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The Catch



NOLAN DOESKEN'S MONTHLY COCORAHHS E-MAIL MESSAGE

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Dear CoCoRaHS rain gauge readers,

Greetings to all, and welcome to the new format. We hope you find it easier to read and navigate. Since I last wrote (end of July), more much-needed rain has fallen in parts of our state (Colorado). We've had beautiful thunderheads to watch almost every afternoon and evening. Some areas by Colorado Springs have picked up 6-8" of rain this month -- a lot for this part of the country and enough to cause some local flooding. But the storms have all skirted our place on the NW side of Fort Collins. My monthly total is only 0.14" even though it's rained (at least a trace) on more than half the days this month.

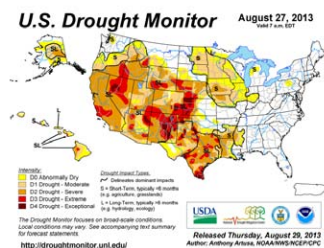
Nationally, the most rainfall this month was just over 20" at a couple of CoCoRaHS stations in south central Missouri. There have also been places around the country with no precipitation this month -- including some places farther north in Missouri. Isn't our climate amazing!

A big welcome to new CoCoRaHS volunteers

We continue to see many new volunteers signing up for CoCoRaHS (several hundred in the past month). If you are new to the CoCoRaHS team, thanks so much for signing up and we're happy to see your reports beginning to show up on our maps. Almost every state has had at least one new recruit and several states (Colorado, South Dakota, Texas, South Carolina and several others have had many). We've even had a few #1's (first in the county) including Pendleton County, KY and Sanborn County, SD. We get very excited when we see more voids on our maps being filled.

If you're new and need some help getting started, just let us know.

Reporting Drought



The rains have also been skipping California as they usually do this time of year, but many parts of the northern plains and upper Midwest have turned dry and the [U.S. Drought Monitor maps](#) are lighting up again in those areas. That has stirred some of us to enter "[Drought Impact Reports](#)" which we appreciate greatly.

To see all the reports for the whole country just click the "Select State" option at the top of the state menu. Please feel free to submit these special CoCoRaHS reports whenever you see drought conditions around you getting worse, continuing, or getting better.

Another Farewell

AZ-MR-103 passed away at the age of 97. Virlin, was one of our corps of WW2 veterans participating in CoCoRaHS volunteers and signed up to help at age 93. He rarely missed a day (mostly zeroes -- total of 27" of rain in 4 years). I don't know if he was our oldest (let me know if you're older) but he was certainly in the top 0.1 percent. His daughter contacted me and asked if she could continue the tradition he started, so that station will continue.

Watching and Marveling

As a kid growing up in the open spaces of rural central Illinois, I spent countless hours watching the progression of clouds during the day. Some of my favorite memories

revolve around warm summer evenings and watching distant lightning. As a teenager, I honed my skills using static crackles on AM radio to help me identify the distance, direction and frequency of lightning to try to predict if it was coming our way. Then as I got older and the responsibility of job and family increased, all too often I have failed to spend time outside watching and wondering.

Thanks to the "excuse" of having to go out to our pasture to check on our irrigation water these recent warm summer evenings, I was pleased to discover that the excitement of watching distant lightning is still present deep inside. Tuesday night I must have spent two solid hours watching in-cloud, cloud-to-cloud and cloud-to-ground lightning light up our night sky in various directions. One cell would get really active. Then it would die down and another part of the sky would light up. Perhaps there was a skunk, fox or raccoon watching with me, but we didn't mind each other. And the many loud crickets just added to the atmosphere. Eventually it got close enough to hear the thunder, but then it quickly headed north towards Wyoming where it continued and then faded out well after midnight.

CoCoRaHS for schools, teachers and kids

CoCoRaHS for Schools. With the beginning of the school year, we want to make our educators out there aware of CoCoRaHS activities for K-12 teachers. There are currently over 500 educators across the country that are already involved, and the CoCoRaHS Education Team is continuing to develop and pilot new materials and activities.

With a successful test run in Colorado last year, we will soon be inviting all participating schools in the network to record and submit data during the same week - dubbed 'Rain Gauge Week' (September 10th-16th). If you are not already part of the 'CoCoRaHS School Network', we invite any existing educators, teachers, students, schools, and home schools to send your contact information to: education@cocorahs.org.

Also, if you happen to know teachers in your local schools that you think might or should be interested, please spread the word.

An interesting opportunity to "play with Lego's"



I will admit, I loved playing with Lego's as a kid. That would have been in the 1960s. Lego's were so fun and functional that I retired my American Bricks and temporarily set aside my Erector Set. I even took my Lego's to college with me where we built stuff in the dorm (fellow engineers :-)) when we should have been studying.

Well, just a few days ago we learned that the latest Lego challenge has been announced -- an opportunity for groups of kids to develop and apply Lego robotics to try

to solve real world challenges. This year the challenge is "[Nature's Fury](#)".

Kids all across the country will now be hustling to identify a project that they can undertake. They will be seeking local experts to help them identify a problem and try to design something to help. One student just came to our office a few minutes ago to pick our brain and get ideas.

There just aren't enough meteorologists and climatologists to go around across our whole country. If you like helping kids in your community, this might be a opportunity for the CoCoRaHS community to pitch in. Here is a [NOAA resource](#) for teams and mentors to be able to begin their research.

[Click here](#) If you are interested in volunteering as a local coach, mentor or judge. Our NOAA point of contact for this challenge is Steve Storck. [Click here](#) to e-mail Steve and he can help line you up with a local contact.

Do zero's matter?

Yes. Reports of precipitation on days when no precipitation falls are very helpful to CoCoRaHS. Our silly saying is "Be a hero. Report your Zero!"

Get out your camera -- "Field Photo Weekend"



Have you participated in the CoCoRaHS Field Photos Weekends before? If not, here's your chance to join in with hundreds of other CoCoRaHS volunteers to see what our landscape looks like. If you have participated

before, this is a great chance to go back to your favorite spots and see what has changed. On August 31st, September 1st or 2nd, you can help by participating in our fourth "Field Photo Weekend".

All you have to do is take your camera or mobile device, find a landscape in your community (streams, lakes, rivers, reservoirs, a forest, a crop field, a pasture, etc.) and take a single photo or a panorama in four different directions (N, E, S, W) from where you are standing. After that you can either [email your photos](#) with your location or [upload them directly](#) to the Earth Observation and Modeling Facility's photo archive website. For detailed instructions, [click here](#).

If you want to see what others have submitted before, [click here](#) and select any of the dots (these photos were from Memorial Day weekend last May). We are working on going back to the earlier events and tagging all those photos so you will be able to easily find all the ones from our initial event last Labor Day or Presidents Day this past winter. If

you upload photos directly to the EMOF website, you can help us by adding a tag #CoCoRaHSSep13 in the Field Notes section. Then your photos will pop up on [this link](#) along with any that we receive by e-mail.

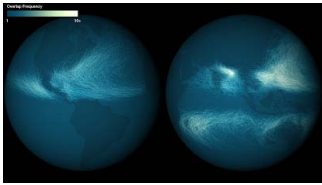
Field Photo Weekend is a partnership between CoCoRaHS, the Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program (SCIPP) and the Earth Observation and Modeling Facility (EOMF) to help ground truth through photos, what is going on with our landscapes throughout the country. It's not just drought we are looking for either, it could be flooding, or whatever state the landscape is now in. There is the possibility that we may hold additional "Field Photo Weekends" during the year to show how conditions to your landscape may have changed over time. This should be fun!

In a few weeks this weekend's photos will be posted and you'll be able to see your photos and those taken by other volunteers.

Remember you don't have to email your photos this weekend, just take them, but we do encourage you to email them soon afterward. That address again is: fieldphotos@southernclimate.org. When uploading your photos please include the words: #CoCoRaHSSep13 in the notes field.

Just think if all 19,000+ CoCoRaHS volunteers take photos! Wow!!

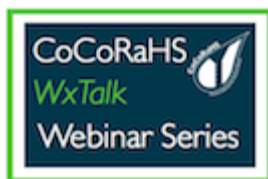
Best Blog ever



Not sure that's totally true, but the [CoCoRaHS Blog](#) is great - - thanks to the dedicated efforts of Steve Hilberg of the Midwest Regional Climate Center at the University of Illinois. This week Steve features an incredible global view of the tracks of tropical cyclones -- Wow.

Each new Blogpost also appears on the [CoCoRaHS Facebook page](#). So if you've "liked us" on Facebook you'll never miss an update!

The hundred hunt for the red sprite Webinar



exclusive opportunity!

What am I talking about? In the interest of time, I'll spare the details, and let you find out for yourself. The atmosphere is full of surprises, and that is the topic of our next [WxTalk Webinar](#) on September 12th. Due to copyright concerns, this webinar will NOT be recorded for future viewing, so don't miss out on this

[Register here](#) and learn about a remarkable phenomenon.

More flying chickens -- too many roosters



For the most part, farm life is good. The horses have accepted the young one. The geese are not as aggressive as they were in the spring. And the dogs are behaving themselves. We did have one new chicken join the flock last week (a reject from another flock). She was the first chicken ever that flew over the fence with the specific intention of being close to


our dogs (turns out she had grown up with her own watch dog). So when our dogs tried to chase her, instead of running she rubbed up against the dogs and tried to make friends. They were so confused they stopped chasing, lay down and just watched her. There was peace. It was a different story in the laying boxes, however. This new chicken liked to break eggs. That doesn't work so she was dismissed.

We're not happy with the statistics on our new chickens hatched this spring. They came out 70% male and we really need more young layers. Well, we know what will be for dinner soon. The young ones better watch out, though. They all figured out on the same day that they could fly in mass, they all flapped furiously and with much fanfare flew up and over our eight foot tall chicken fence and landed 50 feet away on the far side of the horse tank. It was a sight to see. I half expected to see a fox waiting for their unceremonious landing. Life goes on.

In conclusion

Sorry for this long message. There is always so much to share. Please know that your efforts, past present and/or future, in helping track and map our precipitation patterns are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Nolan Doesken
Colorado State University

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