

The Catch

COCORAHS -- SEVERAL SEPTEMBER REMINDERS

Fort Collins, CO — Thursday, September 20, 2012

Greetings to all CoCoRaisins

It was fantastic seeing all the rainfall reports streaming in these past few days as moisture has swept across many parts of the country. If you haven't already, I highly recommend taking a look at the CoCoRaHS maps <http://www.cocorahs.org/Maps/> and click on your favorite areas. These maps are our collective handiwork. Everyone's measurements matter and the sequence of national maps for the past 10-day show a fantastic progression of rainfall across much of the country.

Today (September 19) there was significant rainfall reported from nearly every CoCoRaHS rain gauge from southern Florida all the way up to the northern tip of Maine. Meanwhile the western 2/3 of the country was dry (Thanks for all the "zero" reports today).

Yesterday (September 18th) we had close to 5300 reports of measurable precipitation with an impressive average rainfall (including nearly 4000 zeros) of 0.42" per observer nationwide. 150 of us received more than 4" of rainfall yesterday and another 200 volunteers reported between 3" and 4" of rain in 24 hours. It's been a long time since we've had such widespread and soaking rains -- and this is helping to further reduce the area and the intense impacts from this summer's drought.

"So you want to be a meteorologist?" Special Webinar tomorrow -- still time to sign up

I am so sorry for this last minute notification, but tomorrow (Thursday, September 20 -- 1 PM Eastern, noon Central, 11 AM Mountain and 10 AM Pacific) Dr. David Changnon (good friend and long time CoCoRaHS participant) will be our guest to answer questions about how to become a meteorologist. Here is the link to register

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/394305070>

If you are interested but can't attend -- or if you know of students, teachers, or school counselors who may be interested -- we will have this posted for viewing by Friday afternoon

<http://www.youtube.com/cocorahs/> Click on "WxTalk Webinars" to see the playlist and select your topic.

2012 coming to an end -- the "2012 Water Year" that is

For those of us who are CoCoRaHS regulars, we are familiar with this annual tradition. But this will be new for the hundreds and hundreds of new rain gauge readers who have joined CoCoRaHS in recent months.

At the end of September each year we check over our data for the past 12 months, fill in any entries we missed and correct any errors that we might have made. Then we compile the totals for each month and compare the annual (October 2011 - September 2012) total to previous years and from place to place across the country. Some of you have your own spreadsheets set up to do this, but we will do these computations for every single stations.

Here is the nationwide summary from last year.
<http://www.cocorahs.org/WaterYearSummary/>

Go ahead and get ready. We'll run the first set of summaries in early October. Then we'll let everyone look over the results and check over their data. We'll make a final update of these reports in early November or thereabouts.

Ready for snow?

No, I'm not either. The first snow of the year could come any day now in the Rocky Mountains and has already arrived in a few parts of Alaska (yes, we do have volunteers there, too) But it's still weeks or months away for most of us. We are working feverishly to have some more training materials ready to help make snow measurements easier.

Close, but not quite

CoCoRaHS made its first debut on the "big screen" at the IMAX theater at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. Our video animation of the water cycle was selected as a finalist in the "Jackson Hole Science Media Awards competition". We did not win our category (short science videos) but it was amazing to be in the same room with producers from NOVA, National Geographic, and many other high caliber video producers and to at least see one image from our video on the screen.

If you can spare seven minutes, please take a look at our Water Cycle animation. If you know of students and teachers that might make use of it, please pass this on to them.

<http://youtu.be/ZzY5-NZSzVw>

An award -- Tuscaloosa

It's not very often that the words "CoCoRaHS" and "Tuscaloosa" appear together. But in less than two weeks some of the CoCoRaHS team including several Alabama CoCoRaHS volunteers will be gathered on the campus of the University of Alabama. CoCoRaHS has been recognized by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and the National Outreach Scholarship Consortium as a Western Region Finalist for the 2012 C. Peter Magrath University/Community Engagement Award. The award will be presented on Tuesday, October 2 at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa.

I don't know much about this award, but our university administrators are really excited about this, so it must be a big deal. This is only possible because of the enthusiastic participation of so many of you. So thanks very much for helping make this possible.

The farm and beyond

I'm happy to report that there's not much to report from our little farm. Egg production is already starting to slow down as the days get shorter. The pasture responded a bit to last week's wonderful rain so we'll have a little more grass for the horses before we switch over to hay for the winter. We're making progress on the "hoop house" (low cost structure like a green house) -- and hoping we're reinforcing it enough so it can withstand the strong winds we get in the coming winter months.

We're getting very excited now as Monday is the day we fly to see our daughter and little grandson who are living in France. Our flight takes us to Iceland and then on to Paris. Some of you are experienced international travelers, but this is a new experience for us. It's been 45 years since the last time I flew over the Atlantic -- but it will be so great to see the family. I'll report back next month after we return. If you have any questions or need any help while I'm away, please send e-mail to info@cocorahs.org

Best wishes to all, and thanks so much for helping with rain gauge measurements.

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