggy. Ruthie coordinated rooms, snacks, and equipment at the school for the presenter's needs, in addition to ensuring that the flyers and cards made it to the teachers to be handed out. Other helpers during the day included Wendy Zwickl (NWS), Cookie Huddy (In-Demand Cleaning), and the parents in attendance as guides and wranglers for the students. WSO Valdez would like to extend its thanks to all the teachers who donated rooms, the staff, and administration at Herman Hutchins Elementary School for the support of our event and all the parents and students that made our day a huge success! ❖



Dr. Kelly Hawkins

Feeding the Homeless By Ursula Jones

The day before Thanksgiving, WFO Juneau staff was very busy. As part of a community outreach effort, Juneau's staff volunteered to provide food, cook, and serve a meal at The Glory Hole, the local homeless shelter and food kitchen.

Fifteen folks helped our efforts by baking desserts, corn bread, shopping for food, cooking, and serving. The office collected enough money to pay for the meal and to cover the next meal we plan to serve. The chili prepared received rave reviews, with attendees coming back for seconds and thirds.

As part of the same effort, we collected over 25 pounds of cold weather clothing to donate to The Glory Hole. ❖



Left to right - Stephen Ahn, Paul Suffern, Carrie Larsen, Nolin Ainsworth, Tom Ainsworth, Grant Ainsworth, Sue Ainsworth (pink cap), Kimberly Vaughan (orange cap), Larry Vaughan, and Ursula Jones.

Breakfast in Juneau By Ursula Jones

In early February, WFO Juneau held a pancake breakfast for staff to attend. Below, Paul Suffern and Kimberly Vaughan are hard at work prepping and cooking for the event.



What kinds of things are we looking for to include in our Diversity newsletter?

- Employee biographies - new and current
- Outreach activities
- Travel stories
- Scientific papers (abstract with weblink)
- Volunteer activities
- Weather office introduction
- Anything else?



*Society of American Indian
Government Employees*

The Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) is a national non-profit organization that serves the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native government employees.

They provide a forum on the issues, opportunities, and challenges of American Indian Tribes and the government work community.

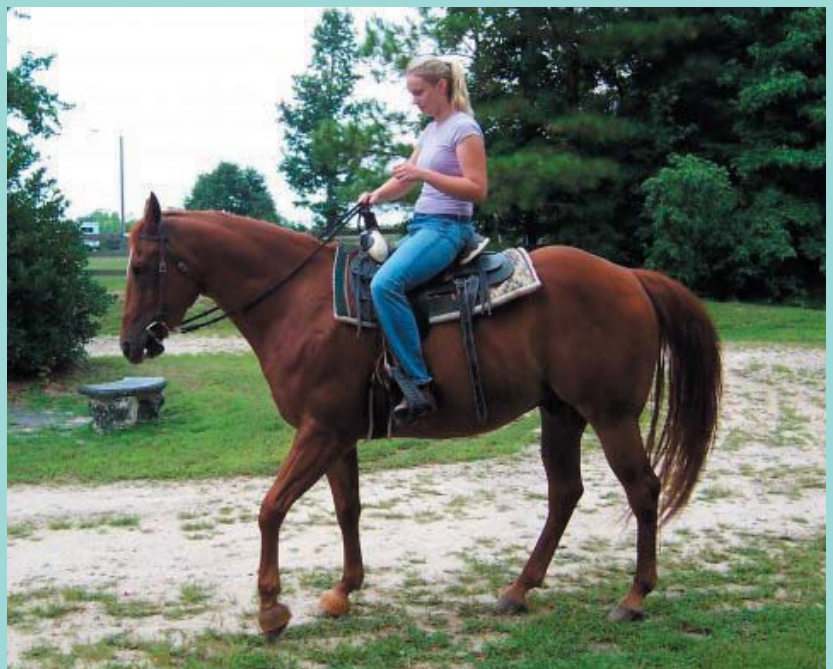
Its mission is to promote the recruitment, hiring, retention, development, advancement, and equitable treatment of American Indians and Alaska Natives in the government workforce.

SAIGE's 7th Annual training conference - "Walking in Two Worlds: Bridging the Gap Between Native America & Government" will be June 14 - 18, 2010 in Uncasville, Connecticut.

For more information on SAIGE and the conference go to: <http://www.saige.org/>

Carrie Larsen, WFO Juneau's latest addition, is a Meteorologist Intern originally from Rolesville, North Carolina. She received her meteorology and marine science degrees from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Carrie is the oldest of two children and enjoys horseback riding, downhill skiing, hiking, and photography.



Carrie Larsen on Zan, her 16 hand, 16 year-old, Quarter Horse.

The Winds of Change The Winds of Change

**A WARM WELCOME GOES OUT TO
ALL NEW EMPLOYEES AND
CONGRATULATIONS ON PROMOTIONS
AND RETIREMENTS!**



Richard Haller, from Anchorage, took a Meteorological Technician position at WSO McGrath effective October 13, 2009.

Wasył Hewko, from Bossier City, Louisiana, took a Meteorological Technician position at WSO St. Paul effective October 26, 2009.

Pauline Jones, from Federal Way, Washington, took a Meteorological Technician position at WSO Annette effective October 26, 2009.

Philip Beda, from Norman, Oklahoma, took a Meteorological Technician position at WSO Cold Bay effective November 9, 2009.

Emily Niebuhr, from Edina, Minnesota, took a Meteorologist Intern position at WFO Anchorage effective November 9, 2009.

Kevin Skow, from Anoka, Minnesota, took a Meteorologist Intern position at WFO Anchorage effective November 9, 2009.

Scott Beauchamp, from South Bend, Indiana, took a Meteorological Technician position at WSO Yakutat effective November 23, 2009.

David Boytor, from Twin Falls, Idaho, took a Meteorological Technician position at WSO Barrow effective January 4, 2010.

John Snell, a local hire, took an Information Technology Specialist position with SIB effective March 14, 2010.

Richard Rasch, from Palmer, Alaska, took an Information Technology Specialist position with SIB effective March 15, 2010.

Braydon Mikesell, from Eagle Mountain, Utah, took an Information Technology Specialist position with SIB effective April 11, 2010.

Promotions:

Eugene Petrescu was promoted from SOO at the AAWU to Science Infusion Technology Meteorologist at the Alaska Region Headquarters in ESSD effective October 11, 2009.

Nikole Gallegos was promoted from Office Automation Program Manager to Supervisory IT Specialist at Alaska Region Headquarters effective November 8, 2009.

Nathan Eckstein was promoted from Meteorologist to Science Operations Officer at the Alaska Aviation Weather Unit Office effective February 14, 2010.

Resigned/Retired/Transferred:

Christopher Hattings, a Meteorological Technician, transferred from WSO Barrow to WFO Pocatello, Idaho effective October 10, 2009.

Stephen Kearney, a Meteorologist Intern, transferred from WSO Nome to WFO Fairbanks effective October 11, 2009.

Jimmy Jones, a Meteorological Technician at WSO Cold Bay, resigned effective October 11, 2009.

Nathan Hardin, a Meteorologist at WFO Anchorage, resigned effective October 24, 2009.

Daniel Robinson, a Meteorologist Intern from WFO Fairbanks, transferred to WFO Goodland, Kansas effective December 5, 2009.

Dean Greimann, a Meteorological Technician of WSO St. Paul, resigned effective December 17, 2009.

James Smith, the Supervisory Meteorological Technician (Official In Charge) of WSO Cold Bay, retired effective December 31, 2009.



James Jones, the Surface Program/Coop Manager of DATAC, transferred to NWS Training Center in Kansas City, Missouri effective March 12, 2010.

Donald Smith, a Meteorological Technician from WSO Kodiak, resigned effective March 14, 2010.

Samuel Shea, a Meteorologist at WFO Anchorage, transferred to WFO Chicago, Illinois effective March 28, 2010.

Valerie Flynn, a Support Services Specialist at ARH ADMIN, transferred to GSA effective April 23, 2010.

Carrie Haisley transferred from the Center Weather Service Unit to the Alaska Aviation Weather Unit as a Meteorologist effective May 16, 2010.

Louise Fode, a Meteorologist at WFO Anchorage, resigned effective May 23, 2010.

Michael Richmond transferred from the WFO office in Fairbanks as a Meteorologist to the WFO office in Anchorage effective May 23, 2010.

Jack Endicott, the Supervisory Meteorological Technician (Official In Charge) of WSO Yakutat, retired effective June 3, 2010.

Glenn Hoffman transferred from WSO Barrow to WSO King Salmon as a Meteorological Technician effective date June 20, 2010.

YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

Employee	Position	Office	Years
Thomas Foss	Electronics Technician	EUA	40
James (Dean) Prowker	Engineering Technician	SIB	35
Karolyn Maldonado	Chief, ADMIN	HQ	35
Jack Endicott	OIC	WSO Yakutat	35
Michael Kutz	Cooperative Program Specialist	DATA	35
John Stepetin	Hydro-Meteorological Technician	WFO Anchorage	35
James Truitt	Lead Forecaster	WFO Juneau	30
Daniel Hancock	Meteorologist	WFO Fairbanks	30
John Lingaas	Warning Coordination Meteorologist	WFO Fairbanks	30
Rebecca Perry	Hydrologic Technician	APRFC	20
Stephen Ahn	Lead Forecaster	WFO Juneau	20
Kelly Harris	Meteorological Technician (MOBEU)	DATA	20
Donald Aycok	Meteorologist	WFO Fairbanks	20
Kathleen Cole	Ice Meteorologist/SST	WFO Anchorage	20
Carlos Godfrey	Meteorological Technician (MOBEU)	DATA	20
John Selman	Meteorological Technician	WSO Kodiak	20
Audrey Rubel	Regional Communications Manager	ESSD	20
James Hancock	Meteorological Technician	WSO Nome	20
David Stricklan	Hydro-Meteorological Technician	WFO Anchorage	20
Jeff Perry	Sr. Hydrologic Analysis & Support Forecaster	APRFC	20
Arleen Lunsford	Hydrologic Analysis & Support Forecaster	APRFC	15
Richard Courtney	Meteorological Technician	WSO Kodiak	15
William Ludwig	Meteorologist	WFO Anchorage	15
John Papineau	Service Hydrologist	WFO Anchorage	15
Per Pedersen	Chief, SIB	SIB	15
Thomas Lees	Electronics Technician	EUA	15
Edward Zingone	Lead Forecaster	WFO Anchorage	15
Shaun Baines	Meteorologist	WFO Anchorage	10
Paul Rockwood	Meteorological Technician	WSO King Salmon	10
Stephen Senisch	OIC	WSO St. Paul	10
Ralph Johnson	Meteorological Technician	WSO Yakutat	10

Upcoming Monthly Celebrations

June - Gay Pride Month

August 26th - Women's Equality Day

September 15 - October 15 - National Hispanic Heritage Month

As always, meeting minutes and other EEO/Diversity information may be found at

<http://eeo.arh.nwsar.gov/>. The EEO/Diversity meeting dates are:

August 4, 2010

September 15, 2010