

The Catch

SOME REMINDERS—AND A COCORAHHS STORY I MUST SHARE

FORT COLLINS, CO — Monday, April 2, 2007

Good evening,

It looked like we might make it through March without snow for only the 4th time in 119 years. But alas, we awoke Thursday AM to white ground (not exactly predicted, but there was a big storm nearby up over WY at the time). We also awoke to the terrible news of the devastating tornado that ripped through Holly, Colorado Wednesday evening. Holly is the last Colorado town on the Arkansas River in eastern Colorado before the Kansas border. Colorado has its share of tornadoes, but most are small and short lived. The tornado that hit Holly was not like that == F3 on the enhanced Fujita scale and was on the ground for quite awhile. We got e-mails from several of you who also experienced some close calls from tornadoes this week. Actually, in the few short years of CoCoRaHS we've had at least 4 gauges blown away by tornadoes—a very scary thing.

Tennessee—Welcome!

Tennessee joined CoCoRaHS on April 1. Already more than 100 volunteers have signed up—a record start for a new state. I've only been to Tennessee twice, so I have a lot of geography to learn.

Who's next?

The next state that is in the cue to join CoCoRaHS is South Dakota. Let your northern plains friends and family know so that they'll be ready to sign up June 1.

Watching the NCAA basketball championship game tonight made me think about how awesome it will be when we are able to look at Florida's precipitation patterns. With the kinds of storms they have, Florida will really be a great state for CoCoRaHS—as well as for basketball, football, etc. etc.

A few other states have expressed interest, and today alone we had inquiries from Washington, California and New York. But for now we don't know who will be next after South Dakota.

2000+ -- we did it!

It took a week for the reports to trickle in, but for the first time in CoCoRaHS history, more than 2000 of us sent in daily precipitation reports for one day—March 24. Several more dates will also surpass 2000. This is nearly double the number of reports we were getting this time last year. That's not even counting the hundreds of volunteers that participate in Nebraska's CoCoRaHS equivalent, NeRAIN. Thanks for contributing to this effort.

Colorado opportunities!

There are two CoCoRaHS activities coming up. I hope some of you can attend.

Our Denver Metro area CoCoRaHS Coordinator, Steve Hamilton, has organized a fantastic hail pad party that will be held at his office—the studios of KOSI radio (and several other popular Denver radio stations). Here are the details.

Denver-Metro Hail Pad Party

Saturday April 7th, 10:00AM

Location: KOSI-FM* studios

4700 South Syracuse Street, Denver, CO 80237

Directions: I-25 to Belleview. Exit at Belleview and go EAST on Belleview one block to Syracuse St. Turn LEFT, (north) on Syracuse and go one block, past Garcia's Restaurant on your right, then turn right into parking lot of Denver Corporate Center. Go to Tower One and we will meet in the lobby at 10:00 a.m. and will take the elevator up together. Please be on time.

RSVP to Steve Hamilton at: 303-596-4578 or email CoCoRaHS@gmail.com

Northern Colorado CoCoRaHS Training Session

We will be holding a training session for newcomers to CoCoRaHS or veterans who need to brush up or ask a few questions. I'll be leading this session.

Monday, April 9th, 6:30–8:00 PM

Fort Collins Public Library (Harmony Library Public Meeting Room) on the SE Corner of Harmony and Shields. Please RSVP to Henry Reges at hreges@atmos.colostate.edu or call 970 491-1196

Moisture 3 feet down

We were doing some fence work this weekend and drilled a number of fence post holes. I am delighted to say that the soil was moist all the way to 3 feet in most of the holes. This is a huge improvement from the serious drought conditions last year. The big snow this winter has paid dividends. It was worth the trouble! This is worth celebrating—especially if you're a plant.

Zeros are good data, too

Don't forget to report your dry days as well as your wet ones. We provide "zero" by default on the daily precipitation form to make it easy to report dry weather. Also, don't forget the "Monthly Zeros" report form so that you can go back and fill in all your dry days at the same time.

A story worth sharing!

Winter is about over now. Before we forget about this past winter's long, dark nights and wickedly cold mornings fighting deep snow, I felt like I needed to share the following story. This is a true story from one of our volunteers from central Indiana who sent this to me. Here goes:

"Hi, I would like to tell you the story of my receiving "Snow Toe"! What?? You say you have never heard of Snow Toe? Well, neither had I until Friday when I had a visit with Dr. Horvath. Let me explain,

As some as you may or may not know, I am on disability for both my Multiple Sclerosis and a nasty bout with throat cancer in 05 and 06. There are days when it is almost impossible for me to get out of bed because of the MS symptoms. Anyway, after the "big snow" this past week I went out a little after 5am to read the snow gauge, take measurements, etc. so I could report to CoCoRaHS. I truly had no idea the snow was as deep as it was at the time. So after getting all bundled up, shoveling off the back porch steps off I went to make the 30 or 35 foot trek to the rain/snow gauge.

The gauge was "full" and I was excited to see just exactly what the melted snow would measure in the gauge. As I headed back into the house with gauge and yardstick in hand I noticed that I was slightly "stuck" in the deep snow which had measured 16 inches. I managed to take a step, and then a second and then I felt myself losing my balance. I am already somewhat challenged in that area so naturally down I went in the deep snow in the dark, at 5 am in the morning. Do you think I could get back up? NO! I didn't have the strength to get up because of the deep snow I could not get any leverage. I "rolled" all the way to where I knew the sidewalk was and struggled to my feet covered head to toe in snow looking like the true snowman that I had always read about and seen in pictures.

Making a long story short, I got into the house and out of my coat, hat and gloves only to realize I really had hurt myself. You see, I might as well hit bare pavement in my fall instead of deep snow because I had twisted my right knee and there was "something wrong" with my foot not allowing me to walk on it. I was in great pain, so I just lay around most of the day using "frozen peas" on my knee to reduce the swelling. The following morning I had an appointment with my Radiologist Dr. Horvath. It was all my wife Susan could do to get me there as I was in great pain and still can barely walk.

After the normal exam and questions from nurses and doctor, doctor Horvath wanted to look at my knee and foot. He determined that I might have some possible ligament damage to my knee and told me to stay off it as much as possible and that the "Frozen peas" was as good a remedy as any and to keep applying them to the knee. He looked at my foot and the way my "Great Toe" was swollen and had no movement at all and said "Jerry, you have what's known as turf toe" We laughed a bit and he asked what in the world I had been doing that might cause such an injury. (Turf toe as you may know can be a season ending injury to a football player) After I told my story and we laughed some more about it he looked at me and said "wee my friend, you don't have turf toe at all you have a new one, we'll call it SNOW TOE) so he wrote in my chart that I was suffering from a sprained knee and "snow toe".

There you have it! I bet I am the very 1st person ever diagnosed with Snow Toe. Maybe one day I'll make the medical journals, who knows! HAHHAHAHAHAHAHA"

Jerry

Do you have a story to share?

Several of us already have some good stories of early mornings at the rain gauge. We've had stories of elk, mountain lions, bees, ice, rocks—all sorts of exciting things. Who would have thought that reading a rain gauge could be so exciting. If you have a story involving your rain gauge and a morning observation, feel free to write it up and send it in. We may select it for publication in our little newsletter.

Problems logging on?

If you have not been able to log on with your CoCoRaHS username and password, please drop me a line. We'll make sure you're set up. There are now over 3500 of us with CoCoRaHS rain gauges in our yards, so if we all got around to reporting on the same day our maps would be covered with data dots!

Thanks as always!

Nolan Doesken
Colorado State University