



NEWSLETTER

**National Weather
Association**

NO. 09 – 3 MARCH 2009

January 2009 Ice Storm

Much of the middle part of the country suffered a crippling and historic ice storm Jan. 26 – 28 of this year. Kentucky was hit the hardest with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) calling this storm the most widely damaging weather event in the Commonwealth's modern history.

Assessment teams from local governments, Kentucky Division of Emergency Management and FEMA brought back estimates that push the total damage figure past \$214 million. The National Weather Service reported that the storm resulted in power outages to 609,000 homes and businesses across Kentucky, which was the largest power outage on record.

The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management reported that more than 310,000 lost power. Electric grids were completely shut down in much of northeast Arkansas, thousands of trees were lost, and several people lost their lives

by trying inventive ways to stay warm. Area residents were extremely grateful to the utility workers who came from across the country to help. Many from Louisiana mentioned that they were just repaying people in Arkansas for their hurricane relief efforts after Katrina.



Photo courtesy Ryan Vaughn (see page 6 for more)

Contributors:
Janice Bunting, Contributing Editor
Ryan Vaughn, Chief Meteorologist,
KAIT-TV, Jonesboro, Ark.



**Dr. Joseph Schaefer interviewed
by NWA President, page 3**

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Tick-Tock Students:

Application Deadlines Approaching for NWA Scholarships



NWA Scholarship	Application Closing Date
David Sankey Minority Scholarship	April 15th
Arthur C. Pike Scholarship	April 15th
AccuWeather Undergraduate Scholarship	May 15th
Dr. Roderick A. Scofield Scholarship	May 15th

Information for scholarships and their deadlines available at:
http://www.nwas.org/committees/ed_comm/application/index.php

34th NWA Annual Meeting: Get Your Plan On! Oct. 17 - 22

Where:

Sheraton Waterside Hotel, on the waterfront in downtown Norfolk, Va., Oct. 17 - 22, 2009

Our Theme:

"The Future is Now: New Technologies and Techniques to Support the Weather Enterprise and Society: 2010 and Beyond."

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. 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 submitted. If you are unable to submit your abstract via the online form, please contact the NWA office at (919) 845-1546 or e-mail: exdir@nwas.org.

Annual Meeting Hotel Information:

The Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel: www.sheraton.com/norfolk

NWA room rates are as follows: 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. The group rate is good for reservations made by Sept. 16.

Still Need More:

For more information on exhibits, special accommodations, registration and the overall meeting program, please see the Web site (www.nwas.org). You may also contact the NWA office at (919) 845-1546 or by e-mail: exdir@nwas.org.

North Texas Chapter News

Eric Howieson, AWIPS/Radar Program Manager at the National Weather Service Southern Region Headquarters, gave a very interesting presentation about the advances in the National Weather Service radar program at the North Texas Chapter of the American Meteorological Society (AMS)/NWA January meeting. Eric showed some examples of the super resolution WSR-88D radar data versus the legacy resolution. He also talked about algorithm SZ-2 and multiple pulse repetition frequency dealiasing algorithms (MPDA) that will be used to reduce range folding. Eric also talked about the negative effects wind farms are having on radar returns. He first discussed how the dual polarization retrofit of the WSR-88D will work, and what advantages it will bring over the current system. Then Eric discussed the Multi-function Phased Array Radar, these radars can get updates every 15 seconds. Eric closed with a demonstration of the radar data of the future.

President Greg Story congratulated Bernard Meisner who was presented the AMS's Francis W. Reichelderfer award for "providing

excellent support and devoting his professional life to nation's environmental services."

Our chapter is going forward to provide care packages for military troops. We have decided to adopt the Weather Squadron from Fort Hood which is currently deployed. At the February meeting, St. Patrick and Easter cards were passed around for members to sign. We will send them to the 14 soldiers who we adopted, along with the member donated food items, books and other items. The Fort Worth Emergency management office donated some of the Knowwhat2do decks of playing cards for us to include in the packages. Donations will continue to be collected at chapter meetings this year.

Stanley Christmas gave a report on the Fort Worth Science Fair where Tracy Burns, Bernard Meisner and Stanley were judges. Chapter members also judged the Dallas Science Fair on Feb. 28.

Greg Higgins was elected as the new vice president at the February meeting. Greg replaces Diane Cooper who recently moved to Minneapolis, Minn., and is the new service

hydrologist at the NWS office.

Greg Story announced that the month of March is Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) March Madness; they would like to see who can get the most new members in the month of March. Our chapter has been promoting CoCoRaHS at storm spotter training sessions in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

It was also announced the creation of the TESSA Alan R. Moller Severe Weather Education and Research College Scholarship in the amount of \$500. Alan recently retired after a long and very distinguished career with the NWS.

The February meeting concluded with an interesting presentation on "A Meteorological Review of the 6 March 2008 Convective Snow Event" by NWS Meteorologist Intern Nick Hampshire. Nick talked about all the factors (including the deformation zone and frontogenesis) that came together last March for our snow event.

Bobette Mauck
Chapter Secretary

President's Message: Interview with Dr. Joe Schaefer

I would like to use this issue of the NWA Newsletter to highlight someone who has made substantial contributions to the organization: that member is Dr. Joseph (Joe) Schaefer, Director, National Weather Service Storm Prediction Center (SPC). I have known Joe for many years through the NWA as well as my time working at the SPC. He has been actively involved in the NWA since 1985 and served as President in 1998. He also served as Vice President and Councilor. Joe is a regular attendee at the annual meetings along with several staff members from the SPC. I recently asked Joe a series of professional questions about himself, some of the challenges the SPC faces and his thoughts on the NWA. The interview follows.



Mike Vescio, NWA President

At the Storm Prediction Center, we are exploring new techniques to make weather forecasts more relevant to the public. For instance, this summer we will be experimenting with using calibrated ensemble thunderstorm forecast guidance in a human-over-the loop mode to create more relatively detailed probabilistic non-severe thunderstorm outlooks for four hourly periods through 04Z tomorrow followed by an 8-hour overnight outlook through 12Z in the morning. Working on developing these types of new forecasts and improving the value of our science to the public is extremely exciting and rewarding.

Mike: A lot has changed at the SPC since I left in 2000. What do you think is the biggest challenge facing the SPC forecasters now?

Joe: As the quality and quantity of forecast data from numerical models increases, perhaps the biggest problem facing weather forecasters at any level is having the time and knowledge to evaluate the output from the various models, to differentiate between real and model “created” signal, and to interpret the model output as an indicator of weather. When cloud resolving numerical models first became available over regional sized domains, an illustrative way to composite the output into an easily understandable quick look display was to create simulated radar reflectivity charts. However, the resolution of the output was such that it was very easy for forecasters to forget that they were looking at model space rather than at real radar displays. This made it very easy to buy off on the model forecast without the in-depth scientific analysis that is required to create a good forecast.

It is also imperative that we develop ways to forecast the pattern as well as the simple occurrence of weather. For most real world decisions, it is not simply enough to know what will happen, but it is also necessary to know the temporal and spatial distribution of the event. Again using convection as an example, it is not enough to give the probabilities for the occurrence of thunderstorms, rather we need to be able to forecast the probability that storms will develop into a squall line. The mode of the storms determines their impact on society.

Mike: Joe, rumor has it that you have more years of federal service than almost everyone in the NWS. What keeps you going?

Joe: That really is a bit of an exaggeration, in fact according to the Social Security Administration I am not yet full retirement age. But in a serious vein, I really enjoy my job and look forward to coming to work each morning.

Mike: Do you think the addition of high resolution model forecast reflectivity data has benefitted the forecasters when making watch decisions?

Joe: The forecast reflectivity data is a great way to get an overview of the weather the various models are forecasting. This is especially true when the model grid spacing is small enough (~5 km or less) to allow explicit cloud physics instead of total parameterization. However, it is important to remember that this is simply guidance. The timing and location of convective initiation and the mode of the convection are important, and are extremely difficult to forecast. Because of this, the forecaster must still evaluate the reality of the physical processes that the model is invoking to create the “radar echoes.”

As an extension of this idea, the SPC has been working with the Environmental Modeling Center to develop experimental algorithms that will simulated satellite imagery from the NAM and GFS output. These displays will not supplant traditional displays of model forecasts, but they will enable forecasters to get a quick look at the model forecast to see if there any unexpected areas of concern developing.

Mike: Lets switch gears a little and talk about the NWA. Why did you join and what do you like most about the organization?

Joe: I joined the NWA while I was with the National Severe Storms Forecast Center. As a meteorologist at a national center, a person has the rather unique opportunity to specialize in specific types of weather. However in doing this, there is a risk that they may lose their appreciation for the importance and difficulty of making the more routine forecasts that gives operational meteorology credibility with the public. The NWA gave me an opportunity to strengthen my ties with the entire forecast community.

As THE professional society for operational weather forecasters, the NWA offers a venue for forecasters and others interested in operational meteorology to get together with their peers from around the country, either in person at meetings, or virtually via the Web and the various NWA publications, to discuss mutual concerns and to try to develop solutions for ongoing problems. One's affiliation and educational background is totally unimportant; the significant factor is their unbridled interest in the weather. Weathercasters, government forecasters and individuals who work for private forecast companies all share ideas on how to improve our profession and better the end product, the forecasts given to the public.

See CORNER, page 7

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REVISED:
MARCH 3, 2009

SUBMITTING NWA AWARD NOMINATIONS:

Please copy the award cover sheet from the NWA Web site, www.nwas.org/awards/awardnomination.pdf, or call 919-845-1546 for a faxed copy of it. Attach a narrative nomination (up to two pages in length) with no more than three supporting letters of endorsement. Nominations should be mailed by July 1, 2009 to:

NWA Awards Committee
attn: Daniel McCarthy, Chairperson
228 West Millbrook Road
Raleigh, NC 27609-4304

Although there is no rigid time requirement for the awards, it is preferred that the accomplishment, if not on a continuing basis, occur within 18 months prior to the nominations. Self nominations will not be accepted. If the nomination is not selected as the winner, it will remain a valid nomination for two additional years unless the nominee(s) are no longer in positions applicable to the award. The nomination may be updated by the submitter in each of those additional two years. Presentation of the annual awards for 2009 will be made at the NWA Annual Meeting Awards Luncheon Oct. 21 (see page 2 for meeting details).

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2009 NWA ANNUAL AWARDS

The National Weather Association (NWA) began its annual awards program in 1977 to provide deserved recognition to those individuals involved in operational activities. The NWA Annual Awards Program recognizes the professional as well as the volunteer. The emphasis is on the people who perform the day-to-day tasks of providing meteorological information and weather support services to the public.

Please review the award categories carefully and use the category most appropriate for the nomination being submitted.

The Award Categories are:

Operational Achievement Individual Award: This award is presented to a NWA member who has made a significant contribution to operational meteorology. This could be for an accurate and timely forecast for one or more significant weather events or for long-period achievement in operational weather support or related activities.

Operational Achievement Group Award: This award is presented to a group of two or more individuals for a significant contribution to operational meteorology. At a minimum, a majority of the group (greater than 50 percent) must be NWA members.

Member of the Year Award: This award is presented to a NWA member who has made significant contributions to the organization over a period of time.

T. Theodore Fujita Research Achievement Award: This award is presented to a NWA member whose research has made a significant contribution to operational meteorology.

Broadcaster of the Year Award: This award is presented to a NWA member Radio or Television weathercaster, or other member of the broadcast media, whose activities have significantly contributed to the development and presentation of quality and timely weather information to the public service. Radio and Television weathercaster candidates must be current NWA Seal of Approval holders and have had the NWA Seal of Approval for at least one year prior to being nominated for this award.

The Larry R. Johnson Special Award: This award is presented to an individual or a group to recognize unique events or extraordinary accomplishments, which significantly contributed to operational meteorology.

Walter J. Bennett Public Service Award: This award is presented to an individual or organization directly assisting the meteorological community in providing weather-related information to the public. Individuals and organizations in the meteorological profession are ineligible for this award.

Public Education Award: This award is presented to an individual or organization providing significant contributions to increase the public's weather awareness.

Local Chapter Award: This award is presented to a Local Chapter of the NWA whose activities have significantly increased awareness of the weather and of the NWA in their local area.

Aviation Meteorology Award: This award is presented to an individual or group to recognize significant contributions to aviation meteorology, such as impact of operational forecasts on aviation operations or advances in aviation meteorology including research in detection and forecasting of aviation hazards.

Other Special Achievement Awards are detailed online at: www.nwas.org/awards/. Names of previous annual award winners and additional award information are also listed.

Ice: A Most Destructive Winter Phenomena



Please see related story on front. More images and information about this storm is online at:
www.crh.noaa.gov/lmk/?n=jan_2009_ice_and_snow and
www.srh.noaa.gov/lzk/html/win0109a.htm

2008 Contributions to the National Weather Association

The National Weather Association extends a heartfelt thank you to the following members who provided contributions of \$25 or more to the NWA general fund and/or to the Sol Hirsch Educational Fund. Thanks again from the NWA!!

\$500 or more

Nancy Dean
Benjamin Hablutzel
John E. Jones Jr.
Thomas E. Skilling
Brian G. Smith

\$100 - \$499

Thomas C. Adang
Dr. Kenneth C. Crawford
Walter H. Drag
Roger Edson
Renee R. Fair
Dr. Elbert W. Friday Jr.
Floyd F. Hauth
G. Chet Henricksen
Sol Hirsch
Troy Kimmel
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Dennis H. McCarthy
Bernard N. Meisner
Celia A. Miner
Harvey L. Moskowitz
Ashton G. Peyrefitte Jr.
Bill Proenza
Joseph T. Schaefer
Steven J. Weiss

\$25 - \$99

Judith Anne Artley
Donald J. Aycock
Robert Ballard
Teresa Bals-Elsholz
Daniel S. Berkowitz
Brian Billings
David Billingsley
Richard Borneman
Dr. Lance F. Bosart
S. Edward Boselly III
Bob Breck
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Jim Buchanan
Dr. John J. Cahir
John Carroll
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Richard L. Livingston
Michael J. MacGown
Dr. Robert A. Maddox
Daniel W. McCarthy
William Eric McLin
Thomas C. Messner
Paul Mireles
Elizabeth Morse
Craig & Cynthia A. Nelson
Kathleen Orr Feid
Kristi Owen
Elizabeth Mulvihill Page
Susan M. Palka
Russell L. Pfost
Edward D. Priselac
Ron W. Przybylinski
William M. Quinlan
Mike Roberts
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Joseph Rua
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Don Sarreals
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Edward R. Schoenberg
Stephen H. Scolnik
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Gerald F. Watson
Lisa Argen Weir
Neil J. M. Wheeler
Dr. Herbert L. White
John A. White III
Michael E. Whitehead Cdr USN (Ret)
Gregory E. Wilk

Mike: Are there areas that you would like to see improved from an organizational perspective, or are there challenges that you think we need to address?

Joe: The NWA needs to continuously explore ways to maintain and even increase its relevancy to the operational meteorological community. Since 2004, membership has plateaued at about 3100. It is essential the next generation of forecasters become active members of the Association. The Student Session at the 2008 Annual Meeting was a great start, but we need to continue to build momentum in this and work to insure that the students who attended join and participate in the NWA after they graduate.

The quality and accessibility of NWA publications needs to continue to improve. The new color Newsletter is tremendous, but we still have a long way to go with the *National Weather Digest* and the *Electronic Journal*. Authors need to appreciate that the membership of the NWA is comprised of operational meteorologists and that one of the best ways to spread information on new forecast and warning techniques to the forecast community is via the NWA publications and the NWA journals.

Mike: Last question. Any advice for a new NWA President?

Joe: The only advice I have is not to try doing everything yourself. Let the Executive Director manage the day-to-day Association Operations, but set specific, obtainable goals for what you want to accomplish during your year in office. Then use the talent pool of the NWA Officers, Councilors, Committees and members in making your goals happens.

Great comments from Dr. Schaefer. The NWA leadership is working hard to grow the organization and improve services. In fact, we are devoting an entire day at our mid-year business meeting in June to address strategic planning. Our goal is to develop a road map for an even more successful organization for years to come. If you would like to comment on this new "Members Corner" installment of the Newsletter, please send me a note at president@nwas.org. Also, if you found some of the information that Dr. discussed about severe weather interesting, plan on attending our annual meeting in Norfolk in October (see page 2). We already have a session planned on the future of severe weather forecasting which will no doubt be very exciting!

Professional Development Opportunities in 2009

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.

2009 Southeast Severe Storms Symposium: March 27-28

This is the eighth annual symposium sponsored by the East Mississippi Chapter of the NWA and AMS. Details are at www.msstate.edu/org/nwa/sympos.shtml.

7th Annual Great Lakes Meteorology Conference: March 28

This conference sponsored by the Valparaiso University AMS/NWA Chapter and will take place at Strongbaws Inn located in Valparaiso, Ind. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Tim Marshall from Haag Engineering. Learn more online at www.valpo.edu/organization/nwa/index.html

13th Annual Severe Storms and Doppler Radar Conference: April 2 – 4

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

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

The Workshop will be held in Rapid City, S.D., and is sponsored by the NWS and the SD School of Mines and Technology. 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. Details are available at: <http://www.ias.sdsmt.edu/NPWorkshop/index.htm>.

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 is jointly sponsored by the AMS and the NWA, and organized by the AMS Committee on Weather Analysis and Forecasting with assistance from the NWA Committee on Weather Analysis and Forecasting. Call for Papers is at <http://www.ametsoc.org/MEET/ann/callforpapers.html>.

Inland Impacts of Tropical Cyclones Conference: June 10 – 12

The Conference, hosted by the Metro Atlanta NWA/AMS Chapter, will be held at the Westin Peachtree Plaza in Atlanta, Ga. Oral presentations are solicited around the broad theme of the inland impacts of tropical cyclones. Please submit abstracts electronically to the science committee chairperson: Rob Handel at robert.handel@noaa.gov. For further information contact the program chairperson: Trisha Palmer (trisha.palmer@noaa.gov) or visit Web site: www.ametsoc.org/chapters/atlanta/iitc.htm.

34th NWA Annual Meeting: Oct. 17 – 22

The 34th NWA Annual Meeting will be held at the Sheraton Waterside Hotel in Norfolk, Va. Visit www.nwas.org/meetings/nwa2009 and page 2 of this *Newsletter* for more information.

6th GOES Users' Conference: Nov. 3 – 5

"Bringing Environmental Benefits to a Society of Users" will be held Nov. 3 – 5 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison, Wis. It is being organized by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with support from CIMSS at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. For more information, please see: http://cimss.ssec.wisc.edu/goes_r/meetings/guc2009. The conference co-chairs are Dick Reynolds [(410) 268-5360 or Dick.Reynolds@noaa.gov] and James Gurka, NOAA/NESDIS (james.gurka@noaa.gov).

NWS Central Region Changes Hail Criterion

In a rollout implementation from April 1 through July 1, 2009, all NWS Central Region Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs) will begin using a new experimental hail criterion for determining when to issue severe thunderstorm warnings. In an effort to better represent hail that produces damage and to reduce user complacency to numerous severe thunderstorm warnings for three-quarter inch diameter hail, the WFOs in Central Region will use a hail criterion of one inch in diameter or larger as opposed to the three-quarter inch criterion referenced above.

This effort is an expansion of a successful experiment conducted in the state of Kansas over the last four severe weather seasons where WFOs used the 1-inch criterion for severe thunderstorm warnings. Due to the overwhelmingly positive response to this change, the entire Central Region will test the new criterion with the potential for further expansion across the NWS in the future.

No change will occur with respect to wind speed and severe thunderstorm warnings. Winds equal to or greater than 50 knots (58 mph) will remain the threshold.

NOAA/National Weather Service



For a product description document of this experiment:
<http://products.weather.gov>

A map showing affected offices is on-line at:
www.weather.gov/os/notification/resources/CR_WFOS.pdf

A 5-minute informational video can be accessed at:
www.crh.noaa.gov/crh/One_Inch_Hail_Podcast.wmv

Dates 2 Remember

March 24 – 27: 7th Annual Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop

March 27 – 28: 2009 Southeast Severe Storms Symposium

March 28: 7th Annual Great Lakes Meteorology Conference

April 2 – 4: 13th Annual Severe Storms and Doppler Radar Conference

April 7-8: 13th Annual Northern Plains Weather Workshop

June 1-5: 23rd AMS Conference on Weather Analysis and Forecasting/19th AMS Conference on Numerical Weather Prediction. Co-sponsored by the NWA.

June 10-12: Inland Impacts of Tropical Cyclones Conference

Oct. 17 – 22: 34th NWA Annual Meeting, Norfolk, Va.

See page 7 or www.nwas.org/events.php for details on these and additional Professional Development Opportunities!

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