

# The Catch

## **COCORAHS MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

FORT COLLINS, CO — Monday, December 25, 2006

Dear weather caring folks—CoCoRaisins, CoCoNuts or whatever it is that we are.

It has been quite a week here on the Front Range of Colorado. I shoveled snow for close to 6 hours on Thursday but eventually made it to the Colorado State University Campus Weather Station to complete—a few hours late—the storm report. We ended up with 19.9" of fresh snow for the storm and a water content in our National Weather Service 8" diameter metal standard rain gauge of 1.91" That snow all fell in less than 20 hours -- quite intense and accompanied by strong winds and cold temperatures. The adjacent CoCoRaHS gauge picked up 1.86" Our Universal weighing bucket recording rain gauge had 1.75" and our NWS Fischer-Porter recording rain gauge showed 1.61" (What should we believe?) But when we took core samples of the new snow on the ground, we found even more—anywhere from 2.20 to 2.50" of snow water equivalent. For us, that is a HUGE storm for this time of year and it will take weeks to melt.

As we enjoy one of our whiter Christmas's in our 118 years of continuous weather records from our campus weather station—I want to personally wish you all the very best this year.

For some of you this has been a wonderful year full of accomplishments, new milestones, and great successes. Some of you got married this year, some had children, some of you went off to college. For all of this we are grateful. But for many of us this is also been a year of struggle and loss. While the holidays are a special time for many and a time to unite with friends and family (if the weather permits :-) ), these are also the hardest, darkest and coldest of days in many people's lives. While we may take a few minutes each day to check and report our weather, we are also each living out the rest of our lives. We have our bright and sunny days, but we also have storms—some gently rains, some downpours and a few tumults. I feel honored that some of you have felt comfortable sharing your joys and your sorrows. We do feel like family— maybe even better.

In the last few months, several of our volunteers have been diagnosed with cancer and other serious illnesses. We've lost a few this year who have moved

on to the next level of weather observing—whatever that may be. Many of us have lost loved ones. There have been some heart attacks, broken bones, mental disabilities and other aches. Some of us have had to move from our long-time homes. Some have moved to other states. Some of us have immediate family members in Iraq and Afghanistan. Life does go on and we can't stop it. It's not always kind.

This all makes me appreciate you even more. We don't know what tomorrow may bring—and that's a good thing. If we knew, we might decide to turn around, go back, and hide. Still, many of you find time each day—despite personal trials and tribulations—to look up at the sky, admire sunrises and sunsets, feel the wind, sniff the air and measure the rain. Somehow this little activity of reading a rain gauge brings a degree of normalcy to even the craziest of our days. Thank you so much!!

I hope to find time over the remainder of the Christmas holiday to share a weather story with you—a weather and travel story from my senior year of college back in 1973. But now it's time for rest.

Blessings and good cheer,

*Nolan Doesken*

P.S. We've passed the winter solstice now. Brighter days lie ahead!! Some of you are still waiting for winter to start, but spring is already only a few weeks away.