

NEWSLETTER

*National Weather
Association*

NO. 11 – 1 JANUARY 2011

COMET Turns 21

By Greg Byrd and Wendy Schreiber-Abshire

Now that COMET is 21, we wanted to take this opportunity to provide a short review of the first two decades of our program and its service to the community. The COMET Program was established in 1989 to train operational forecasters during the period of modernization of the National Weather Service (NWS). This was a collaboration of the operational community through U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA), and the academic community through UCAR. Today COMET is funded by several agencies, including NOAA (NWS, NESDIS, Sea Grant), Air Force Weather, the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command and the Meteorological Service of Canada. Additional funding sources include the National Environmental Education Foundation, NSF, DOT, BLM, the Australia Bureau of Meteorology and EUMETSAT. Training is developed in response to sponsor needs and is freely available on the MetEd website

(www.meted.ucar.edu).

COMET consists of residence, distance learning (DL) and outreach programs, the latter of which funds applied research between universities and forecast offices. While we continue to teach a few residence courses in meso-



COMET Module on Antarctica

and hydro-meteorology, COMET's cornerstone is the DL program that has grown substantially over the years. DL has significant advantages, addressing large student populations in a more cost-effective manner with a consistent

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President's Message: Borrowing from Sir Newton

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." – Sir Isaac Newton



words of Isaac Newton. I don't possess Sir Isaac's scientific insight or his intellectual prowess, but when it comes to the NWA, I do feel as though I am standing on the shoulders of giants.

As I assume the duties of NWA President for 2011,

I am reminded of those immortal

Our past presidents, most recently Steve Zubrick, have lead our association through some needed changes and modernization, **and** did so during the worst economic upheaval since the Great Depression. In short, I am taking the helm of an NWA that has been run remarkably well. Our headquarters staff, the executive officers, the Council, and many other volunteers have all worked well together to keep up with daily business while bringing our association firmly into the 21st century. No doubt you have noticed the changes to which I refer, but the recent additions cannot

be overemphasized. For example, the Member's Portal on our home page has increasing functionality; copies of the *National Weather Digest* and the NWA Newsletters were put online, and past issues are currently being added to our website; our content-rich Facebook page has over 800 followers, and our Twitter feed has over 600 followers, and those numbers continue to grow. All of these changes have been aimed at providing greater value to existing members, as well as attracting the next generation of members.

See PRESIDENT, page 6

**36th NWA Annual Meeting –
Oct. 15-20, 2011 - Birmingham**
Get Ready! Get Set! Start Planning for a GREAT Meeting!

*The End Game -
From Research and
Technology to Best Forecast
and Response*

Where: *Wynfrey Hotel*, in Hoover, 10 miles south of downtown Birmingham, Ala.

Our Theme: *The End Game - From Research and Technology to Best Forecast and Response.* Being a champion is not easy, in sports or in life. It takes not only a mastery of our chosen field, but also a passion, intensity, energy, focus and commitment that helps us to achieve our very best. It is easy to lose that passion in the day to day routine of our jobs. Weather is unique in that nearly every person can tell you why they got into it. The goal of the 2011 NWA Annual Meeting in Birmingham will be to help us find that original spark and connect to that passion in a fun and spirited environment of learning and networking.

Professional Development Opportunities: The 2011 Annual meeting will include the annual Broadcasters' Workshop and DVD swap, and the Fourth Annual Students' Session at the hotel (both on Sunday, Oct. 16). Student presentations will be reviewed by the NWA Weather Analysis and Forecasting Committee members, and monetary awards will be presented to the best presentations and posters in undergraduate and graduate student categories. The general session will be October 17-20, with the annual awards luncheon on Wednesday, October 19.

Abstract Submission: The deadline for submissions of abstracts is June 1, 2011. Abstracts should be sent via the online form on the NWA Web site at: www.nwas.org/2011abstracts.html. Abstracts will be published in the Meeting Agenda as submitted, so please make sure that they have been carefully reviewed and edited before submission. If you are unable to submit your abstract via the online form, please contact the NWA office at (919) 845-1546 or email: exdir@nwas.org. Presenters will be notified regarding the disposition of their abstracts by July 15, 2011.

Annual Meeting Hotel Information: Wynfrey Hotel, 1000 Riverchase Galleria, Birmingham, AL 35244
Telephone: 1-205-987-1600 Website: <http://www.wynfrey.com>

NWA negotiated room rates are as follows:

Standard Guestroom: \$88.00 (Plus \$10 for each additional person up to a total of 4 per room)
Concierge Level Guestroom: \$128.00 (Plus \$10 for each additional person up to a total of 4 per room)
Rooms will be available at the negotiated rate until 9/21/2011 or until the block is full.

Reserve a room by calling 1-800-WYNFREY (1-800-996-3739) by Sept. 1 for the NWA Annual Meeting rate.

Online reservations: The group code for 36th Annual Meeting of the National Weather Association is **1B35Q3**. Go to the [Wynfrey website](http://www.wynfrey.com), click "Quick Reservations" on the left side, and enter your information and the group code to make reservation in the block.

More Information on Birmingham, the Meeting and the Program Planning: Visit the [NWA2011 blog](http://www.nwa2011blog.com), maintained by the Birmingham Program Committee, for information on the event, the agenda, vendors, the hotel and the local area as well as breaking news. Follow the latest on Twitter [@NWAS2011BHM](https://twitter.com/NWAS2011BHM). We'll use the hashtag #NWAS2011 this year, so include that in your posts about the event. Use your Twitter accounts to send out information, and re-tweet liberally. A Facebook Event page will be available from the [NWA Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/NWA2011BHM).

The Annual Meeting Program Committee Chair is Jim Stefkovich, Meteorologist in Charge, NOAA/NWSFO, 465 Weathervane Rd., Calera, AL 35040; (205) 664-3010, ext 222; annualmeeting@nwas.org.

Broadcaster Workshop Program Chair: Mike Goldberg, PO Box 2491, Glen Allen, VA 23058-2491; mike@mike-goldberg.com

For more information on exhibits, special accommodations, registration and overall meeting program, go online to www.nwas.org or contact the NWA office at (919) 845-1546 or by emailing: exdir@nwas.org.

Special Feature For The 36th NWA Annual Meeting: A joint meeting will be held with the 7th GOES Users' Conference! The GOES Users' Conference will be held in the Wynfrey Thursday Oct. 20 and Friday Oct. 21 with Thursday being a joint meeting of the two conferences. Thursday, we'll highlight the new operational capabilities to be provided by existing and future GOES satellites; we'll also solicit feedback from attendees regarding current and future needs by those using GOES information. NWA meeting attendees are urged to attend the Friday, Oct. 21 session of the GOES Users Conference. Registration information will be forthcoming.

How Prepared Are We Really? Three Job Tips for Broadcasters

Nick Walker, NWA Broadcast Committee Chair

As weather broadcasters, most of us are quite vocal in our weathercasts and community talks about weather preparedness. Yet, when it comes to our jobs, we're often caught woefully unprepared. Too often I have seen broadcast meteorologists, blindsided by a job loss, unready and underequipped to launch themselves back into a job market already populated by many other good candidates competing for the few available positions. Too late they remember the adage that "the best time to prepare for your next job is while you still have your old job." So whether you're employed day to day or you have a solid three-year contract, now is the time to prepare for your next job. Here are some preparedness tips.

#1 Got Seal?

In this economic climate, broadcasters are increasingly discovering the value of a Seal of Approval. Here are a couple of real-life scenarios I have seen this past year. One broadcaster put off obtaining the required continuing education units (CEU) for seal recertification until the last year before her seal expired. She was suddenly laid off and couldn't afford to go to a conference or meet other CEU requirements to keep her seal. She's now a finalist for a job that requires a seal, but can't guarantee she'll have one by the time the job starts. Then there's another weathercaster whose former employer didn't require a seal, so he never got one. Now that he's out of work and looking for another job, he needs the seal to compete. Unfortunately, current rules require that he be employed in order to get one. The NWA Seal does not require a meteorology degree, but it does require comprehensive study as well as on-air proficiency. Even if you don't need a seal or can't display a seal at your current job, now is the time to study up, get a seal, and maintain it.



#2 Record Record Record!

I know a great broadcaster who was laid off without warning and found that he didn't have a single recent air check. Even if you feel secure in your job, don't forget to regularly record your shows, critique them and learn from them; dub the best of them onto DVD. Keep that reel current with a variety of weather scenarios.

#3 "Apply" Every Day for the Job You Have

It's a cruel truth that we're often only as good as our last broadcast, so don't get lazy or overconfident. Stay sharp and valuable. Come to work with an attitude to give your viewers and your employer your best. Find out what your boss values and do that. When he/she makes suggestions for improvement, don't ignore the comments, but put them into practice. I know this sounds obvious, but we all have a tendency to fall into old habits. Keep up with the changes in the field, hone your computer and forecasting skills, practice your delivery, recognizing that no one ever completely "arrives." Be teachable and vow to never stop learning. That way, you'll be valuable to both current and future employers.

These reminders are, of course, not an exhaustive list. There are personal and financial issues to plan for as well. But whether you're a recent college graduate or a veteran broadcaster, always be thinking ahead. Like storm preparedness, job preparedness is a continuing endeavor. Be prepared and you'll find that not only are you ready if the ax falls, but you'll perform even better at the job you have now.

Students and Teachers! Applications now being taken for 2011 NWA Scholarships and Grants

All applications are available Online!

This year, the NWA is offering six scholarship opportunities and one grant for university students.

Four scholarships will be available this spring and two grants in the summer.

There will be seven education grants for K-12 Teachers.

Information for scholarships and grants are available at:

www.nwas.org/committees/ed_comm/application/

www.nwas.org/grants/

<u>NWA Scholarship and Grants</u>	<u>Closing Date</u>
Broadcast Meteorology Scholarship	March 15
David Sankey Minority Scholarship	April 15
AccuWeather Undergraduate Scholarship	May 15
Dr. Roderick A. Scofield Scholarship	May 15
Meteorological Satellite Application Award Grant	June 15
2011 Sol Hirsch Education Fund Grant for K-12 Teachers	June 1
Arthur C. Pike Scholarship	Oct. 25
Cassens/Phillips Family Undergraduate Scholarship	Oct. 25

Student Award Winners from Tucson Annual Meeting

The results have been tallied and the following are the winners of the 2010 NWA Annual Meeting Student Presentations.

The breakdown for both the undergraduate and graduate poster awards is as follows:

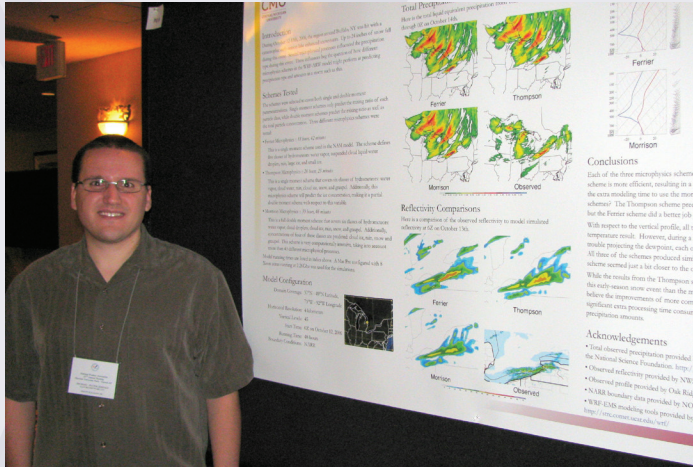
1st Prize: \$125 and 2010 NWA Dues

2nd Prize: \$75 and 2010 NWA Dues

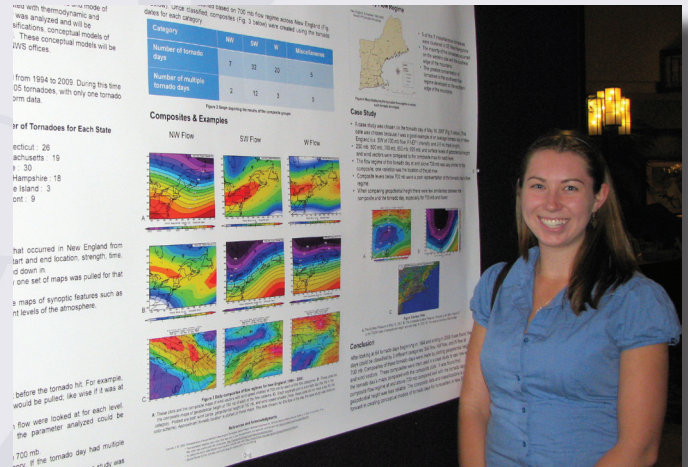
3rd Prize: 2010 NWA Dues

Only one prize is awarded to those competing for oral presentations: 1st Prize: \$75 and 2010 NWA Dues

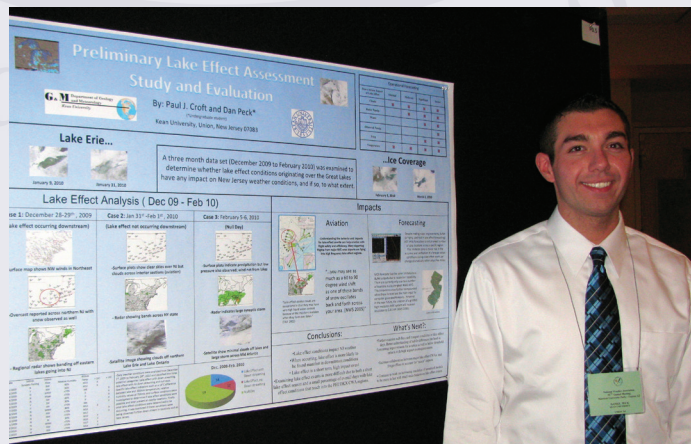
Undergraduate Division



Best Undergraduate Student Poster Presentation
Mike Piatek-Jimenez, Central Michigan University, for *Analysis of Microphysics Scheme Performance with the October 2006 Buffalo Snowstorm*. His co-author was Dr. Martin Baxter of Central Michigan University.



Second Place Undergraduate Student Poster Presentation
Sarah Trojniak, Central Michigan University, for *New England Tornado Characteristics*. Her co-authors were Dan St. Jean and David Glenn of the NOAA/NWS Forecast Office in Gray, Maine.

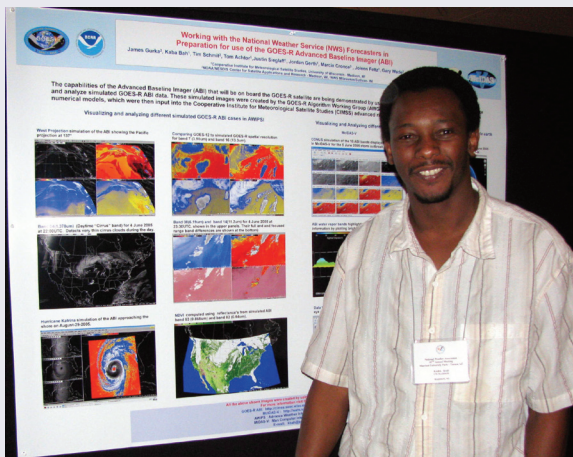


Third Place Undergraduate Student Poster Presentation
Dan Peck, Kean University, for *A Preliminary Lake Effect Assessment Study and Evaluation*. Co-author was Dr. Paul Croft of Kean University.



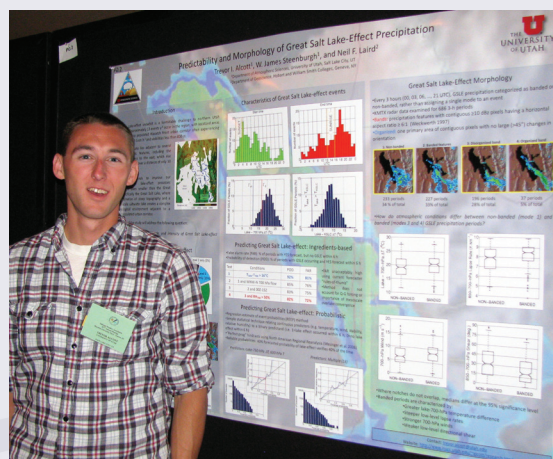
Best Undergraduate Student Oral Presentation
Matt Albanese (left) and Tom Skic (right), Kean University, for *Keancast - Kean University's Weathercasting System*. Co-author was Dr. Paul Croft of Kean University.

Graduate Division Poster Winners



Best Graduate Student Poster Presentation

Kaba Bah, University of Wisconsin, *Working with the National Weather Service (NWS) Forecasters in Preparation for use of the GOES-R Advanced Baseline Imager (ABI)*. His co-authors were Justin Sieglaff and Tim Achtor of University of Wisconsin/CIMMS, Marcia Cronic of the NOAA/NWS Forecast Office in Madison, Wisc., and Tim Schmit of NOAA/NESDIS.

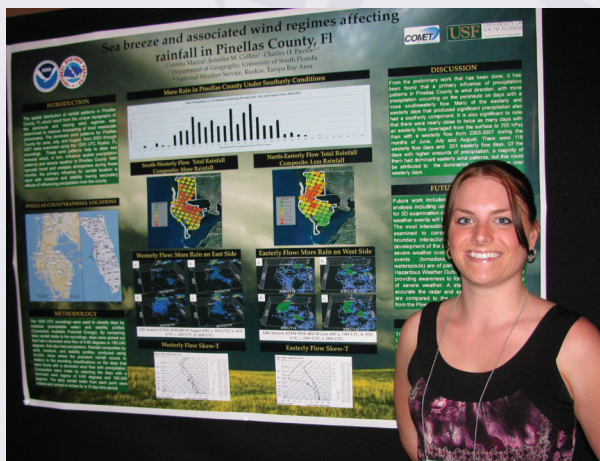


Second Place Graduate Student Poster Presentation

Trevor Alcott, University of Utah, for *Predictability and Morphology of Great Salt Lake-Effect Precipitation*. His co-author was Dr. James Steenburgh of University of Utah.

Best Graduate Student Oral Presentation

Elise V. Schultz, University of Alabama - Huntsville, for *Exploring a Physically-based Tool for Lightning Cessation: Preliminary Results*. Her co-authors were Dr. Lawrence D. Carey, Dennis E. Buechler, and Patrick Gatlin of University of Alabama - Huntsville and Walter A. Patterson of NASA/MSFC.

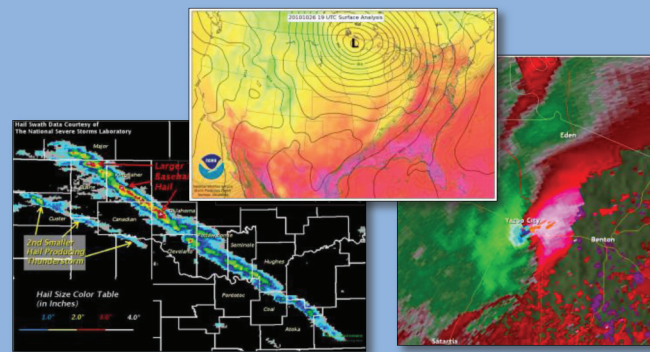


Third Place Graduate Student Poster Presentation
Cristina A. Mazza, University of South Florida, for *The Spatial Distribution of Rainfall Patterns in Pinellas County, FL*. Her co-authors were Dr. Jennifer Collins of University of South Florida and Charles Paxton of the NOAA/NWS Forecast Office in Tampa, Fla.

Students and Teachers!
Applications now being taken for 2011
NWA Scholarships and Grants
See page 3 for details

Meteorological Memories of 2010

Greg Carbin's presentation on the most memorable weather events of the year is always very popular at NWA Annual Meetings. Greg has updated his 2010 list of events and written the article
"Meteorological Memories of 2010"
that is available on the NWA website at
www.nwas.org.





Delivering a COMET virtual course.

training approach. DL delivery has evolved from Laser disc to CD-ROM to today's Web-based training. COMET has 600+ hours of DL online and continues to add 50+ hours annually to MetEd. Topics include aviation, coastal, winter and fire weather, tropical, mesoscale, radar and satellite meteorology, climate and NWP. We've recently broadened our environmental focus, including topics of environment and society, hydrology, oceanography and space weather. Since 2007, COMET has amassed over 150,000 registered users from 200+ countries. The audience has expanded to include the K-12, university and emergency management communities, and the private sector, most notably broadcast meteorologists.

COMET staff includes scientists, instructional designers, graphic artists and multimedia developers, who contribute unique skill sets to the multimedia production process. Robust DL combines sound science, innovative instructional design and outstanding graphics with an operational focus that often uses scenario-based learning. COMET modules have traditionally been highly mediated, interactive lessons but have evolved into several other formats. Webcasts have limited interactivity and are often recorded and edited residence classroom lectures. Distance courses have self-paced, topical modules, and blended courses combine asynchronous modules with live teletraining. Learning or media objects are stand-alone instructional pieces that can be used to enhance other education and training presentations. Virtual courses utilize online conference tools to deliver live lectures to distant learners. COMET has won numerous awards for innovative instruction, including the Brandon-Hall Gold Medal for Excellence in Learning, the AGU Excellence in Geophysical Education Award and the NWA Public Education Award.

COMET continues to pursue opportunities that exploit advances in educational technology. This includes realistic online simulations using situational learning with case-based simulations and just-in-time training that accesses specific information and conceptual models through performance support systems. COMET is repackaging training into formats suitable for alternate platforms such as mobile devices. We're working to update the current MetEd site to take advantage of collaborative tools such as Web 2.0. Wikis will be employed to promote a better sense of community among distant learners. Enhanced accessibility to university education will be accomplished by means of online degree programs, which may use COMET DL materials for instructional support. We look forward to continued service to the weather, climate and water enterprise in the coming years.



COMET residence classroom

training approach. DL delivery has evolved from Laser disc to CD-ROM to today's Web-based training. COMET has 600+ hours of DL online and continues to add 50+ hours annually to MetEd. Topics include aviation, coastal, winter and fire weather, tropical, mesoscale,



NWA Flashback!

January 1979
First list of NWA
award winners
published in the
Newsletter

PRESIDENT from front

In fact, I believe that building and serving our student and young professional membership is critical to the survival of the NWA. Last month, Past President Steve Zubrick unveiled the new **NWA Vision Statement**: "Promoting excellence in operational meteorology to benefit society." As an instructor of future meteorologists, this vision is particularly important to me. At present, I am an Associate Professor of Atmospheric Science at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Mo. In that capacity, I get to teach our department's Synoptic Meteorology sequence. As such, I take the promotion of excellence in operational meteorology as the foundation of my personal instructional philosophy. But I can reach directly only a handful of those students who are seeking a career in operational meteorology.

This is where we need you even more. You have invested in the NWA through your dues, and you are reading this Newsletter and even this message. Clearly, your NWA membership means more to you than a mere line on a resume. So, now I would ask you to take just one or two minutes and talk about the NWA to a classmate, your students, the new personnel on base, or the interns at your studio or office. You are our conduit to other aspiring operational meteorologists who may not yet be aware of the NWA and what it has to offer them. I believe that this personal approach has been, and continues to be, a critical key to NWA survival and success. If you find in your discussion that you (or they) have any questions, they can be directed to me at this address: president@nwas.org.

2011 promises to be an exciting year for the NWA. Our electronic presence continues to expand, but our opportunities for face-to-face contact are also growing. We are hoping to add several student chapters, existing local chapters are sponsoring at least six regional meetings, and the NWA Annual Meeting in Birmingham, Ala., in October may well be our biggest to date. We are also in the early stages of a formal mentoring program for early career members of the NWA. Clearly, we are an organization on the move.

In closing, I want to thank you for your continued membership. I look forward to working for you and with you in 2011. Have a Happy New Year.

Patrick Market
NWA President

2011 NWA Sponsored Annual Meetings & Conferences

Feb. 26: 2011 Minnesota Storm Chasing Convention

This convention is being cosponsored by the NWA and many other organizations. It will be held at The Holiday Inn – Arbor Lakes in Maple Grove, Minn.
www.mnstormchasingconvention.com

March 3-5: 2011 National Severe Weather Workshop

This annual workshop held in Norman, Okla., is cosponsored by the Central Oklahoma AMS and NWA Chapters, NOAA and others. www.norman.noaa.gov/nsww/

March 11-13: The 36th Annual Northeastern Storm Conference

The Lyndon State College chapter of the AMS and NWA will host this conference in Taunton, Mass. at the Taunton Holiday Inn. <http://meteorology.lyndonstate.edu/ams/>

March 12: The 2011 National Storm Conference

This free, annual event organized by The Texas Severe Storms Association (TESSA) will be held at the Colleyville Center in Colleyville, Texas. The North Texas Chapter of the AMS/NWA is a sponsor. www.tessa.org

March 31–April 2: 15th Annual Severe Storms & Doppler Radar Conference

This annual conference sponsored by the Central Iowa NWA Chapter will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott in Ankeny, Iowa. www.iowa-nwa.com/conference/

Aug. 4-6: 15th Annual High Plains Conference

This annual conference sponsored by both the Wichita and High Plains Chapters of the AMS/NWA will be held at the Wichita Marriott in Wichita, Kan. www.wichita-amsnwa.org

Oct. 15-20: 36th National Weather Association Annual Meeting

The 36th Annual Meeting will be held at the Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham, Ala. See page 2 for more.

Oct. 20-21: 7th GOES Users' Conference

This conference will be held in the Wynfrey Hotel in Birmingham, Ala. with the first day being a joint meeting with the 36th Annual NWA Meeting. Details will be available later this winter.

Other Meetings & Conferences in 2011

Feb. 18-20: The 13th Annual National Storm Chaser Convention

This ChaserCon will be held in Denver, Colo.
www.chasercon.com

Feb. 25-26: Southeastern Coastal and Atmospheric Processes Symposium

This 8th annual symposium will be held on the campus of the University of South Alabama in Mobile, Ala. Registration is free and there is no fee to present at the event.
www.southalabama.edu/meteorologyclub/secaps/

March 1-4: 9th Annual Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop

The 9th annual CPASW brings together a diverse group of climate application users, climate product developers, and researchers to share best practices and applications of climate information in societal decision-making. It is organized by Iowa State University and will be held at the Des Moines Iowa Marriott Downtown Hotel.
www.ucs.iastate.edu/mnet/cpas/home.html

March 8-10: 2nd Midwest Bow Echo Workshop

This workshop is cosponsored by the NWS and the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Department at Saint Louis University. This workshop will be held on the University campus and is free, but registration is desired.
www.crh.noaa.gov/lx/?n=bow_echo

March 15-16: The 2011 Alaska Weather Symposium (AWS '11)

The sponsors of The 2011 Alaska Weather Symposium invite you to attend at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The Symposium provides a forum for the exchange of operational and research information related to weather in the Alaska environment. Participation from academic, research, government, military and private sectors is encouraged.
<http://weather.arsc.edu/Events/AWS11/>

April 4-8: NOAA Satellite Direct Readout Conference

The NOAA's National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service (NESDIS) will be hosting this Conference in Miami, Florida. The conference is the follow-up to NOAA's successful 2008 Direct Readout Conference. The Theme of the 2011 conference is, "Real-Time Access for Real-Time Applications."
Details at: <http://directreadout.noaa.gov>

June 18: 2nd Annual Raleigh StormFest

The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences will host this large public outdoor event in downtown Raleigh, N.C. Details available later this winter.

MEMBER'S PORTAL!!

Having trouble accessing the Member's Portal?

Contact NWA Office at
assist@nwas.org or 919-845-1546

2011 NWA Election Results

The polls have closed and all votes counted. Here are the winners of the 2011 NWA election for Officers and Councilors:

President-Elect for 2012:	Elizabeth (Liz) Quoetone NWS Warning Decision Training Branch Norman, Okla.	2011-2013 Councilors:	
		Frank Brody	NWS Spaceflight Meteorology Group Houston, Texas
Vice President:	Bruce Thomas Midland Radio Corporation Kansas City, Mo.	Dr. Chad Kauffman	Asst. Professor, California University California, Penn.
		Troy Kimmel	KEYE-TV and University of Texas Austin, Texas
Treasurer:	Jeff Craven NWS Milwaukee/Sullivan Dousman, Wisc.	Nezette Rydell	NWS Denver/Boulder Boulder, Colo.

Bylaws Changes: The four proposed bylaw changes were approved with approval margins of between 87 and 98 percent.

Dates **2** Remember

Feb. 26: 2011 Minnesota Storm Chasing Convention, Arbor Lakes, Minn.

March 3-5: 2011 National Severe Weather Workshop, Norman, Okla.

March 11-13: 36th Northeast Storm Conference, Taunton, Mass.

March 12: TESSA 2011 National Storm Conference, Colleyville, Texas

March 31-April 2: 15th Severe Storms and Doppler Radar Conference, Ankeny, Iowa

April 4-8: NOAA Satellite Direct Readout Conference, Miami, Fla.

Aug. 4-6: 15th Annual High Plains Conference, Wichita, Kan.

Oct. 15-20: 36th National Weather Association Annual Meeting, Birmingham, Ala.

Oct. 20-21: 7th GOES Users' Conference, Birmingham, Ala.

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Submit newsletter items directly to the NWA office or to nwanewsletter@nwas.org. Material received by the 25th will be considered for the next month's issue.

Members receive the Newsletter and *National Weather Digest* as part of their regular, student or corporate membership privileges. Printed Newsletter subscriptions are available for \$25 per year plus extra shipping costs outside U.S. Single copies are \$3. **Address, phone number, email and affiliation changes can now be made online at the member portal.**

Connecting operational meteorologists in pursuit of excellence in weather forecasting, communication, and service.

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