

# NEWSLETTER

**National Weather  
Association**

NO. 09 – 1 JANUARY 2009

## ***A Note from NWA's New President Mike Vescio***

As I enter my term as President, I can't help but reflect upon my nearly two decades of membership in this great organization. Our current Executive Director, Steve Harned, was responsible for getting me involved in



Mike Vescio, Current NWA President

the NWA in the early 1990s. Steve served as NWA President in 1992. That year he also happened to be my boss at the NWS Forecast Office in Raleigh where I was serving as a Journeyman Forecaster. The 1993 Annual Meeting was scheduled for Raleigh and Steve needed me to serve as Program Chairman. To get an idea of how annual meetings were run, I attended the 1992 conference in St. Louis and was quite impressed! The NWA was (and still is) obviously a great organization for those focusing on operational meteorology.

Through the years I have been very fortunate to serve in a variety of roles and have had the opportunity to witness the many volunteers who selflessly donate their time and talent to NWA; not only keep this organization strong, but also move it forward. Recent years have seen great progress made in many areas, and my job this year is to work with the Executive Director, officers, council and committees to ensure that progress continues.

Some items that we plan to address this year include: improving our Web presence with a members-only functionality, evaluating the NWA Strategic Plan, forming a Societal Impacts Committee and reducing the time it takes for manuscripts to get published in the *National Weather Digest*. I never expected to be President of the NWA, but I have had a great opportunity to learn from and work with (and sometimes for) several excellent past presidents. I would like to extend a special thanks to the outgoing President John Scala who did a fantastic job in 2008, and who taught me a lot throughout the year.

I will keep you informed of our progress and important NWA announcements in the monthly newsletters, and I also plan to try something a little different, too. For at least a couple of newsletters, I would like to interview NWA members, get their perspective on the organization and publish it for you, our members. Finally, I would like each of you to consider attending this year's annual meeting in Norfolk, Va. Only a small portion of our membership attend these meetings, but it is a wonderful opportunity for the public, private and academic sectors to gather, learn and network. Planning is already well underway and the theme for the meeting is "*The Future is Now: New Technologies and Techniques to Support the Weather Enterprise and Society : 2010 and Beyond*" (please see page 5 for details and call for abstracts). Much more information will be forthcoming throughout the year, but now is the time to be thinking about a study or topic that you would like to present at the meeting. Here's to a great 2009 for you and for the NWA!

**Mike Vescio**  
**NWA President**

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*See Virginia Beach's King Neptune in person — a short drive from this year's Annual Meeting in Norfolk, Va.*

*(See page 5)*



***National Weather Association founder passes away in January. Details on page 3.***



## Chasing Thundersnow Could Lead to More Accurate Forecasts

The job of one University of Missouri researcher could chill to the bone, but his research could make weather predicting more accurate. Patrick Market, associate professor of atmospheric science in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, is chasing storms in the dead of winter in order to release weather balloons that will produce data about the little-known phenomenon of thundersnow.

“One of the things we don’t understand is how the cloud becomes electrified,” Market said. “We hope to determine how the atmosphere is becoming unstable.”

Market and his storm-chasing students are searching for winter storms in order to release weather balloons into the storm every 90 minutes over a 24-hour period. The balloons carry boxes with a barometer to measure pressure, a thermometer to measure temperature, and a hydrometer to measure humidity.

Market uses a GPS to monitor wind speed and direction of the balloons. This information covers the five things that are most important for a meteorologist to know for accurate predictions, according to Market.

“It has been decades since a detailed study with modern weather balloons has been done to see how the atmosphere destabilizes for summer thunderstorms, much less the winter storms,” Market said.

“So we are taking this tried-and-true tool of the meteorology trade and applying it to the very specific instance of heavy snowfall in the winter.”

Once the weather balloons are launched, they provide detailed readings of every layer of the atmosphere. More detailed readings and data provide better and more accurate forecasting.

“We get thunderstorms in all seasons. That means something is making the atmosphere unstable,” Market said.

“Thunderstorms are often associated with heavy rainfall or heavy snowfall. It’s just as important to get it right in the spring, summer or winter.”

The phenomenon known as thundersnow is not understood very well. It is defined as a snowstorm with thunder and lightning that can bring heavy snowfalls of 8 to 12 inches. Tracking such storms can be quite a challenge.

“Often, these winter storms cause us to travel through inclement weather in order to get to the area where the weather balloons should be launched,” Market said. “During

travel, the heater in the vehicle cannot be on because the instruments need to be kept cold.”

*Terra Daily Staff writers  
Columbia MO (SPX) Jan. 20, 2009*



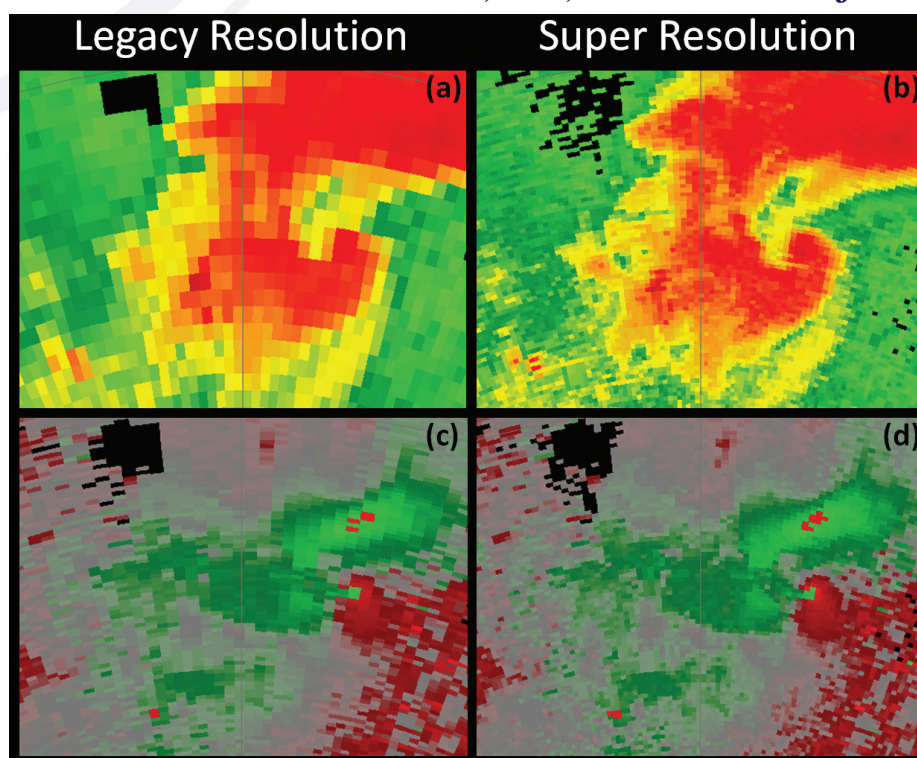
## Super Resolution for the NEXRAD Network

Legacy-resolution base data on the NEXRAD network consists of reflectivity on a 1 km-by-1° polar grid and Doppler velocity and spectrum width on a similar 250 m-by-1° grid. Researchers at the National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL) have shown that some meteorological signatures can be detected at greater ranges using radar data with finer spatial resolution on a 250 m-by-0.5° grid. Radar data produced this way and with a range coverage of 300 km is termed super-resolution data. Super-resolution was introduced on the NEXRAD network beginning in 2008 and will be produced for the lower tilts (below 2°) of all volume coverage patterns. Because current algorithms that operate on base data are not ready to handle the finer spatial resolution and the higher statistical errors associated with super-resolution data, initially this data will be used for visualization only. Super-resolution radar data has the potential to increase the detection range of mesocyclone and tornado vortex signatures as well as increase the visibility of Doppler velocity and reflectivity signatures associated with severe weather. These can contribute toward an increase in warning times for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes.

For more information, refer to NOAA’s Weather Decision Training Branch RDA/RPG Build 10 training module (<http://wdtb.noaa.gov/buildTraining/Build10/docs/build10deploy.pdf>)

*Sebastian Torres, NSSL*

*Pam Heinselman, NSSL, NWA Remote Sensing Committee*



Reflectivity (a, b) and Doppler velocity (c, d) fields obtained during a tornado outbreak in Oklahoma City on 9 May 2003 with the KOUN radar in Norman, Okla. Fields were generated with legacy resolution (a, c) and super resolution (b, d).







## *In Memoriam: Tony Tancreto*

Tony Tancreto, one of the three original founders of the National Weather Association, passed away on Jan. 6, 2009, at the age of 89. Along with Jerry LaRue and Joe Vazzo, Tony signed the original incorporation document for the NWA in late 1975. He then became the first "President-Elect" and succeeded the NWA's first president, Jerry LaRue, in 1977.

A native of suburban Boston, Mass., Tony received a B.S. in Mathematics from Tufts University in 1941. During World War II, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy where, sensing a true talent, the Navy assigned him to be an Aerological Officer and arranged for him to earn a M.S. in meteorology from MIT in 1944.

After the War, he began a remarkable career with the U. S. Weather Bureau/National Weather Service. His assignments included Bermuda (described by Tony as "tough duty"), New York City, Boston, Atlantic City and NWS Headquarters in Silver Spring, Md. While at NWS Headquarters, he was instrumental in leading the massive reorganization of the NWS in the early 1970s which led to the establishment of the 52 Weather Service Forecast Office (WSFO) concept. This structure remained in place for a quarter of a century. His last tour with the NWS was back home as Meteorologist-In-Charge of the Boston WSFO where he led the office to a high level of recognized excellent performance.

In addition to his outstanding service to the NWA where he was awarded the Member of the Year Award for 1978, he was an active member of the American Meteorological Society. In 1981, Tony was elected to be a Fellow of the AMS. He was please professionally that



Tony and his wife, Barbara.

he was active and recognized by both professional meteorological associations.

After retiring in 1979, Tony played tennis, golf and bridge. He traveled the U.S. and abroad, finding time to also spend endless hours working on his meticulously landscaped yard. He thrived on heated political debates with anyone who would go a few rounds with him. Tony is survived by Barbara, his wife of 62 years, four children, nine grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

**Steve Harned, Editor**

## **Share Your Knowledge with NWA Members**

Did you present a paper at one of the Annual Meetings or a regional meeting? If the answer is yes, consider expanding upon that presentation by submitting a paper to the NWA *National Weather Digest* (*Digest*) or *Electronic Journal of Meteorology* (*EJOM*). Share operational meteorological or hydrologic tips and techniques; a document or a case study.

The editors of the *Digest* and the *EJOM* are currently accepting submissions for 2009 editions.

The average time between the initial submission of a well-written accepted paper and the publishing date for *EJOM* articles is two to three months. Papers that are well-written, correctly formatted and properly referenced can normally be published in the *Digest* less than a year after initial submission. To ensure a smooth review process, see "Instructions for Authors" on the NWA Web site ([www.nwas.org](http://www.nwas.org)).

*"I had a very positive experience in publishing my recent hail spike article in the EJOM. Jeffrey Medlin was extremely helpful and supportive during the review process."*

**Chris Smallcomb**

***Published on EJOM, Fall 2008***

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## **HAIL SPIKES AND VELOCITY DATA**

Chris Smallcomb published an *Electronic Journal of Operational Meteorology* (*EJOM*) paper in the fall of 2008 titled "Hail Spike Impacts on Doppler Radial Velocity Data During Recent Convective Events in the Continental United States."

He presents radar data from several sites around the U.S. and explains how a three body scatter spike Doppler signature can impact storm interrogation and the warning decision process.

Chris includes recommendations for operational forecasters in the article.

Read Chris's article at:  
[www.nwas.org/ej/2008/2008.php](http://www.nwas.org/ej/2008/2008.php)

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## 34<sup>th</sup> NWA Annual Meeting ... Start Planning Now!

### Where:

Sheraton Waterside Hotel, waterfront in downtown Norfolk, Va.

### When:

October 17-22, 2009

### 2009 NWA Annual Meeting Theme

This year's theme is *"The Future is Now: New Technologies and Techniques to Support the Weather Enterprise and Society: 2010 and Beyond."* In addition to a focus on new technologies such as advances in radar and severe weather analysis, there will also be an emphasis placed on marine and tropical meteorology, military weather forecasting, decision support for high impact events and societal impacts of weather.

### Abstract Submissions:

The deadline for submission of abstracts is June 1, 2009. Abstracts should be sent via the online form on the NWA Web site at: [www.nwas.org/2009abstracts.html](http://www.nwas.org/2009abstracts.html). Abstracts will be published in the Meeting Agenda as submitted, so please make sure that they have been carefully reviewed and edited before they are sent to the NWA. Contact the NWA office if you cannot submit your abstract online.

Presenters will be notified regarding the disposition of their abstracts by Aug. 15, 2009. Prior to the meeting, an FTP site will be established for authors to upload their audio/visual presentations. This will facilitate a smooth transition from one speaker to the next during the Annual Meeting presentation sessions.

**For more information on exhibits, special accommodations, registration and the overall meeting program, visit [www.nwas.org](http://www.nwas.org) contact the NWA office at (919) 845-1546 or by e-mail: [exdir@nwas.org](mailto:exdir@nwas.org).**

### Professional Development Opportunities

#### Saturday, Oct. 17

On-site registration will begin, training may be offered by corporate members and exhibits will be set up. Weather permitting, the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing will take place to benefit the NWA Scholarship Fund (special thanks to Betsy Kling for organizing this popular event!).

#### Sunday, Oct. 18

Weather Broadcaster Workshops will include special presentations, exhibits and hands-on workshops appropriate to continuing education for weathercasters, but open to all interested. The annual TAPE SWAP will be on Sunday evening.

2<sup>nd</sup> Student Session will be designed to assist students with their entry into the workplace by concentrating on challenges and practices which will help separate graduates "from the pack" in the very competitive job market.

#### Monday – Thursday, Oct. 19-22

Annual Meeting General Sessions will include a mix of formal presentations, poster sessions, exhibits and panel discussions on a wide variety of topics relating to the meeting's theme. Student presentations will be reviewed by the NWA Weather Analysis and Forecasting Committee members and monetary awards will be presented to the best in undergraduate and graduate student categories. The NWA Annual Awards Luncheon will be on Wednesday, Oct. 21st.



While in Norfolk, make time to stroll along the Elizabeth River and take in the city's strong naval history.

### Annual Meeting Hotel Information

The Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel is a full-service hotel and meeting center. Located on the waterfront in the heart of a revitalized downtown Norfolk, many attractions and restaurants are located within easy walking distance.

**NWA room rates:** Deluxe Guest rooms - \$94 per night (single); \$139 per night (double)  
You may reserve a room by phone by calling 1-888-627-8042 and request the National Weather Association 2009 group rate (reserve your room NO LATER THAN Sept. 16 to obtain the NWA discount). More hotel information at: [www.sheraton.com/norfolk](http://www.sheraton.com/norfolk).

### Additional Plans

Registration information and forms will be available on the Web site and the Newsletter by June. The preliminary agenda will be published in the August Newsletter and on the NWA Web site.

### 2009 Annual Meeting Leaders (contact them with suggestions and to volunteer!)

#### Program Committee Chair:

Jennifer McNatt of the NOAA/NWS Forecast Office, Wakefield, Va. Email: [annualmeeting@nwas.org](mailto:annualmeeting@nwas.org) or call (757) 899-5734

#### Broadcaster Workshop Program Chair:

Bryan Karrick, KCCI-TV Meteorologist, 888 Ninth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309. Email: [bkarrick@hearth.com](mailto:bkarrick@hearth.com).





## Attention Students: It's Scholarship Time!

### Applications being accepted for NWA Scholarships

This spring, the NWA is offering the five scholarship opportunities for university students, including a new scholarship for broadcast meteorology students (see article below).

NWA Scholarship	Application Closing Date
Broadcast Meteorology Scholarship	March 15th (New!)
David Sankey Minority Scholarship	April 15th
Arthur C. Pike Scholarship	April 15th
AccuWeather Undergraduate Scholarship	May 15th
Dr. Roderick A. Scofield Scholarship	May 15th



**Additional scholarship info (including eligibility and the application process) is at:**

**[www.nwas.org/committees/ed\\_comm/application/index.php](http://www.nwas.org/committees/ed_comm/application/index.php)**

### New NWA Broadcast Meteorology Scholarship

This scholarship opportunity will be awarded to a talented student pursuing a career in broadcast meteorology. NWA will annually select one student to receive \$1000 through this scholarship. The Broadcast Meteorology Scholarship recipient may be asked to present at a local or annual NWA meeting (additional funding may be provided by the NWA for required travel and accommodations for such a presentation).

**Administration:** The scholarship selection is administered by the NWA Broadcast Meteorology Committee and the NWA Education Committee. The application period for this scholarship will close March 15th with the scholarship designee receiving notification in late May.

**Eligibility:** Any undergraduate going into their sophomore year or higher in the fall. (Note, graduate students are NOT eligible for this scholarship) If the student is classified as a senior they must either have at least the upcoming fall (September - December) semester to complete after the scholarship is awarded.

**Award Criteria:** The scholarship is awarded based on:

Academic achievement/merit (transcripts); two letters of recommendation (one from a current or former meteorology professor, and one from media personnel); a one page statement explaining why the applicant wants to be a broadcast meteorologist and their vision for the future, and a DVD including two full on-camera weathercasts, with all graphics and show elements prepared by the applicant.

**Application Process:** The application form and all enclosures must be postmarked by March 15th. Student copies of transcripts are acceptable. Recommendations should be submitted in sealed envelopes. .

Please contact the NWA office if you have questions.

Telephone: (919) 845-1546 or via e-mail: [exdir@nwas.org](mailto:exdir@nwas.org)

### New Scholarship Available this Fall!

As the result of the kind efforts of members Ryan and Kathryn Phillips of Hollywood, Fla., the NWA will be offering the "Cassens/Phillips Family Scholarship for Meteorology" this fall. This scholarship will be awarded to an undergraduate student.

The application process will open in September with the winner announced in December. Funds will be distributed for the Winter/Spring semester of 2010. More information regarding this new offering will be available in late summer.





## Professional Development Opportunities in 2009

### **6th Annual Southeastern Coastal and Atmospheric Processes Symposium (SeCAPS): February 27 – 28**

SeCAPS will be held on the campus of the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Ala. Oral and poster presentations on any aspect of meteorology, geography, or geology are welcomed. Abstract deadline is Feb. 6. Contact AMS Faculty Co-Advisor Gina Wade [gwade@usouthal.edu](mailto:gwade@usouthal.edu) or visit [www.southalabama.edu/meteorologyclub/secaps](http://www.southalabama.edu/meteorologyclub/secaps) for more information.

### **9th Annual National Severe Weather Workshop: March 5 – 7**

Results to the first-ever National Severe Weather Workshop survey will help design this workshop, which will be in Norman, Okla. For a limited time, the survey will be online at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=cbcttdbgCU6ou9EieQO1\\_2fQ\\_3d\\_3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=cbcttdbgCU6ou9EieQO1_2fQ_3d_3d).

### **34th Annual Northeastern Storm Conference: March 6 – 8**

Sponsored by the Lyndon State College AMS/NWA Chapter, abstracts are due Jan. 30. Dr. Joshua Wurman will speak at banquet; Wendy Abshire at the Ice Breaker. More information is located at <http://apollo-dev.lsc.vsc.edu/ams/index.php?page=nesc>.

### **2009 Alaska Weather Symposium: March 10 – 12**

This symposium will be held in Fairbanks, Alaska, and more information is available at <http://weather.arsc.edu/Events/ASWo9>

### **2009 TESSA National Storm Conference: March 14**

This free public event features the third annual Super Storm Spotter Session, provides the highest level of training available to storm spotters anywhere in the country. The session will be presented by Ft. Worth NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist Gary Woodall. Watch the TESSA Web site [www.tessa.org](http://www.tessa.org) for a complete list of presenters.

### **7th Annual Climate Predication Applications Science Workshop: March 24 – 27**

This workshop will be held in Norman, Okla., at the National Weather Center. More information is available at <http://climate.ok.gov/cpasw/> or by calling Diane Perfect at 301-713-1970 ext. 132.

### **The 8th 2009 Southeast Severe Storms Symposium: March 27 – 28**

Sponsored by the East Mississippi Chapter of the NWA and AMS. Details are at [www.msstate.edu/org/nwa/sympos.shtml](http://www.msstate.edu/org/nwa/sympos.shtml).

### **7th Annual Great Lakes Meteorology Conference: March 28**

Sponsored by the Valparaiso University AMS/NWA Chapter, it will be at Strongbows Inn in Valparaiso, Ind. Dr. Tim Marshall from Haag Engineering is the keynote speaker. Abstracts are due Feb. 8. Details at [www.valpo.edu/organization/nwa/index.html](http://www.valpo.edu/organization/nwa/index.html).

### **13th Annual Severe Storms and Doppler Radar Conference: Tentatively scheduled April 2 – 4**

Sponsored by the Central Iowa Chapter of the NWA, information will be posted at <http://www.iowa-nwa.com/> as plans progress.

### **13th Annual Northern Plains Weather Workshop: April 7 – 8**

Sponsored by the NWS and the SD School of Mines and Technology, it will be in Rapid City, S.D. Invited talks will be given on VORTEX2, dual-polarization radar, incident support meteorology, tower strikes and high-speed lightning photography, and climate services and mesonet applications. Abstracts due 1 March. Details at: <http://www.ias.sdsmt.edu/NPWorkshop/>.

### **23rd AMS Conference on Weather Analysis and Forecasting/19th AMS Conference on Numerical Weather Prediction: June 1 – 5**

These will be held in Omaha, Neb., and jointly sponsored by the American Meteorological Society and the National Weather Association. It is organized by the AMS Committee on Weather Analysis and Forecasting with assistance from the NWA Committee on Weather Analysis and Forecasting. Abstracts are due 6 February 2009. Call for Papers is at <http://www.ametsoc.org/MEET/ann/callforpapers.html>.

### **Inland Impacts of Tropical Cyclones Conference: June 10 – 12**

Hosted by the Metro Atlanta NWA/AMS Chapter, it will be at the Westin Peachtree Plaza in Atlanta, Ga. Oral presentations are solicited around the broad theme of the inland impacts of tropical cyclones. Abstracts due Feb. 6. Please submit abstracts electronically to the science committee chairperson: Rob Handel at [robert.handel@noaa.gov](mailto:robert.handel@noaa.gov). Contact program chairperson: Trisha Palmer ([trisha.palmer@noaa.gov](mailto:trisha.palmer@noaa.gov)) or visit Web site: (<http://www.ametsoc.org/chapters/atlanta/iitc.htm>) for more.

### **34th NWA Annual Meeting: October 17 – 22**

See page 6 and [www.nwas.org/meetings/nwa2009](http://www.nwas.org/meetings/nwa2009) for more information.







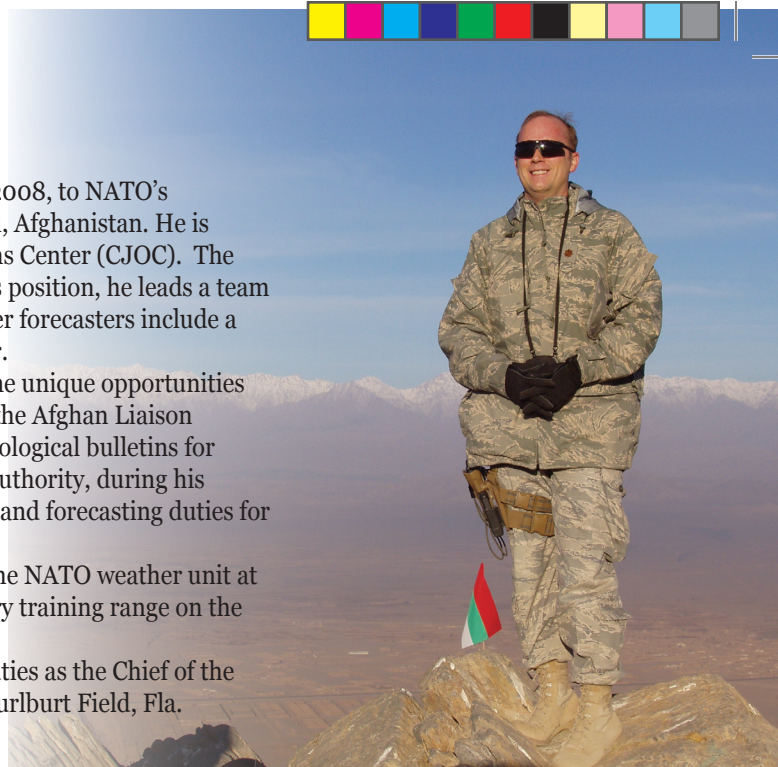
## Afghanistan Duty Calls NWA Member

Major Dave Biggar, a weather officer with U.S. Air Force, deployed July 25, 2008, to NATO's Headquarters of the International Security Assistance Force (HQ ISAF) in Kabul, Afghanistan. He is serving as the Chief of the Meteorology Section in the Combined Joint Operations Center (CJOC). The HQ ISAF CJOC oversees NATO's military operations across Afghanistan. In this position, he leads a team of four meteorologists, providing around-the-clock weather support. His weather forecasters include a Romanian civilian, a Czech Republic Army officer and a Belgian Air Force officer.

In addition to the routine military weather support duties, Dave has had some unique opportunities in his job as NATO's lead meteorologist in Afghanistan. He had a meeting with the Afghan Liaison to the U.S. Geological Survey. This office produces monthly Agricultural Meteorological bulletins for Afghanistan. He has also met the president of the Afghanistan Meteorological Authority, during his participation in meetings concerning the eventual transfer of weather observing and forecasting duties for Kabul International Airport from NATO military forecasters to Afghan civilians.

Dave has had a few travel opportunities in Afghanistan, including a visit to the NATO weather unit at Kandahar Airfield in southern Afghanistan, and a trip to a mountain on a military training range on the outskirts of Kabul (pictured).

When Dave returns to the U.S. in February 2009, he'll resume his normal duties as the Chief of the Technology and Training Division at the Air Force Combat Weather Center at Hurlburt Field, Fla.



## Dates 2 Remember

**Feb. 27 – 28:** 6<sup>th</sup> Annual SeCAPS

**March 5 – 7:** 9<sup>th</sup> Annual National Severe Weather Workshop

**March 6 – 8:** 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Northeastern Storm Conference

**March 14:** TESSA National Storm Conference

**March 24 – 27:** 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop

**March 27 – 28:** 2009 Southeast Severe Storms Symposium

**March 28:** 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Lakes Meteorology Conference

**Oct. 17 – 22:** NWA Annual Meeting, Norfolk, Va. (page 5)

*See page 7 or [www.nwas.org/events.php](http://www.nwas.org/events.php) for details on these and additional Professional Development Opportunities!*

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