

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER FOR THE
WICHITA CHAPTER OF
THE AMERICAN
METEOROLOGICAL
SOCIETY AND THE
NATIONAL WEATHER
ASSOCIATION



Quarterly AMS/ NWA News



Volume 1, Issue 4

September 2010

Some of the companies represented in the Organization.

- AccuWeather (WeatherData)
- Local Broadcast Media
- Local Public Schools
- McConnell Air Force Base
- National Weather Service
- Wichita State University

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Upcoming September Meeting

Next Meeting: Tuesday September 21, 2010, 6:30pm.

Location: Sedgwick County Park Shelter #1 (See map on back page)

Cost: \$3 a person, children 12 and under free

The cost of \$3 will cover BBQ meat which will be provided by the chapter.

What to Bring:

- Yourself and your family, we will be close to a playground
- Side dish or Dessert to share with the group

Meeting Topics:

- High Plains Conference
- Nominations for Chapter Officers
- Vote on November Meeting Speaker

Note: We are asking for a small fee for the BBQ sandwiches, to help defray the costs, and to be conscious of the Chapter budget for the upcoming High Plains Conference in August 2011.

**RSVP to Lorrie Donham by September 19th, 2010,
via e-mail to hdschteach@cox.net**

Reminder: Annual Dues for Members are \$15 and will be accepted at any Meeting by cash or check.



Spotlight on a Member

SENIOR MASTER SERGEANT CHARLES R. HOFFMAN

Senior Master Sergeant Charles R. Hoffman is 22d Operations Support Squadron Superintendent, 22d Operations Group, 22d Air Refueling Wing, McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas. As the squadron's senior enlisted leader, Sergeant Hoffman advises the commander on all matters influencing the effective employment of over 160 Airmen assigned across 10 career fields. The operations support squadron's primary combat role consists of air refueling and airlift operations in support of worldwide air mobility and overseas contingency operations. Sergeant Hoffman also coordinates closely with wing staff agencies and senior enlisted leaders to sustain career, recognition, morale and quality of life improvement initiatives for Airmen. He grew up in Schertz, Texas and entered the Air Force in May 1991. His background includes a myriad of duties in meteorology and management. His assignments include bases in Texas, Illinois, Florida, Mississippi, Germany, Massachusetts, South Korea, Louisiana, Hawaii, and Kansas. He has deployed in support of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR Tuzla AB, Bosnia; Task Force ABLE SENTRY, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia; and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM at Balad AB, Iraq.



*Charles R. Hoffman,
Senior Master Sergeant,
McConnell Air Force Base.*

Charles Education includes work in Germany, Maxwell AFB, AL, and McGuire AFB, NJ. He received a Baccalaureate Degree in Human Resources Management and a Masters Degree in Management Science, both from Bellevue University, NE. In 2008 he attended the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Gunter AFB, AL.



Note from the Editor: This section is to highlight a different, randomly selected member each quarter. My vision for this section, is to see all of the different aspects of how Meteorology is apart of our Chapter and getting to know one another.

July 15th, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Total Attendance: 19
Member Attendance: 17

MEETING SUMMARY

President Rob Cox called the meeting to order.

Rob announced that it was his last day as he is moving to the National Weather Service's Cheyenne office. The Vice President is not currently available. So, on a temporary basis, Secretary Mike Smith is taking over the President's duties until the regular election later in the year.

Current chapter activities are focusing on hosting the 2011 High Plains Weather Conference in Wichita next summer. Ken Cook of the NWS has begun the planning process. Mike Smith said he would look into hotels [[Addendum: We have received an extremely competitive bid from the Wichita Marriott to extend the government per diem rate of \$84/night to all guests.]]

Lori and Stephanie are reviewing our 1995 by-laws and will report on any revisions that might be needed.

Rob introduced our speaker, Dr. Erik Rasmussen. Dr. Rasmussen's presentation was titled, "What Is Left to Learn About Tornadoes." It explained, beginning with the tornado and working backward in the development cycle to the atmospheric conditions conducive to them, what we still have to learn. The presentation can be found on his web site: www.rasmsys.com/.

Questions and answers followed.

Chance Hayes requested a round of applause for Rob and, as his final act, Rob adjourned the meeting.



*Keep an eye
out for Future
AMS/NWA
Meetings.*

Mark your Calendars

Keep an eye out for future AMS/NWA Meetings

November 2010

AMS/NWA Officers

Let us know what you think. Do you have ideas for Speakers, Suggestions, etc. Please feel free to contact the Officers

President: Vacant

Vice President: Lorrie Donham, hdsciteach@cox.net

Treasurer: Craig McPherson, Craig.McPherson@mccconnell.af.mil

Secretary: Mike Smith, michaelsmith@mac.com

Wichita AMS Newsletter Editor: Jerilyn Billings, Jerilyn.Billings@noaa.gov



Tornado Fatalities in a Kansas a Survey by Cody Charvat, Sedgwick Co. Emergency Management

2010 was my second year for teaching storm spotter safety classes across Sedgwick County, and this year I did something a little different. My boss, Randy Duncan, had allowed me to purchase a number of these nifty little devices: a dynamo-powered combination flashlight/radio/weather radio/cell phone charger that I gave away as a door prize at each of my 25+ presentations. The prize was nice enough, though, that I didn't want to just draw a name out of a hat; I wanted them to feel like they had to do something to earn it, which led me to an idea that I hoped would also increase participant feedback. I told them, in order to be eligible for the prize drawing, they had to take a Kansas Severe Weather Quiz that I put together, and oh, by the way, as long as you're filling things out, there's a course evaluation on the flip side.

All of that background was to lead up to the fact that there was one question on the quiz that I thought the folks in this group might be interested to hear the results of:

The Kansas tornado which produced the most fatalities struck which city:

Andover
Topeka
Greensburg
Udall

Before I break down the results, though, just a quick note on the scientific reliability of my survey: it's not real high. This was just a fun little exercise, so I had no controls in place to keep people from cheating off their neighbor or simply asking someone else in the room for their opinion. I did not put the answer sheets out until after intermission, but there was no requirement that they turn in their quiz before picking up the answers, so someone could have gone back and changed their responses before handing it in. Because of that, I adopted a game show host mentality when grading the results: "I'm sorry, but we must accept your first answer." So, if someone had circled one city but crossed it out to select Udall, I counted it as a vote for their original answer. The only exceptions were, if someone crossed out one wrong answer and changed to a different wrong answer, I let their final answer count. There were not a lot of people who changed answers, though, so despite my attempts to discredit my own work, it's probably still a pretty accurate sampling.

After the official Storm Spotter classes were over, I continued to give the survey to audiences at business and civic groups that asked me to give weather presentations, so all told I received 623 responses from late February through early June. The voting breaks down as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Andover | 133 votes | 21.4% |
| Topeka | 32 votes | 5.1% |
| Greensburg | 126 votes | 20.3% |
| Udall | 331 votes | 53.2% |

And one poor, confused soul offered a write-in vote for Haiti.

As you might expect, the correct responses were much higher if you compare the numbers for those attending the storm spotter classes to those of the general public who were only at a weather meeting because that's what someone in their organization scheduled for that day:

Storm Spotter Classes (368 votes) General Public (255 votes)

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Andover | 58 or 15.8% | 63 or 27.8% |
| Topeka | 17 or 4.6% | 15 or 5.1% |
| Greensburg | 56 or 15.2% | 58 or 25.6% |
| Udall | 236 or 64.1% | 91 or 40.1% |

The only individual class for which I kept track of the numbers separately was McConnell AFB. Since my audience was made up largely of folks who had grown up somewhere other than Kansas, I figured the answers would reflect

that; they did.

Andover 12 43%

Topeka 0

Greensburg 12 43%

Udall 4 14%

(The McConnell numbers are included in the figures above for the Storm Spotter classes, as well as the overall results.)

So what does it mean? Well, I do not intend to inspect the data too closely; after all, it was only included as a bit of a fun exercise...to spend too much time trying to figure out its meaning would push it over the line from fun into work. Still, there is one important fact that stands out in the numbers: Despite the fact that the Udall tornado occurred over 55 years ago, most Kansas, especially those with an interest in the weather, still remember the significance of the event. As someone who grew up only a few miles from Udall and has heard the tales of the survivors, I take some small comfort in knowing that, more than a generation later, their suffering and loss are not forgotten.

Cody Charvat
Training Officer
Sedgwick County Emergency Management

