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The Catch



NOLAN DOESKEN'S MONTHLY COCORAHS E-MAIL MESSAGE

CoCoRaHS -- Updates on the Fundraiser and the Farm

Fort Collins, Colorado -- December 8th, 2015

Our [2015 year-end CoCoRaHS fundraiser](#) is off and running. As of this morning (Dec 8th) we've received 746 donations totaling just over \$22,000. For all of you who have contributed already, THANKS SO MUCH! We're already 11% of the way to our goal of \$200,000 with four weeks to go.

We've had to set our goals much higher this year, but for an important reason. Our longtime support from NOAA's Office of Education has ended, and other normal funding has been reduced for 2016. It's time for us to stand on our own two feet. [You can read more about our financial status here.](#) We know there are many important organizations doing critical work in your communities. We hope that you continue to support them. If you have any additional resources to spare, please consider making a donation to support CoCoRaHS and help us reach this year's goal. ([Click here to donate](#)).. If you prefer to not use the online link, you can [click here to download the form and mail your donation to us.](#)

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Water Year Summaries

Thanks to those of you who checked over your data for the 2015 water year (Oct 1, 2014 - Sep 30, 2015) and filled in some gaps and fixed some errors. We have now rerun and updated all the [summary reports for the past year](#) and also updated the

previous 5 years. All of your changes and additions should now show up properly. Please enjoy these summaries. Here are a few highlights:

- 20,281 stations submitted data in WY2015. That's fantastic!!!
- 1,575 had complete records (all 365 days reported).
- Another 2,847 reported on 350 - 364 days.
- When multiday reports were included, several thousand more had complete totals (daily plus multiday covering all 365 days).

Based on stations with complete or nearly complete data, our busiest observer during 2015 was HI-HI-14 on the "Big Island" near Honomu. They measured 224.98". If I counted correctly, they had measurable rainfall on 285 days including a stretch of 57 consecutive days with rain during a period in April and May. Two other stations in Hawaii also exceeded 200". Our wettest reporting station in Alaska was Edna Bay (AK-PW-1) near Ketchikan with 131.98". On the mainland our wettest volunteer was OR-TL-2 (in the Oregon coastal range west of Portland in Tillamook County) with 113.78". As large as that amount may seem, it was still less than their average. On the dry side, one of our volunteers in southern Nevada with complete data totaled only 3.59" for the year. And my hero of the year -- AZ-YM-7 (Yuma 78.7 SE) never missed a day despite only getting 2.38" for the entire year. Now that's diligence! -- and a great "dry" sense of humor.

Webinar: Radiosondes, it's what's overhead that counts

Radiosondes may well be the most important weather instrument in the history of weather forecasting going back 75 years. Yet, many people have no idea what a radiosonde is and why it's so important. If you'd like to find out, please register for and attend our final WxTalk Webinar of 2015 on Thursday, Dec 10 at 11 AM MST. Paul Ciesielski -- long time friend and colleague here at Colorado State (and former basketball teammates on our "Atmospheric Science" team in our younger years) will be our special guest and topic expert. Paul has helped launch radiosondes to analyze atmospheric conditions from many parts of the world and also for teaching students.

[Please register here.](#)

Weather Highlights Since Thanksgiving

Here are a few:

- White Thanksgiving in parts of Colorado and Wyoming.
- A very, very wet spell for Texas over the Thanksgiving weekend Totals exceeded 10" in 8 counties.
- The wet weather spread north and east and soaked many Midwest and eastern states Nov 26 - Dec 2.
- Snow across the Northern Plains states from Nov 30 - Dec 1.
- SE Florida downpours: 4 days in a row with duck drowning rains in south Florida culminating in a 10" rain in 12 hours in west Miami reported Dec. 6.
- Midwest dense fog the past few days slowed travel and closed some airports.
- Drought stopping rains in the Pacific NW this past week.
- And finally -- yes, it's true. It's Dec 8 and it still hasn't snowed in Buffalo, NY.

Be Careful on Snow and Ice

It's still early. Snow will come eventually. This is my second reminder to all to be very careful during cold icy weather. As important as our rain and snow observations are, it is more important still to stay safe this winter. If it's slick and icy out -- and you're not as young and steady on your feet as you once were -- please consider taking a break from CoCoRaHS, or find younger family members or neighbors to help with the winter measurements. We haven't had much snow and ice yet, but it's early in the season and there will be plenty more.

CoCoRaHS Theme Song - Update

It's taken us a long time, but we've finally scheduled what will possibly be our most entertaining CoCoRaHS webinar ever. On February 29th, our very own Henry Reges (who happens to be a darn good DJ on the side) will host the CoCoRaHS Theme Song Awards Ceremony. Plan on joining us that day to hear some great oldies and to here live performances of some of our original entries. We will have a link to register in the coming weeks.

Farm Story

When I last wrote back in November we hadn't had much winter yet. That quickly changed with a sharp cold front the day before Thanksgiving and a mini ice storm that evening. We rarely get freezing rain here, but we had about 4 hours of heavy drizzle with temperatures near 28F which put down a thin but effective sheet of ice on everything. That made for some treacherous holiday travel, but fortunately we weren't going anywhere. We woke to 2" of fresh snow on Thanksgiving morning and it proceeded to snow all day and parts of Friday with temperatures staying in the teens with an awesome display of [winter's finest dendritic crystals](#). The chickens stepped out of their coop, looked around, kicked at the snow once or twice, and then decided to go back in and wait for warmer temperatures. They had to wait nearly a week. But now that they have their new coat of feathers they can tolerate cold and are laying a few eggs again.

During that cold week, our plump yellow and white semi-barn cat protested his lot in life and begged to come in the laundry room. He played "cute cat", and we relented -- and that was all the precedent he needed. Now he shows up about 9 o'clock every night -- after we've brought the dogs inside -- and requests his warm overnight accommodations. He won't budge in the morning from the top of the drier. So I have to pick him up and plop him back out by the chickens.

The horses all have thick coats now and are ready for whatever winter throws us. Bella, our young one (four years old, I think) celebrated our white Thanksgiving by rolling, kicking and generally frolicking. The older horses ignored her enthusiasm. It was interesting to see that some of the Thanksgiving snow that accumulated on their backs stayed in place until the sun came out a few days later -- indicating their insulation is doing what it should.

The dogs had a wonderful Thanksgiving -- thanks to my wife. We cooked two turkeys this year. She took the livers, and carcass leftovers, mixed it with brown rice and baked it on cookie sheets and then cut into dog-cookie sized morsels. They have been very attentive ever since.

The snow is all gone now, thanks to an impressive "Chinook wind". For two nights in a row, the "downslope" wind picked up out of the west just before midnight, coming down out of the mountains and shaking the house with gusts -- but warming the temperature dramatically by as much as 25 degrees in less than 30 minutes. Today we're back up to nearly 60F.

Hope you're well. Enjoy the season -- and the long nights! Note that sunsets already begin to come later now, but sunrises still come later for 4 more weeks. And yes, it will snow in Buffalo -- eventually.

Sincerely,

Nolan Doesken and the CoCoRaHS team
NOAA's Weather Ready Nation Ambassador Program
Colorado State University

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