



# Cultural Diversity

National Weather Service  
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## DIRECTOR'S CORNER By Frank Kelly

Since late October of last year, I've had the pleasure to live in Alaska and the distinct honor to work with the diverse and dedicated NWS employees in Alaska Region. As I was thinking about the diversity of our profession, I was reminded of a special meeting of the local Washington, D.C. Chapter of the American Meteorological society I attend in October of 2001. The speaker that evening was the then head of one of our federal branches of government who began his professional career as a weather observer.

William H. Rehnquist, former Chief Justice of the United States, spent his World War II service time as an Army weather observer.

By way of background, Rehnquist was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as William Donald Rehnquist and grew up in the suburb of Shorewood, Wisconsin. His father, William Benjamin Rehnquist, was a paper salesman; his mother, Margery Peck Rehnquist, was a translator and homemaker. Rehnquist changed his middle name to Hubbs, his grandmother's maiden name, during his high school years. Rehnquist is a Swedish surname.<sup>1</sup>

Rehnquist graduated from Shorewood High School in 1942.<sup>2</sup> He attended Kenyon College, in Gambier, Ohio, for one quarter in the fall of 1942, before entering the U.S. Army Air Forces. He served in World War II from March 1943 to 1946. He was put into a pre-meteorology program and was assigned to Denison University until February 1944, when the program was shut down. He served three months in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, three months in Carlsbad, New Mexico, and then went to Hondo, Texas for a few months. He was then chosen for another training program, which began at Chanute Field, Illinois, and ended at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. The program was designed to teach the maintenance and repair of weather instruments. In the summer of 1945, he went overseas and served as a weather observer in North Africa.

Of his service as a weather observer, Rehnquist stated, "... I was not a major contributor to the war effort. But I, and millions like me, learned to obey orders, do what we were told, and thereby help in a modest way to victory".

After the war ended, Rehnquist attended Stanford University with assistance under the provisions of the G.I. Bill. In 1948, he received BS and MS degrees in political science. In 1950, he went to Harvard University for an MS degree in government and then returned to Stanford Law School for his Juris Doctor in 1952.

The weather career field draws on people from all places and backgrounds making us stronger, wiser and more adaptable. We are proud of our service to our country as we answer the call every day to help make the decisions people need to make, easier to make!

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Rehnquist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Rehnquist) - cite\_note-2

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Rehnquist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Rehnquist) - cite\_note-stanford\_lane-3

# NWS Cameroon

By Joe Cannon

In July 2008, I had the opportunity to visit the Cameroon National Meteorology Office in Douala, Cameroon (La Direction de la météorologie nationale du cameroun or DMN). From our hotel, the taxi driver was challenged to find the office as the street sign was difficult to see among all the street vendors. (see photo below right) DMN personnel include a Director and Deputy Director, a few other office staff, and an operations office. (see photo below left) Not much larger than some of our Weather Service Offices, the operations office had a link to EUMETSAT (<http://www.eumetsat.int>) through cooperation with the German Met Center. They had computers to receive and display satellite imagery and surface observations. Only one radar is available in the country - at the Douala airport.

DMN maintains a web site (<http://www.meteo-cameroon.net/>) which is mostly in French, the National language from the



Vendors and Joe in front of the Cameroon National Meteorology Office



Joe Cannon (right) and NRL colleague Sam Brand (left) meeting with members of the Cameroon National Meteorology Office. The members are (L-R), a forecaster, the climatologist, and the assistant director.

days as a former French colony. A 24-hour forecast covering the entire country (Cameroon is about the size of California) is published on the web at 12:00 local time on workdays. The forecast is published on some days in French and other days in English. Unfortunately, DMN only operates during normal workdays (Monday - Friday), which means there are no forecasts for Sundays and Mondays. The Cameroonian government does not have the funds to operate DMN for more hours.

Fortunately, weather in Cameroon is fairly predictable. There are two seasons - a rainy season in the summer months and



a “not as rainy” season during the winter months which corresponds to the seasonal location of the ITCZ (Intertropical Convergence Zone). One interesting weather phenomena are the squalls in spring. These form when easterly waves travel across the central African continent and meet low level moist SSW flow from the Cameroon coast.

We visited one of the nearby observation sites. This site, near a small gravel airport, was manned by a woman looking after her two children. She recorded instrument readings five times a day from an old, worn single office building and phoned in her readings to DMN once per day.

From Alaska, the flight time transcends two overnights - leaving on a Friday night and arriving Cameroon on Sunday night. Cameroon is on time zone UTC +1 or 9 hours ahead of AKDT. On the flight, it was most interesting meeting Cameroonians who now live and work in Europe, that were flying down to visit parents and other relatives. Upon arrival at the Douala Airport, it is rather chaotic as many people volunteer to help you with your bags on your way to a taxi. Prior to closing the taxi door to depart, at least 10 people were expecting tips.

Douala, at over 2 million people, is the largest city and a major port, not only for Cameroon, but for many neighboring countries in West Africa. City streets were busy and vendors were everywhere selling goods. (see photo to right) With school not in session, many teenagers were selling ground nuts (peanuts) and banana chips to raise money for the school year.



*Visiting the central market in Douala, Cameroon. One could find anything for sale there. Note the muddy ground. Vendors quickly covered their items with plastic covers when it rained - which was frequent.*

Cell phones were popular and in most cases, the only way to communicate - thus phone cards were for sale everywhere. Some vendors, particularly those selling artisan goods can be quite aggressive. Cameroonians seemed to be pleasant people and appreciated my limited French vocabulary. With the higher fuel prices, the people are struggling more. There were many places along the streets where cheaper petrol was sold in used 2 liter plastic bottles.

In the morning, there were older ladies selling a stew that locals, including other vendors, would pour onto bread or rice for breakfast. Though I didn't try this, I had a lot of grilled fresh fish (sole, grouper, and barracuda) and fried bananas for each meal. Stewed vegetables and chicken were also common. The fresh pineapple was delicious!

One of the port pilots invited me to ride a cargo ship out of the Douala Harbor. We boarded an Liberian flagged outbound ship with a Russian crew. (see top photo on next page) The ship



*Joe Cannon (left) in the pilothouse of an outgoing vessel. The ship's captain is in discussion with Capt. Tomdio Pius (forefront), a Cameroonian pilot.*

was headed out to the Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire). We rode the ship out about 3 hours before debarking on a small 50 ft. pilot vessel. The surprise was boarding an inbound 25,000 GT RO-RO vessel using a rope ladder. (see photo below) The ship was Norwegian flagged with an Asian crew. The pilot carefully berthed the ship alongside the pier using only one tug. Small fishing vessels in the channel, which looked like tiny specks in the water from the pilothouse, managed to get out of the way.

As long as one takes the proper precautions, Cameroon can be an exciting country to visit. I only saw a small part of the large diverse country. Getting to know and work with local people gives you a unique perspective - much different than the tourist perspective (true for any country you visit). By visiting Cameroon, you get a chance to see rainforests and exotic birds, elephants, historic architecture, and palm-fringed volcanic-dust beaches. At the same time, with the chaos, noise, and pollution in the large city, you appreciate the life and solid infrastructure available in your home country. □



*25,000 GT RO-RO Vessel - The inbound cargo vessel - about 9 stories high. After being dropped off from a pilot vessel, one climbed up the rope ladder onto the accommodation ladder. Once on the vessel, the pilothouse is several floors up, near the top of the ship.*



# ANDEAN EXPERIENCE 2008

By Michael Richmond  
WFO Fairbanks

## Part I: Andean Experience 2008: Destination Bolivia

As a NWS meteorologist and IMET, living in Fairbanks, Alaska, I have an avid interest in outdoor/wilderness, and fitness-oriented pursuits (that's why I live here). When looking for a new part of the World for traveling, I wanted a unique place with extreme geography and interesting culture, that would prove challenging, physically and culturally. I have long been attracted to high mountainous regions. So after a few weeks of research last summer, I decided the South American country of Bolivia would provide what I was seeking. It has mountains reaching above 21,000 feet, the two highest large cities in the World, but with a still relatively low population density in the countryside, and an interesting culture dominated by the indigenous Aymara and Quechua (descendents of the Inca) groups. Also, it is in close proximity to Macchu Picchu, the Inca ruins just across the border in Peru, which I wanted to visit.

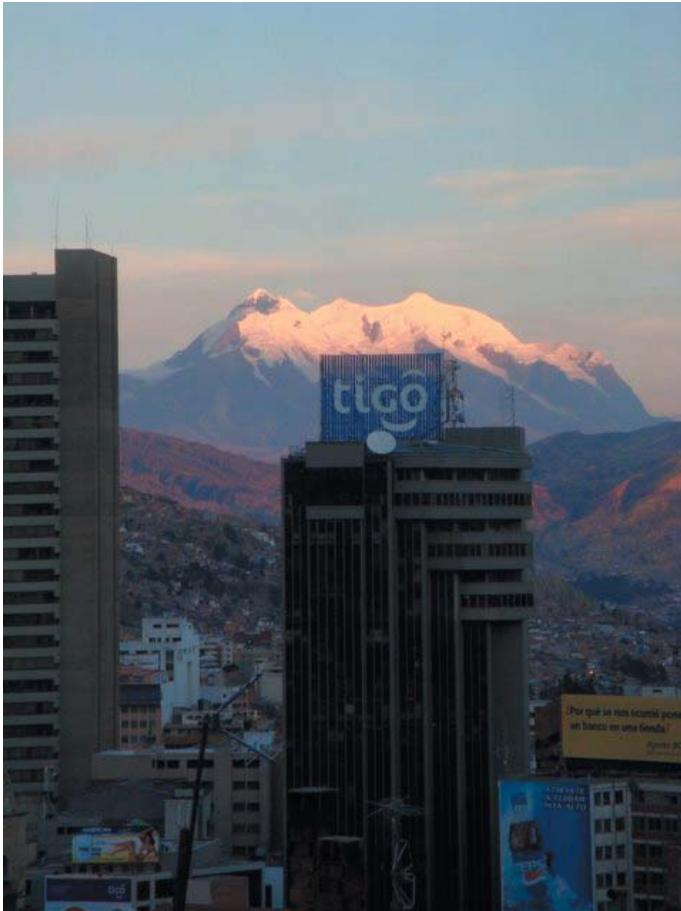
I flew into La Paz, Bolivia on October 7, 2008, from Miami, a seven hour overnight flight. The airport there, in the adjoining city of El Alto, is at 13,500 feet, and the complex of El Alto/La Paz forms the highest capital city in the World. My guidebook had warned that some tourists have been known to collapse walking off the plane, from the effects of that altitude, but I was just a little light-headed, and more tired, since sleeping on the plane was broken up by the usual interruptions of international air travel.



The taxi ride down from El Alto to La Paz, which is a thousand feet lower, was a classic Latin American driving experience. Needless to say, the ride was terrifying, especially since it was 7 a.m. and I was tired and groggy. Bolivian drivers view traffic as a challenge, and stoplights as suggestions, to be followed only if absolutely necessary. I've had similar experiences in Mexico as well. As you can see in, the city of La Paz flows down a canyon, and extends to as low as 10,000 feet.



City of La Paz



*Illimani summit in the background of La Paz*



*Inca ruins Macchu Picchu*

I had two goals for this trip, to summit Illimani, the extinct 21,230 foot volcano that towers over La Paz, and to visit the Inca ruins of Macchu Picchu, across the border in Peru. I'm not a mountaineer in the technical climbing sense, but I was told by the guiding service, a local agency run from La Paz, that if you are fit and acclimated, summiting Illimani is possible without extensive mountaineering experience and training. I run two to three marathons a year, and also do many long hikes and cross-country ski outings, so I figured it would be possible for me. I designed my whole trip around these objectives - I would stay above 12,000

feet for two weeks, touring the high areas of Bolivia before the Illimani climb. Then after that, I would take the bus over to Cuzco, Peru, followed by the train, to Macchu Picchu, which is between 8,000 and 9,000 feet.



*Zona Sur, the upper-class part of La Paz*

My first three days were spent seeing the sights and attractions and around La Paz. The city is like many in Latin America where large areas are open markets, with sections of streets selling certain items. Thus, there are blue jean streets, fresh produce streets, electrical supply streets, etc. There are supermarkets and other large stores in the more affluent area of the city, Zona Sur, which, with



it's skyscrapers, embassies, and fancy restaurants, provided quite a contrast to the crowded, poorer areas of La Paz/El Alto. During these three days, I visited the highest ski area in the World, Chacaltaya, the base of which is at 17,384 feet. Unfortunately, the glacier which used to provide the base for the ski runs has melted back, so skiing there now is only possible just after fairly infrequent, heavier snowfalls. When I was there, it was snowing, but there was only about three to four inches covering the slopes. Moisture becomes more available in October, which is spring in Bolivia, and summer is the wet season. A thunderstorm developed while the tour group I was with were wandering around outside in the heavy falling snow. We all rushed quickly in to the lodge. I had



*Plaza Murillo*

a very bad experience on a 27 mile hike/run last year on the Kesugi Ridge trail, near Denali National Park, here in Alaska. I was trapped in a strong storm with continuous lightning above timberline for two hours with no shelter and barely adequate clothing. An experience I've vowed never to repeat!

Because of road conditions, the tour bus, which was not four wheel-drive, had to



*Chacaltaya*

pull over at about 15,000 feet, and we had to walk about two miles up to Chacaltaya on the road. I had just a light 15 lb. pack on and felt fine, no headache or nausea, but on the steeper portions, I did have to stop every few minutes to catch my breath. Once I was up at the lodge though, I felt great, had a snack and thought to myself, "I am doing pretty good and should be ready for my Illimani trip when it starts. After all, this is only my second day at high altitude and I've got 12 days left."





# 2008 SKYWARN™ Recognition Day December 6, 2008 (0000 - 2400 UTC.)

By Peggy Perales

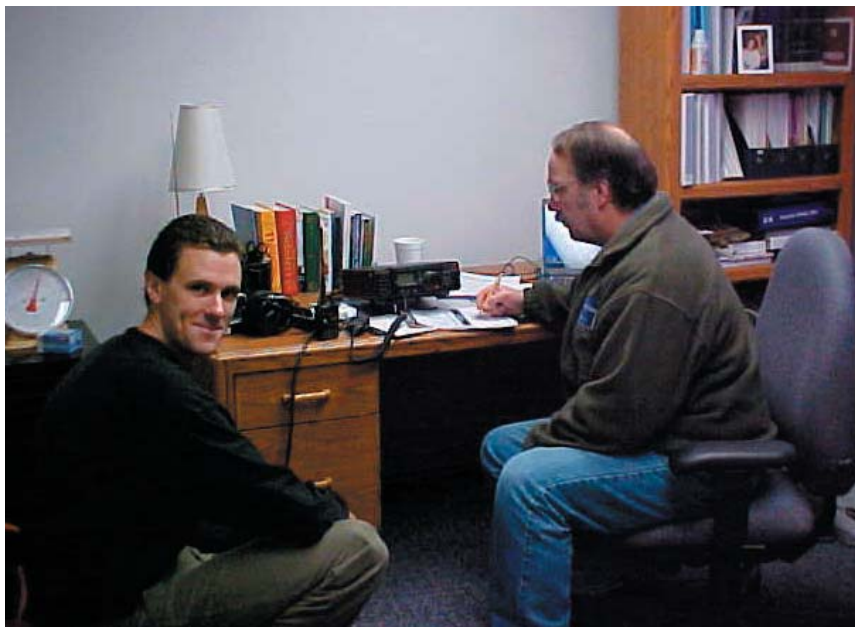
## WSO Valdez HAMS it up....

WSO Valdez hosted the local HAM radio Club and, radio operator, Robert Rountree in support of SKYWARN™ Recognition Days. SKYWARN™ Recognition Day was developed in 1999 by the National Weather Service and the American Radio Relay League. It celebrates the contributions that volunteer SKYWARN™ radio operators make to the National Weather Service. During the day SKYWARN™ operators visit NWS offices and contact other radio operators across the world.

Peggy Perales (OIC) and Dave Noble (Met. Tech) were able to spend time with Robert as he contacted stations throughout Alaska and participated in the weather transmission drill. Peggy and Dave learned how the radio operates, its strengths and weaknesses, and its importance as a backup in emergency situations.



*Peggy discusses the use of the radio and its importance in Valdez with Robert. She is assisted by her puppy (in training) Bo.*



*Dave talks to Robert about frequencies and wavelengths*

The first SKYWARN event was held on November 27, 1999. Hams participated from 56 National Weather Service offices and made an accumulated total of 15,888 contacts with other operators across the world. Hams from all 50 states were contacted. Amateurs from 63 countries were also contacted that first year.

The ham who worked the most National Weather Service stations in 1999 was AB5KP from Pine Bluff, Arkansas. He worked 46 of the 56 sites.



## *Cold Bay School Career Day*

In early February, Jim Smith headed over to the Cold Bay School, a single building for K-12 grades, to give a couple of weather talks on weather observing and forecasting as a career. The high school students were very interested in the education requirements needed to get a degree.

If the weather cooperated, Jim planned to put a balloon up the following day. □



Quilts at the 2008 State Fair in Palmer. *Photos by Alberta Vieira.*





## Bristol Bay

By Peggy Perales

**L**iving in Bristol Bay can be quite the experience, but you need to be prepared.

**T**emperatures between -20°F and -40°F are common during the winter, as are temperature in the high 60's to low 70's in the summer. Don't let the temperature difference stop you though ... it is a beautiful place to be with plenty to see and do.

**D**uring the spring break up, drive to the city dock and watch the beluga whales come up the river. Thirteen miles from the ocean, the whales scrub their skin clean of winter grime and feast on hatching salmon and other fish that transits the Naknek River.

**I**n the summer – you can hang out on the river, catching king salmon, red salmon, silver and pinks, in addition to fishing in Naknek Lake for the elusive trophy sized rainbow trout.



*Naknek River*



Not into fishing – that’s ok – you can take to the trails and explore the tundra and hills surrounding King Salmon and Naknek, hike down the beach for hundreds of miles, camp, and, in general, become one with nature. Kayaks and canoes are a common sight on the lake and river, along with jet skies and other modes of fun.



Fall brings a burst of gold and orange that will exceed your imagination. The trees and tundra colors are amazing and beautiful to see during their transition to winter. Hunting for moose is also a favorite sport for many.

Winter – cold, snowy, but still lots to do. Snow machines and cross country skies are the vehicle of choice during the winter, as well as 4-wheel ATV (which are used year round). Don’t let the cold keep you in, bundle up and take a walk to see snowshoe hares, eagles, and fox as they are plentiful year round. □



More from the Alaska State Fair: Extreme vegetables and a dinner plate dahlia.  
*Photos by Alberta Vieira.*

## Scandinavia Anyone?

By Alberta Vieira



*Vigeland Sculpture Park*

Last October I tagged along on my husband's business trip to Oslo, Norway. Because it is so far away, we decided to make it an extended adventure. We spent four days in Oslo, flew to Copenhagen, Denmark (for four days), and then took the train across the inlet to Malmo, Sweden for a day.

I would not have put Scandinavia on my bucket list. My assumptions were that it was a place of very cold temperatures, too cold to enjoy being there. As it was, Oslo is at the same latitude as Anchorage. It has oceanic influences

that minimize the variations in temperatures. So, it doesn't get very cold in the winter, or very hot in the summer. In fact, in mid-October, it was warmer than Anchorage.

We had two days to look around in Oslo before my husband had to dedicate his time to his conference. Architecture, Vikings, and local food were our main interests. We took in as many museums as possible. The National Museum had works of some famous people, but mainly those after the renaissance and mostly Scandinavian, French, Spanish, and Flemish artists. You realize immediately that Edvard Munch, the painter of the 'Scream', is the country's pride and joy. I visited a park that had about 60 bronze sculptures and relief pieces throughout the park. All the pieces were by one artist, Gustav Vigeland, who does some interesting pieces like a man being attacked by babies. The park was huge, beautiful, and, of course, interesting.

After my husband's conference was finished, we flew to Copenhagen, Denmark (also known as Kopenhagen). While there, we did a lot of walking, sightseeing, and more museum visiting. One of our favorite exhibits was the Body Worlds, which is one of several exhibits traveling the world. The exhibits of real human bodies do not have any skin so that one can examine everything from muscles to tendons, and bones to organs. The exhibit even included parts that were diseased. I believe most would find it fascinating.



*"Man playing with four children" - bronze located on The Bridge in Vigeland Sculpture Park.*



We were able to spend one day in Sweden after a 20-minute train ride across an inlet. We spent time mainly at a park bird-watching, a couple of churches, and a chocolate shop.

Some of what we experienced in Sweden surprised me. Cheese and Danishes are a big deal there and were all very good. We found quite a few McDonalds and Burger King Restaurants. While Norway was big on coffee shops, Denmark had more pastry shops. We entered several of these shops with our eyes bigger than our stomachs many times. I didn't think we ate that much and surely all the walking we did would burn off the calories from the pastries, but that was just a dream. We thought that the pastries (made of butter, sugar, sometimes chocolate, and always a dash of flour) were worth every calorie.

Scandinavians are serious about their art and museums. There are quite a few museums that have something of interest for everyone. One of our favorites was an art history museum in Copenhagen. The art side had both native and international exhibits, while the history side had an extensive Roman and Egyptian exhibit. There were even coins from the time of Caesar there.

I found out Vikings didn't wear horns on helmets as they would have been detrimental in battle. No one knows where the idea of horns came from, although the businesses still capitalize on the idea.

In Scandinavia, people are taught English, and speak with an accent typical of an American anchorperson, and speak it as well as their native language. Nevertheless, phrases like, 'thank you', 'excuse me', 'I'm sorry', and 'you're welcome', are rarely heard. It is simply a different culture.

Something else I found interesting, men expect to be taken care of before women. I was not exposed to it enough to let it really bother me.

Still, it was a beautiful place to visit. Even in late October, plant life flourishes, with the exception of the tulips that they are famous for because tulips bloom in the spring. I saw a different side of art, history, culture, and it was all very interesting. I was worried about being short since I heard Scandinavians were very tall. Come to find out, they weren't any different from Alaskans.

I did not have Norway or Denmark on my bucket list, but I am really happy to have experienced the countries, and hope to get back to see more of the area. □



## *Anchorage Forecast Office Loves Cookies!*

*By Alberta Vieira*

Last October, the Anchorage Forecast Office held a cookie contest. People were asked to submit two dozen cookies of their favorite recipe, along with the written recipe. They were also allowed to submit as many different recipes as they liked. The cookies were then judged by the managers of each Anchorage Forecast Office department. The baker of the best cookies was awarded a gift certificate to a store of their choice while the winners in specific categories would win a gift certificate to Cold Stone. After the judging, the cookies would be sold with the proceeds going to the winner's choice of charity.

Altogether, there were 15 entries with several people entering more than one recipe. Chocolate chip cookies were the most common, although a variety of cookies graced the table. Interestingly, more men participated in the baking than women.

The managers (Bob Hopkins, Jim Kincaid, Robin Radlein, and Tony Hall) asked to judge came up with their own categories and an overall winner. Tony Hall was away on business and Gene Petrescu, the AAWU SOO, was able to step in for him. Jackie Purcell happened to be in the building attending an AMS meeting and was roped-into joining in on the judging.

They found Becky Perry's *Katie's Cheesecake Delight* cookies were the all-around favorite. The judges decided on five more recipes that deserved a placing.

The categories/winners of the cookie contest were...

Best chocolate cookie...Brian Hagenbuch's- *Andie's Candies*

Best roll cookie.....Becky Perry's- *Pecan Sugar Cookies*

Best frosted.....Todd Foisey's- *Sugar Cookies*

Best fruit/nut cookie....Alberta Vieira's- *Pistachio Cookies*

Best dunking cookie.....David Vonderheide's- *Sugar Butterscotch Cookies*

Overall Best Cookie.....Becky Perry's - *Cheesecake Delights* (Raspberry White Chocolate Cookies)

Proceeds from the cookie sale, a little over 80 dollars, went to The Women and Children in Crisis Center. Judges had a good time and the cookies were enjoyed by all.



Becky Perry and Jackie Purcell with Becky's *Katie's Cheesecake Delight* cookies.

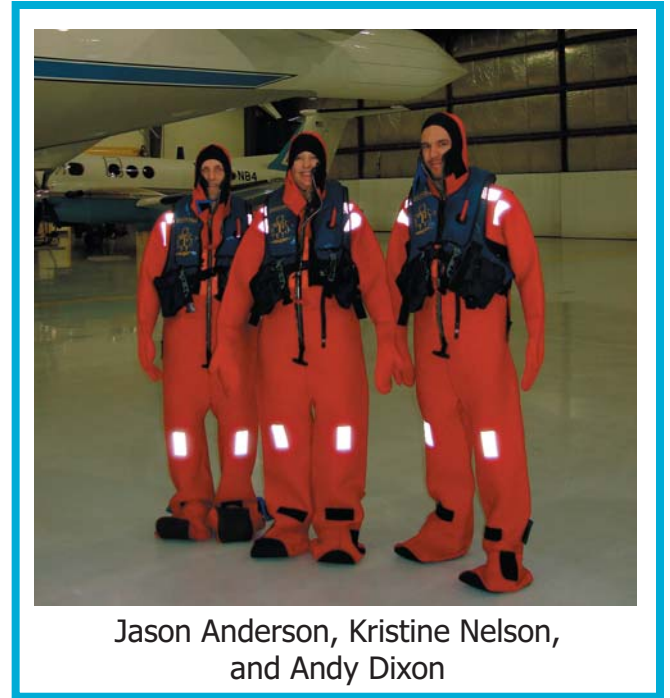


## ***The Adventure of a Lifetime: Flying with the NOAA Hurricane Hunters***

By Kristine Nelson

Andy Dixon, Jason Anderson, and I breathlessly arrived at the Anchorage Airport FAA Hanger at 11:45 a.m. It was too good to be true. We were going to fly with the NOAA Hurricane Hunters.

While the NOAA scientists and co-pilot conducted pre-flight drills and research, the pilot of the P3 aircraft took us down to the airplane for a required safety run through and to take photos. After a few fun shots of the airplane and a group shot under the “hurricanes flown” decals, which numbered 77, we got down to the safety training. The goal was to get into the survival suits in less than 2 minutes. We were done in 1 minute 50 seconds. While we were pleased with our accomplishments, the thought of really having to put these suits on because of an aircraft emergency, made our mouths dry and our knees shaky. The flight plan was to fly over the Bering Sea near the edge of the ice field. The odds of surviving an aircraft ditching even while wearing a survival suit seemed pretty grim.



Jason Anderson, Kristine Nelson,  
and Andy Dixon

Around 1:45 p.m., the pre-flight briefing took place. Weather conditions, Volcano activity, and flight plans were briefed to the group. The P3 was backed out of its warm hanger and onto the tarmac where falling snow and a brisk wind awaited. We climbed onboard and tried to stay out of the way. Eleven NOAA Hurricane Hunter employees flew onboard the flight; while at least two others monitored the mission and provided support from the ground. On board, there were two flight engineers, a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, two NESDIS scientists, a communications technician, a person responsible for sending dropsondes and temporary water buoys out the free fall chute, a data quality control and monitoring position, and Barry, the mission liaison and coordinator for the flight.

The plane started to move, so we all buckled in. Surprisingly, we are asked to unbuckle and go into the cockpit. This was so opposite from the, “everyone must be seated with their seatbelt on or we can’t push back” situation on commercial flights. As we squeeze into the cockpit, they told us the weight was needed to help with steering on the icy tarmac. Just before takeoff, we were instructed to take our seats and buckle up.

The P3 Hurricane Hunter airplane had a LAN system. There were monitors at every station to watch all kinds of meteorological and aircraft data such as temperature, wind speed, ground speed, pitch, tilt, etc. Webcams on the front, bottom, and sides of the aircraft were operational as well as radars in the base of the aircraft and nose. Graphical sectional maps with GPS locaters tracked the aircraft locations as well as a

regular car GPS locator on the map of Alaska. Through the headsets, we could monitor communications with the ANC Tower, ANC Approach (TRACON), and Center (ARTCC) Controllers.



*Web cam of takeoff*

Lift off. We watched our takeoff via the webcam view and mapped the departure pattern using the GPS tracker. Once the aircraft was at cruise altitude, we could move around the cabin, get snacks and drinks from the back, and talk to people. For the most part, we strained our eyes out the window hoping for a break in the clouds.

Our track took us just south of Mt. Redoubt. Clouds obscured the 10,000-foot mountain peak. At 14,000 feet, we were flying in Instrument Meteorological Conditions (IMC) and saw the sun as a dim glow through the clouds at times. Farther west, the clouds thinned and we were able to view the wide-open frozen spaces of southwestern Alaska.

Finally, we were over the ice. The patterns, ridges, different thicknesses, and varying compositions of the ice lent itself to beautiful images. We all burned through hundreds of pictures trying to capture the essence of what we were seeing. Near the edge of the ice, the ocean swell was visible as the ice rode the waves. Then, the water was ice-free. This is where we needed to be for the first part of the mission. Back and forth in a north to south pattern, we flew several passes until the time was right for the second half of the mission.

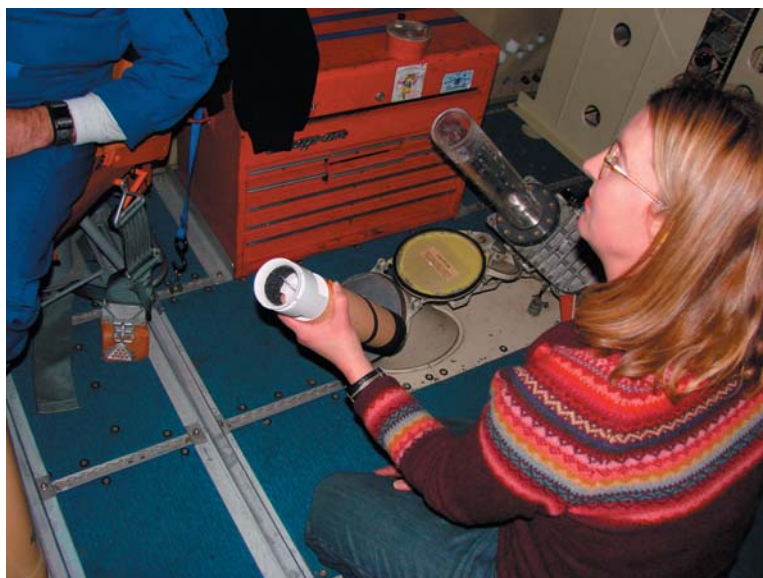


The second half of the mission's destination was just east of Kodiak Island to verify Quick Scat wind data from a polar orbiting satellite. The timing was crucial. They had to be east of Kodiak Island around 8:30 p.m. to match their data against the wind data from satellite calculations. The first dropsonde was released at 8:00 p.m. The second dropsonde and a temporary buoy with line that would unroll to a depth of 1200 feet to measure the ocean temperature was on schedule for 8:17 p.m.



I asked to drop the dropsonde into the chute and was told, "Yes". Awesome! The dropsonde scientist gave me the 1-minute signal and said that when he lifted the hatch, I was to throw the dropsonde in the hole. When the time came, I found I didn't have to throw at all because it was sucked from my grip. It's a good thing the free fall chute was only big enough for items smaller than the length of an adult shoe.

The temporary buoy was encased in a 4-foot long tube, which is placed over the free fall chute. The force of the pressure difference sucked the buoy out of the airplane



*Kristine preparing to release the dropsonde.*

with a giant slurping sound. Then it was over. The next dropsonde was sent out at 8:30 p.m. By then, we were all getting kind of tired. It was dark out, we couldn't take pictures, and we were headed towards home.

We nibbled on our snacks, chatted or read our books, and followed our progress towards Anchorage Approach using the GPS locator. Soon enough we were on final approach to Anchorage. Using the webcam view out the front of the plane and the GPS tracker on the Sectional map, we watched ourselves land.



*Interior of the P3 Hurricane Hunter airplane*

During the final taxi, we were again asked to unbuckle and pile into the cockpit. It still felt weird to be unbuckled with the aircraft in motion. Soon the aircraft was safely parked. We thanked everyone, got off the plane, and said our final farewell to the aircraft that took us on the adventure of a lifetime with the NOAA Hurricane Hunters. □





## WFO Juneau's Chili Cook-off

By Ursula Jones

In late February, Brian Bezenek and Andy McLaurin organized a chili cook off at WFO Juneau. Seven people brought in their homemade chili for judging and to share with the office. Each entry received a number, so you didn't know whose chili was whose, and everyone tried each of the seven entries. Also included on the numeric label was whether the chili was sweet, hot, and super hot. My first time through, I tried every type and was fascinated that chili could have so many different flavors. I was looking forward to tasting the spicy ones and was not disappointed when I tried them. Not only were they hot, temperature-wise, but they were spicy as well - just what I like!



L-R: Carl Dierking, Pete Boyd, Paul Shannon, Kimberly Vaughan, Larry Vaughan, Jim Truitt



Andy with his prize - the Bent Spoon Award.

Everyone had an opportunity to submit their vote of whose they thought was the best. The voting was done simply by using a piece of paper and recording the number of your favorite. I submitted my vote and I also gave an honorable mention for a dish of chili empanadas - even though some people thought that they weren't really chili.

When all was said and done, Andy McLaurin's "Hearty No-Beans" chili won first place and Tom Ainsworth's "Yes, You Can" chili came in second. As the day progressed, the chili gradually disappeared as it was enjoyed by all. The chili cook-off was a pleasant distraction and I am looking forward to next year's event.





## ALASKA STATE FAIR HISTORY

1936 - The Matanuska Valley Fair Association was formed and they decided to hold a four-day Fair from September 4 through September 7. Admission was set at \$1 for adults or \$2 for a season pass; admission was free for children under 8. That year's events included the crowning of the

Fair queen, a baby show, boxing matches, horse races, dances, a rodeo and baseball games. There were also hundreds of agricultural entries, including

giant cabbages, grain, carrots, onions, celery, peas and other vegetables.



1941 - The giant cabbage contest tradition began in when Colonel Ohlson, manager of the Alaska Railroad, offered a \$25 prize for the largest cabbage. Max Sherrod of the Valley took the prize with a 23 pounder.

1942 - 46 - "War jitters" contributed to a five-year hiatus of the Fair

1950 - Saw the first carnival rides at the Fair.

1951 - An air show was added.

By 1956, attendance had grown enough to justify the Fair Board's petition to the Alaska Legislature for official designation as the Alaska State Fair.

1960 - The Fair celebrated its 25th anniversary. Attendance reached 30,000 including an appearance by John F. Kennedy.

1967 - The Fair's first year in its present 300-acre location. Total attendance reached 72,000.

1998 - Attendance reached a record 361,804 people and 10,890 exhibit entries in the 18-day Fair.

2000 - Barb Everingham set the current record for the largest cabbage with her 105.6-pound entry.

2003 - 312,419 visitors attend the Fair over a 12-day period.

2008 - It was estimated a total of 295,530 people attended the Fair, where they viewed 7,950 exhibit entries and browsed the wares of 475 vendors, selling everything from food to clothing and RVs to hot tubs.

The Fair's 2008 efforts earned it an award from the American Bus Association, which named the Fair one of the top 100 events in North America. This annual award recognizes 100 of the best events for group travel in the U.S. and Canada. □



Reference: <http://www.alaskastatefair.org/aboutus/history.html>

# The Winds of Change The Winds of Change



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

Angel Corona transferred from WFO Tucson, Arizona to take the Supervisory Meteorological Technician position at DATAQ effective August 31.

Peggy Perales transferred from WSO King Salmon to WSO Valdez taking the Supervisory Meteorological Technician position effective September 14.

Larry Rundquist was promoted to Service Coordination Hydrologist at the APRFC effective September 14.

Aimee Devaris transferred from NWS HQ in Silver Spring, Maryland to take the Deputy Director position in ARH effective September 28.

Francis (Frank) Kelly transferred from NWS HQ in Silver Spring, Maryland to ARH taking the Regional Director position effective October 27.

Joseph Galbraith arrived from Portland, Oregon taking the Physical Scientist (Watchstander) position at the ATWC effective November 24.

Debra Elliott transferred from WFO Grand Junction, Colorado to WSO King Salmon as a Supervisory Meteorological Technician effective December 21.

James Montesi, a local hire, took the Hydrologist position at the APRFC effective February 1.

### **Electronics Technician:**

ATWC: Scott Langley, a local hire from Wasilla was effective September 2.

WFO Fairbanks: Charles (Tom) Miller transferred from WFO Birmingham, Alabama effective October 12.

Todd Redinius, a local hire from North Pole, Alaska, was effective November 10.

Electronics Unit, Anchorage: Drew Bouvette transferred from WFO Des Moines, Iowa effective December 21.

### **Maintenance Mechanic:**

AFSU/SIB: Eddy Allen, a local hire, was effective January 20.

John Allen arrived from Seattle, Washington and was effective February 2.



**Meteorologist:**

WFO Juneau: Edward Liske arrived from Rapid City, South Dakota effective September 2.

WFO Anchorage: Joshua Maloy arrived from Lawrence, Massachusetts effective December 8.

**Met Intern:**

WFO Anchorage: Christian Cassell moved from Raleigh, North Carolina effective October 14.

Nathan Hardin moved from Greenville, North Carolina effective October 14.

**Met Tech:**

WSO Valdez: David Noble arrived from Delta Junction, Alaska effective September 15.

WSO Kotzebue: Jeremy McMaster arrived from Rolla, Missouri effective November 10.

WSO St. Paul: Dean Greimann arrived from Fredonia, Arizona effective November 24.

WSO Barrow: James Salzwedel arrived from Little Lake, Michigan effective February 17.

**Resigned/Transferred to another agency or NWS Office:**

Jeffrey Swanstrum, Maintenance Mechanic, transferred from AFSU/SIB to the National Park Service in Port Angeles, Washington effective October 25.

Sydney Hausding, Maintenance Mechanic, resigned from AFSU/SIB effective November 8.

Scott Swank, Computer Program Manager, resigned from ARH SIB effective January 3.

Daniel Mundy, Meteorological Technician, resigned from WSO McGrath effective February 6.

Rex Morgan, Supervisory Meteorological Technician, of WSO St. Paul transferred to WFO Glasgow, Montana effective February 16.

**YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION**

*Since September 2008*

<b>Employee</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>Years</b>
Gary Hufford	Regional Scientist	ARH	40
Kim Custer	Electronics Systems Analyst	WFO Juneau	35
Bob Hopkins	Meteorologist in Charge	WFO Anchorage	35
Art Puustinen	Electronics Technician	WFO Juneau	35
David Cole	Information Technology Specialist	WFO Anchorage	30
Joel Curtis	Warning Coordination Meteorologist	WFO Juneau	30
Carven Scott	Chief	ESSD	30
Jerry Holtshouser	Meteorologist	AAWU	30
David Eddy	Lead Meteorologist	AAWU	25
Edward Wentworth	Lead Meteorologist	AAWU	25
James Coe	Hydrologist	APRFC	20
James Nelson	Science & Operations Officer	WFO Anchorage	15
Kristine Nelson	Meteorologist in Charge	CWSU	15
Daniel Schimelpfenig	Meteorologist Technician	WSO Yakutat	15
Rex Morgan	Official in Charge	WSO St. Paul	10

## Monthly Celebrations

March - National Women's History Month

April 22 - Earth Day

April 23 - Take our Daughters and Sons to Work day

May - National Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

As always, meeting minutes and other EEO/Diversity information may be found at <http://eeo.arh.nwsar.gov/>. The next EEO/Diversity meeting will be May 19.

### **Officers and SEPM's for FY09 are:**

Chair – Ursula Jones, WFO Juneau

Vice-Chair – Peggy Perales, WSO King Salmon

Recorder – Alberta Vieira, AAWU

Alternate Recorder - Ursula Jones, WFO Juneau

Alaska Native/American Indian - Carven Scott, WFO Anchorage

Asian/Pacific Islander – Jocelyn Perry, EUA

Person with Disabilities – Gina Sturm, WSO Barrow

Hispanic-American – Alberta Vieira, AAWU

Upward Mobility – Nikole Gallegos, ARH/SIB

Federal Women's – Amy Bedal, WFO Anchorage

African American - Carlos Godfrey, ARH/DATAC, MOBEU

Diversity Catalyst - Peggy Perales, WSO King Salmon



More State  
Fair photos by  
Alberta Vieira

