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Jefferson and Holm Awards Presented to Two Observers Serving Same NWS Office



From left, NWS Jackson, KY, Observation Program Leader (OPL) **Tabitha Brewer**, Holm Award Recipient **Major Sparks**, Jefferson Award Recipient **Robert Watts**, and NWS Jackson, KY, MIC **Shawn Harley**.

Shawn B. Harley, Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC) of NWS Jackson, KY, presented **Robert Watts**, observer at Skyline, KY, with the Thomas Jefferson Award and **Major Sparks**, observer in Whitesburg, KY, with the John Campanius Holm Award. Both of these observers are residents of Letcher County, KY.

Robert has been providing weather observations on a volunteer basis for more than 43 years. He first started taking weather observations as the secondary observer on May 1, 1975, becoming the primary observer in October 2000. He continues to reliably serve in that role. Robert's level of dedication to this service is second to none. He has only missed reporting a couple of days when his wife passed away. In addition

to his observer duties, Robert serves as the onsite manager of Lilley Cornett Woods Appalachian Ecological Research Station, and is a volunteer site observer for the National Atmospheric Deposition Program.

Major has been providing weather observations on a volunteer basis for more than 20 years. He first started taking observations for the NWS on October 1, 1997. Before becoming an observer for the NWS, Major kept diligent records for the Letcher County Extension Office dating back to 1979.

Major is a retired teacher, who is active in the National Wild Turkey Federation, the spring and fall litter pickup in his community, and serves as a volunteer at the Letcher County Historical Society.

NWS History

The following article is excerpted from "An NWS History of the Signal Corps," the Signal Corps was the predecessor of the National Weather Service.

Personal View of H. C. Frankenfield

History was in the making on that damp and gloomy afternoon in Washington in January 1882, when at the seat of the throne at 1719 "G" Street, N.W., a number of callow youths, each hugging to his breast the visible and tangible evidence of his collegiate experience, embarked in the mule-motor express, with the black-bearded, black haired, pessimistic McQueen as chauffeur. The objective was Fort Myer, VA, the land of mystery, also only some three miles distant on the Virginia hills that afford such a magnificent view of our city.

The little party, of which the writer was one, arrived at Fort Myer shortly before nightfall, and was at once shown to quarters, small oblong rooms along a long covered porch, each room with a single window, running water, an army bunk in each corner, two double desks, shelves and clothes chests. All shone with characteristic neatness, and the first impressions were favorable and encouraging. Soon the staccato notes of a bugle rang out, and for the benefit of the uninitiated these tones translate into the supper call. It is almost needless to add that thereafter we never failed to recognize the first notes.

Our appearance in the mess hall was the signal for loud cries of "fish, fish," the colloquial appellation for newcomers. Well can I remember the shout of derision that arose from the hardened reprobates assembled when poor old McRae, big, burly and lovable, and who has but lately passed over, said in his gentle voice "No, I thank you. I do not take coffee. I would like a glass of milk." It didn't take long to discover that any milk we might wish must be paid for out of our little salary.

We were soon outfitted in the regulation "blues," and settled down to the routine of

study and military life. The menu was very limited as to variety and poor as to quality with the exception of the bread, potatoes and coffee. The bread was the finest I have eaten.

We came from every quarter of the country; from Maine and Louisiana, from Oregon and Georgia, each more or less stamped with the peculiarities of his native heath. There was the lumberjack from Maine, in the person of the stolid Fickett; the Frenchman, Martin from Louisiana with his pleasant voice and gentlemanly manners; Glass, the webfoot from Oregon; and several cotton planters from Georgia and Alabama.

College experiences had rendered us ease of assimilation, and we were soon welded into a compact and harmonious unit. We lived and moved as one in a monotony that was unbroken save for Saturday and Sunday trips to Washington for a square meal, (\$.35 at the Temple Cafe on 9th Street, when we had the price), for the seven-up game in the "extra duty" quarters, (tobacco money), and for the little observatory game after taps.

We were a carefree set of youngsters, and our greatest trials were the constant longing for a good, square meal and the Sunday morning inspections, especially the latter when the Chief Signal Officer came up from Washington to witness the same. This gentlemen was very fond of military display, and his presence always meant additional labor and trouble, both at the time and thereafter, for our days were full to overflowing. It was not:

*Eight hours of work;
Eight hours for play;
Eight hours for sleep;
Eight dollars a day,*

but eight hours for work, six hours for more work, two hours for recreation, and eight hours for sleep, the latter not guaranteed. The program was about as follows:

- 5:30 am: Reveille
- 5:35 am: Assembly
- 5:40–6 am: Policy duty in rooms
- 6 am: Mess
- 6:30 am: Sick Call
- 7:45 am: Guard Mount
- 8–9 am: Study and general work
- 9 am: Military drill
- 10 am–Noon: Recitations.
- Noon - Mess

*Eight hours
of work;
Eight hours
for play;
Eight hours
for sleep;
Eight dollars
a day.*



Signal Service officers at Jacksonville, Florida (1890)

- 1–2 pm: Study
- 2–4 pm: Recitations
- 4–5:00 pm: Drill
- 5–6 pm: Recreation. Sunset. Retreat.
- 6 pm: Mess
- 7–9:30 pm: Study (supposedly)
- 9:30 pm: Taps

Later on came the field signalling, both by day and by night, the latter frequently calling for midnight travel in the rain, over muddy road in black darkness, the horses choosing the proper route, as we could not.

And thus some six months passed. We had become a rugged, healthy and active band of 32 youngsters. At the end of the fourth month we were well pleased when old Mike Mahany, the terrible, efficient, sarcastic, friendly, gruff first Sergeant, announced that he could teach us no more of the manual of arms and company drill, and that we had become a virtually perfect military machine.

We had mastered the military details, mounted and dismounted and kept guard. We also had studied meteorology, physics, telegraphy, mathematics and military signalling by wand, flag and torch. We had constructed telegraph and telephone lines, spliced marine cables and learned how to ride a horse, wait at table, clean a carbine, act as valets de chambre and wield a saber. We were more than ripe for the final course before leaving for our future field of broad endeavor.

This course was our observatory course

which consisted of instruction in observational and instrumental work. With bag and baggage we wended our way to the observatory on the second floor of post headquarters. The observatory was in charge of Sergeant Williams, who arrived mysteriously each morning except Sunday, and as mysteriously disappeared each evening. He had some hiding place in the vicinity of the Old Aqueduct Bridge for both mule and uniform.

Under the Sergeant's supervision we soon became sufficiently versed in the theory and care of meteorological instruments and in the taking and reduction of observations to qualify us as assistant observers. It also made us worthy to be promoted from second class to first class private, with a raise of about \$4 a month.

The professional staff was then in the height of its glory. Abbe, Ferrell, Mendenhall, Hazen, Upton, Waldo, and Marvin, and for a time McAdie and Hammon joined us. They did yeoman service and their fame is international.

Well do we remember that early summer day in 1884 when the telegraph announced the rescue of Greely and his little party by Admiral, then Commander, Schley, and the excitement that attended his return. After a rest Greely took his place among us, and in time it became my good fortune to assist him somewhat in the preparation of his official report. I gratefully acknowledge my obligation to Greely for the first real opportunity that came to me in the Signal Corps. He was thorough and square and just, to commissioned and enlisted men alike, and his administration as Chief Signal Officer was eminently successful.

After the transfer of the meteorological branch of the Signal Corps to the new Department of Agriculture on July 1, 1891, troublesome times followed for a few years, but the troubles were finally smoothed out and the Weather Bureau made giant strides upward in efficiency and accomplishment.

We had constructed telegraph and telephone lines, spliced marine cables and learned how to ride a horse, wait at table, clean a carbine, act as valets de chambre and wield a saber.

Thomas Jefferson Award



From left, Acting Regional Director **Ken Harding**, Observer **John Lehman** and John's wife, **Helen**. Photo by OPL **Jesse Lee**.

John Lehman, observer in Coldwater, KS, was presented with a Thomas Jefferson Award by **Ken Harding**, NWS Central Region Acting Regional Director. John also received congratulatory letters from **Sen. Pat Roberts**, **Sen. Jerry Moran**, U.S. Representative **Roger Marshall** and former Governor **Sam Brownback**. John provides temperature, precipitation and snowfall data for Coldwater. He took over the station in 1971 from Observer **Vernon Peppard**, who had been the served since 1943. The Coldwater station dates to 1888! In attendance for the

presentation were **James Lane**, representative for Sen. Roberts, and **Tyler York**, representative for Sen. Moran. Also present were NWS Dodge City, KS, MIC **Larry Ruthi**, Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) **Jeff Hutton**, Science Operations Officer **Aaron Johnson**, and OPL **Jesse Lee**.

John Campanius Holm Award

From left, NWS Seattle, WA, MIC **Logan Johnson** presents the prestigious John Campanius Holm Award to Observer **David Engle** of Coupeville, WA. David took over observations from his father in 1994.

The Engle family has been observing the Coupeville weather consistently for more than 95 years. David recognizes the importance of climate and weather reports and ensures there are no missing observations. Photo by OPL **Art Gaebel**, NWS Seattle.



John Campanius Holm Awards

Olin Berry of Johnston, SC, proudly shows his Holm Award for outstanding accomplishments in meteorological observations. Olin has been reporting daily to NWS Columbia, SC, for the past 38 years. His observations are also used by local media, the state Department of Agriculture, local peach growers and many others. Johnston is known as one of the most important peach-growing regions in the Southeast. His detailed observations include soil temperature, especially important to local farmers. Olin also was recognized with personal letters and a State of South Carolina Certificate of Service by Governor **Henry McMaster** and State Climatologist **Dr. Hope Mizzell**.



From left, WFO Columbia, SC, MIC **Rich Okulski**, Observer **Olin Berry**, **Henrietta Berry** and WFO Columbia Acting OPL **Doug Anderson**.

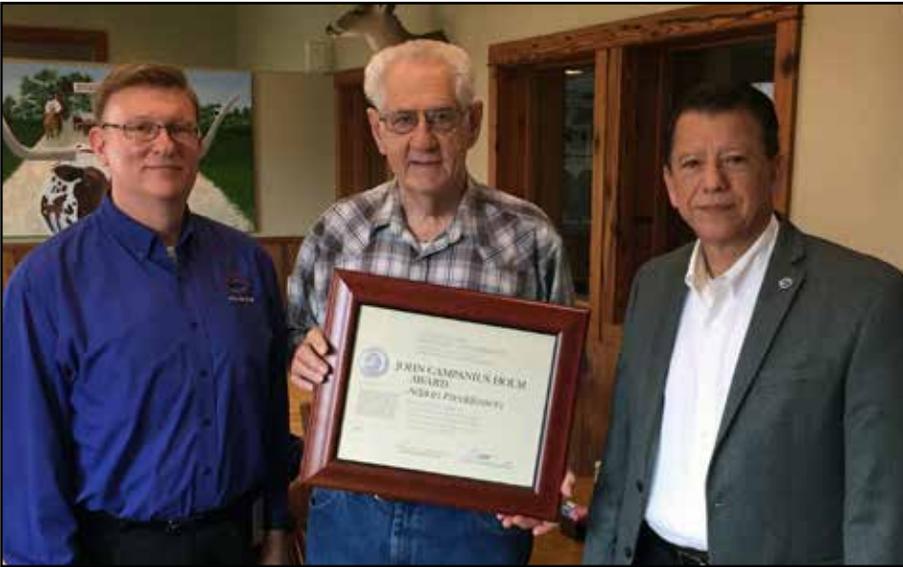
Clint Dietz of Plevna, MT, center, shows his Holm Award for outstanding service. Director of the NWS Western Region **Dr. Grant Cooper** and NWS Billings, MT, MIC **Keith Meier** presented the award to Clint at the Plevna Volunteer Fire Hall. Clint's station dates to 1912. Clint took over from the Farmers Grain Elevator in November 1982. He has provided more than 14,000 timely, accurate and dependable weather observations.

Clint has seen some real weather extreme in his 36 years of service: the record cold was -52°F in January 2016; the hottest day measured 110°F in June 1988. The maximum daily rainfall he reported was 3.12" in April 2008 with a maximum daily snowfall of 15.3" in April 2006.



From left, NWS Western Regional Director **Dr. Grant Cooper**, Observer **Clint Dietz**, and NWS Billings, MT, MIC **Keith Meier**. Photo by NWS Billings, MT, OPL **Larry Dooley**.

John Campanius Holm Awards



Adrian Fredriksson, center, receives his Holm award from MIC **Joe Arellano**, right, and Senior Service Hydrologist (SSH) **Mark Lenz**, NWS Austin/San Antonio, TX. Photo by Hydrometeorological Technician (HMT) **Cory Van Pelt**.

After 18 years of service in the Navy and Air Force and 21 years with the NWS, **Adrian Fredriksson** of Hondo, TX, "retired" and volunteered to serve as an observer for the last 22 years. That spirit of service extends to his local community, where he is actively involved in charitable and public service organizations. In 2002, a severe thunderstorm producing hail up to the size of baseballs and wind gusts to 80 mph severely damaged his home and property. During the destructive storm, Adrian kept NWS Austin/San Antonio updated on its progress, even as glass from his shattering windows was scattering across his floor. After the storm, during prolonged home repairs and disruption to his family's life, he kept his weather record going as if nothing had happened. Adrian embodies the spirit of the NWS observer.

Andy Weir of Chester, SC, was presented with the John Campanius Holm Award. The Weirs' observing lineage in Chester can be traced back to Andy's grandfather **Anderson Weir**, who was the Chester observer in the 1930s. Andy is retired with over 48 years of combined public service at the Chester Fire Department and South Carolina State Fire Marshall's office. Most recently, he served as a Special Agent at the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, specializing in arson investigation with his specially trained K-9 partner.



Observer **Andy Weir**, center, proudly displays his Holm Award. NWS Greenville-Spartanburg, SC, MIC **Steve Wilkinson**, left, presented the award, along with South Carolina State Climatologist **Hope Mizzell** and OPL **Chris Horne**. Also attending was Andy's wife, **Ann**.

100 and 75 Year Honored Institution Awards



Beth LaShell, Coordinator for the old **Fort Lewis** at Hesperus, CO, receives a 100 Year Honored Institution Award from NWS Grand Junction, CO, Data Acquisition Program Manager (DAPM) **John Kyle**. Beth represents the latest in a long line of dedicated staff providing high quality weather observations dating back to July 1, 1917. Fort Lewis was established in the early 1880s with "Buffalo" (African-American), soldiers. It was "a remote new post, deemed absolutely necessary for the protection of southern and western Colorado."

Fort Wilkins Historic State Park, in Copper Harbor, MI, part of the **Michigan Department of Natural Resources**, received an Honored Institution Award for 75 years of weather observations. Receiving this award was Unit Supervisor and Observer **Wayne Burnett**, left. The award was presented by HMT **Jim Salzwedel**, NWS Marquette-Negaunee, MI.



75 Year Honored Institution Awards



Duke Energy's Lake Wateree, SC, Hydroelectric Power Plant recently accepted a 75 Year Honored Institution Award, recognizing its invaluable service to the nation and the climate record. The dam was built in 1919, at which time it was one of South Carolina's oldest man-made reservoirs.

From left, Observations Focal Point **Clyde McFadden** and Plant Operators **Jimmy Coleman** and **Michael Luther** accept the Honored Institution Award. Photo by Acting OPL **Doug Anderson**, NWS Columbia, SC.

NWS Roanoke, VA, presented staff members at the Bluestone Lake Project in West Virginia, run by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Honored Institution Award for 75 years of continuous weather observations.



From left, are staff members **Kenneth Canady, Calvin McLanohan, Levi Mills, Michael McCoy, Tommy Blankenship, Travis Daugherty, Aaron Smith, Robin Ford, Kelly Finch** and **Ryan Caudill**. Photo by NWS Roanoke, VA, OPL **Nick Fillo**.

75 Year Honored Institution Award

Piqua Wastewater Treatment Plant in Piqua, OH, was honored recently for 75 years of outstanding temperature and precipitation observations. From left are **Larry Wiles**, **Chris Melvin** and **Greg Peltier**. NWS Wilmington, OH, Meteorologist **Ashley Novak** presented the award. Photo by NWS Wilmington OPL **James Gibson**.



Helmut E. Landsburg 60 Year Award



From left, NWS Western Regional Director **Dr. Grant Cooper**, Observer **John Jonutis** and NWS Billings, MT, MIC **Keith Meier**. Photo by Billings, MT, OPL **Larry Dooley**.

NWS Billings, MT, recognized **John Jonutis** of Mizpah, MT, with the Helmut E. Landsburg Award and a Lifetime Service Pin for 60 years of outstanding service in the Cooperative Weather Observer Program. John began taking observations in October 1958, providing timely, accurate and dependable weather data that has totaled nearly 22,000 observations! Extremes include 10.24" of rainfall in May of 2011, which caused extreme flooding in the Mizpah area. Temperature extremes were recorded as hot as 112°F on July 20, 1960, and as cold as -49°F on December 22, 1989.

50 Edward H. Stoll and Honored Institution Awards



Harlan Harrison, Sr., was recently awarded the Edward H. Stoll Award near his home in Mexican Hat, UT. Harlan and family have been taking daily weather readings for the NWS for over 50 years! This site is always a joy to visit, and staff leave having learned at least one new word in the Navajo language. Congratulations go out to Harlan and family! Photo and presentation by DAPM **John Kyle**, NWS Grand Junction, CO.

The **Evergreen Metropolitan District Water Treatment Plant** in Evergreen, CO, was awarded a 50 Year Honored Institution Award for continued dedicated service to NWS Boulder, CO. From left are NWS, Boulder, CO, OPL **Jim Kalina**, General Manager **Dave Lighthart**, Wastewater Plant Manager **Kevin Johnson**, and NWS Boulder, CO, WCM **Greg Hanson**.



The 50 Year Honored Institution Award was presented to the **TransCanada Flat Top Compressor Station** in Flat Top, WV. Accepting the award on behalf of the station is Observer **Marty Cooper**. The award was presented by OPL **Nick Fillo**, NWS Blacksburg, VA.



50 Year Honored Institution Awards, 45 Year Award

Staff members at the **Upper Montgomery Joint Authority** were recognized with a Honored Institution Award for 50 years of service at its Palm, PA, site. NWS Eastern Region Headquarters OPL **Chris Stachelski** presented the award on behalf of NWS Mt. Holly, NJ. Photo by **Kevin Lowrie**, Sterling Field Support Center.



The **Price Field Office** of the Bureau of Reclamation received a 50 Year Honored Institution Award for observations in Price, UT. NWS Salt Lake City, UT, MIC **Rusty Billingsley**, left, presented this award to Price Bureau of Land Management Focal Point **Karl Ivory**. Karl has recorded and reported weather observations for nearly 30 years at this site. The entire staff of the field office was on hand for the ceremony; several staff members have been taking observations over the decades. Photo by Salt Lake City OPL **Lisa Verzella**.

Spanish Fork Power House, UT, Observer **Robert Wall**, center, shows his 40 Year Length of Service Award. Robert has played an integral role in the COOP program, measuring, recording and training others in weather observations for the past four decades. He phones in these observations each evening, Pictured with Robert are Salt Lake City, UT, OPL **Lisa Verzella** and MIC **Rusty Billingsley**. Photo by Co-Observer **Craig Davidson**.



35 and 30 Year Length of Service Awards



A 35 Year Length of Service Award was presented to **Tom Francis**, an observer at the Cabrini Shrine in Golden, CO. The award was presented and photo taken by NWS Boulder, CO, OPL **James Kalina**.



Phillip Virden, left, receives his 30 Year Length of Service Award from NWS Grand Junction, CO, DAPM **John Kyle**. Phillip is an avid weather watcher and star gazer from his home just outside of Lake City, CO. Photo by **Carolyn Virden**.

Carl Eric Granfelt of McNary, AZ, was presented with a 30 Year Length of Service Award by **Ryan Eldridge**, Program Support Assistant, NWS Western Region Systems & Facilities.



Sara Waddell of Woodruff, SC, was presented with a 30 Year Length of Service Award by OPL **Chris Horne**, NWS Greenville-Spartanburg, SC. Sara's carries on her parents station, which dates to 1956. Sara took over in 1987.



James Withrow of McRoss, WV, accepts a 30 Year Length of Service Award on behalf of himself and his late wife, **Velma**. The award was presented by OPL **Nick Fillo** NWS Blacksburg, VA.

25 Year Length of Service Awards



Joann Ferguson, of Livingston, MT, was presented a 25 Year Length of Service Award by NWS Billings, MT, OPL **Larry Dooley**.



From left, Alpine, UT observer **Bryan Murdoch** was presented a 25 Year Length of Service Award by Salt Lake City, UT, MIC **Rusty Billingsley** for consistently reporting rain and snow data every single day. Alpine is a beautiful city at the base of the Wasatch Front in northern Utah. The Alpine site dates to 1894! Photo by OPL **Lisa Verzella**.



Debi Stout, observer from Boulder, UT, was presented with a 25 Year Length of Service Award and pin. Debi is an excellent observer in this remote mountainous area of south central Utah. Photo by NWS Salt Lake City OPL **Lisa Verzella**.



David Wagers, observer at Woodrow, CO, was presented with a 25 Year Length of Service Award. The award was presented and photo taken by NWS Boulder, CO, OPL **James Kalina**.

25 Honored Institution, 20 Year Length of Service Awards



Mike Will of the **Pearblossom Fire Department #79** received his 25 Years of Service Award for his dedicated participation in the COOP program. Mike has recently retired and will be relaxing and traveling. NWS Oxnard/Los Angeles, CA, OPL **Bonnie Bartling** presented the award.

The **Pennsylvania Fish Commission** was recognized for 25 years of observations at Bucksville, PA. NWS Eastern Region Headquarters OPL **Chris Stachelski** presented the award on behalf of NWS Mt. Holly, NJ. Photo by **Kevin Lowrie**, Sterling Field Support Center.

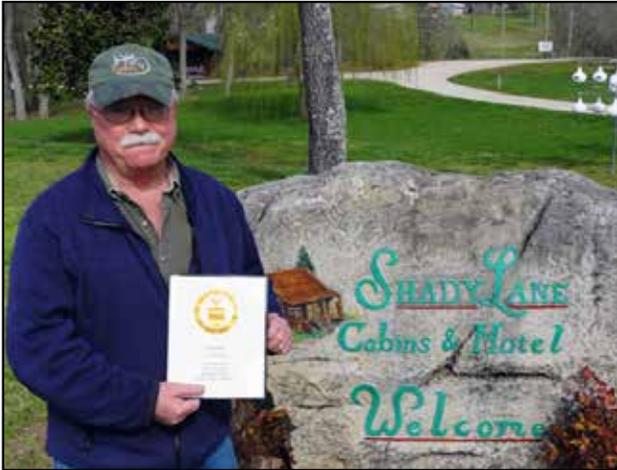


Merle Graffam, left, observer at **Big Water Visitor Center** in Utah, was presented with a 15 Year Length of Service award and pin. Merle, who is retired, was an outstanding observer at this remote, recreation-rich park in southern Utah. Merle went above and beyond his duties by taking daily observations even while furloughed in the winter off seasons. Presentation by NWS Salt Lake City OPL **Lisa Verzella**.



Vicky Schwartz, of Big Timber, MT, was presented a 20 Year Length of Service Award by NWS Billings OPL **Larry Dooley**.

15 Year Length of Service Awards



Jim Anderson, of Eminence, MO, received a 15 Year Length of Service Award from OPL **Thomas Olsen**, NWS Springfield, MO. Jim's site, collocated with his business, is next to the Jacks Fork River. His daily precipitation reporting helps the NWS Lower Mississippi River Forecast Center provide accurate river level forecasts. His reports were particularly valuable during the heavy rains from April 27-30, 2017, which resulted in historic river crests. In this 4-day period, Jim received over 11" of rain. The Jacks Fork River in Eminence crested almost 10 feet higher than the previous record set on November 11, 1993, of 17.82 feet.



The NWS Sioux Falls, SD, OPL **Brad Adams** presented **Rich Boothby** with a 15 years award for his river gage readings. The award was presented to **Roberta Boothby**, who accepted the award on behalf of her husband. Rich also enjoys restoring and entering classic car shows throughout the upper Midwest. Rich now owns several classic cars and has been restoring vintage cars since the 1990s.



Emil Shutt, left, of Northdale, CO, receives his 15 Year Length of Service Award from DAPM **John Kyle**, NWS Grand Junction, CO. Emil lives on the homestead his grandparents established. His family has been taking observations since August 1, 1930. Photo courtesy NWS Grand Junction.



Elroy Dieringer, observer at Schulenburg, TX, was presented a 15 Year Length of Service Award by HMT **Cory Van Pelt**, NWS Austin/San Antonio, TX.

10 Year Length of Service Awards

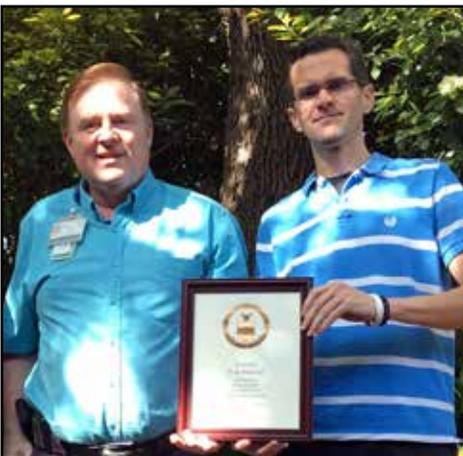


Aspen Water Department Rep. **Laura Taylor** accepted a 10 Year Length of Service Award from NWS Grand Junction, CO, DAPM **John Kyle**. Photo courtesy of the Aspen Water Department



Bonnie Dredla, observer at Luling, TX, received her 10 Year Length of Service Award from HMT **Cory Van Pelt** and Meteorologist **Yvette Benavides**, NWS Austin/San Antonio, TX.

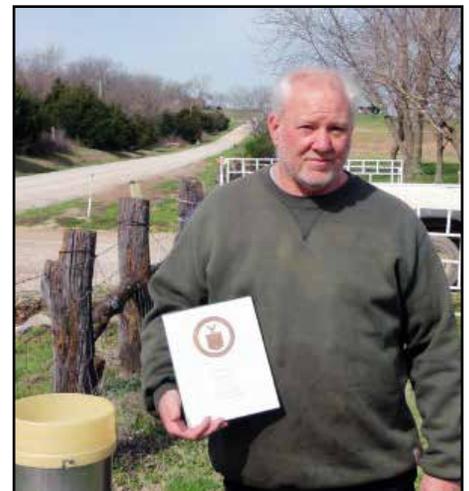
NWS San Diego, CA, presented a 10 Year Length of Service Award to **Heather Garcia** of Chiriaco Summit, CA.



Troy Kimmel, observer at Austin Great Hills, TX, receives his 10 Year Length of Service Award from HMT **Cory Van Pelt**, NWS Austin/San Antonio, TX.



Herbert Romero was presented with his 10 Year Length of Service Award by OPL **Bonnie Bartling**, NWS Oxnard/Los Angeles, CA. Herbert is the Dam Operator for the Flood Maintenance Division of the **County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works**.



Tim Stephan of Walnut, KS, received his 10 Year Length of Service Award from OPL **Thomas Olsen**, NWS Springfield, MO. Tim, along with his brothers, use the rainfall and snowfall data collected to better manage their farm lands.

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July, August, September Temperature and Precipitation Outlooks From the Climate Prediction Center

