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Lone Star Jefferson Award Winner Observes Texas Style: Bigger and Better



George W. Bomar, right, observer at Dripping Springs, TX, receives a Thomas Jefferson Award from NWS Austin/San Antonio Meteorologist-In-Charge (MIC) **Joe Arellano**. Retired Observing Program Leader (OPL) **Steve Smart**, who worked with unwavering dedication to nominate George, was unable to attend the ceremony. Photo by NWS Austin/San Antonio Senior Service Hydrologist (SSH) **Mark Lenz**.

George W. Bomar, observer at Dripping Springs, TX, was presented a much-deserved Thomas Jefferson Award in recognition of his 34 years of faithful and diligent reporting of the weather and his strong spirit of community service. George's wife, children, grandchildren, and several of his many friends were in attendance.

George began reporting temperature and precipitation data on December 1, 1984. Because his new home was not yet completed, the weather instruments were installed in his yard and he'd travel there

from his rental home each day to take the measurements.

On January 12, 1985, nearly 6 weeks after he became an observer, a record-shattering snowstorm struck a large part of south and central Texas. The following morning, unable to make it to his reporting site in his own car due to the treacherous conditions, he recruited a neighbor, who owned a four-wheel drive vehicle, to drive him through the snow to his reporting site. He successfully recorded the amount of snow that fell during that once-in-a-lifetime event.

His favorite outreach activity, however, is conducting a church service on Sunday mornings for elderly residents of a long-term care center in Austin.

The above-and-beyond spirit that George displayed during that famous snowstorm was an indicator of what was to come.

He is now regarded as one of the most knowledgeable and dependable observers in Texas, maintaining a 100 percent complete weather record. A meteorologist who holds bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas A&M University, George is widely known and respected in the Texas meteorological community. He also has long been involved in weather modification projects in this drought-prone state through his job as Chief Meteorologist for Texas agencies.

He eagerly shares his enthusiasm and knowledge with others, most notably in his 1985 book *Texas Weather*, and its 2017 revamp *Weather in Texas: The Essential Handbook*.

Beyond his efforts in weather, he is held in high regard for his support of his community and beyond. In the late 1970s, he

helped establish the Western Hills Church of Christ, and has served as deacon, elder, and pastor of that organization.

He and his wife, Judy, are involved in several charitable organizations that work to rescue children from poverty, abuse and neglect. He and his wife spearheaded an outreach program at their church, which gathered and shipped medical supplies to the African nation of Malawi. The couple traveled there in 2015 to distribute textbooks and laptop computers to schools and seminary students.

His favorite outreach activity, however, is conducting a church service on Sunday mornings for elderly residents of a long-term care center in Austin.

We at NWS Austin/San Antonio are honored and privileged to have been involved in recognizing George W. Bomar for his outstanding efforts, and we look forward to many more years of watching the Texas weather alongside him.

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 John S. Hazen

I took the examination for the [weather] service in June [circa 1890] immediately after my graduation from the Kansas State Agricultural College, was appointed the last of August, and was assigned to Pittsburgh temporarily, thence to Savannah, GA, then to Hatteras, NC, Nashville, TN, Ft. Apache, AZ, Santa Fe, NM, San Francisco, CA, Des Moines, IA, Springfield, MO, Tampa, FL, and Canton, NY.

Hardships and heroic deeds have been scarce articles with me. Perhaps the most outstanding incident in my career was at Ft. Apache, when I was ordered out to make an inspection of the telegraph line south from the fort with a detachment of three troopers as escort. This was during the time when the Apache Indians were not especially tractable. We had made the trip of about 50 miles during

the day without incident but on making camp, I cut in on the line with a pocket telegraph outfit and immediately got a frantic call for me to return at once to the post.

We were all tired enough to quit for the day but there appeared nothing else to do but return. So after feeding and giving a rub down to the horses, getting our supper, and taking an hour's rest, we started on the 50 mile trip back. It was a weird trip of mountains and trees, plains and cacti, passing at one point the charred remains of a wagon train, which had been destroyed a short time before.

The only untoward incident attending the night trip occurred about 3:00 am when one of the horses was noticed to be without a rider. On returning a short distance, the trooper was found sitting in the road somewhat dazed but not hurt. He said he had been asleep but didn't



Troopers from the 10th Cavalry stand in formation at Fort Apache in 1890.
(Courtesy of the Arizona Historical Society/Tucson)

know how long. We reached home just as the sun was coming up the next morning and found the man from Cooleys, who had been sent down to take my place, had proceeded to get gloriously drunk soon after his arrival and had continued so in spite of the guard.

On entering the office he was seated at the key[board], and alternating between swearing a steady stream, copying a portion of a message and tearing up same when he failed to get it. I don't remember how long he had been thus occupied but the office looked as if there were literally hundreds of partially copied messages torn up and scattered throughout the room.

The message which I finally got was from the War Department ordering out a troop of cavalry to subdue a small Moqui uprising. After watching the troop depart, I turned in and slept until night.

A Second Story from John Hazen

There comes to mind now the one story told on Hayden when he first went into the service of how he was found locked in a closet and down on his knees praying for support after having broken every thermometer but

one on the station. It seems he had started to whirl the maximum and the psychrometer at the same time with the result that every thermometer in the shelter was broken. He rushed to the office and while making his selection from the remainder managed to step on three more.

Likewise, following the man from Texas who could not get leave to go fishing but went anyway. He made an artistic series of six observations, coded same and filed them at Western Union, carefully explaining to the clerk that he was to send them in serial order one each morning at 7:00 am, The man then started on his fishing trip, unconscious of the workings of fate.

The clerk who had been carrying with him the careful explanation of how to send these messages, was called away the next day. A new clerk finding the bunch of his desk the following morning fired the whole lot in at the same time.

The result: an inspector with a lieutenant's uniform and proper credentials waiting at the door for him when he returned. A trying hour for Mr. Texas and a shift in scenery thereafter.

On entering the office he was seated at the key[board], and alternating between swearing a steady stream, copying a portion of a message and tearing up same when he failed to get it.

John Campanius Holm Awards



From left, Cooperative Program Leader (CPM) **Valerie Meola**, NWS Mt. Holly, NJ; Observer **Wayne Roop**, and NWS Eastern Region Headquarters OPL **Chris Stachelski**. Photo: *The Press of Atlantic City*.

Wayne Roop of Lower Township, NJ, was presented with the John Campanius Holm Award. Wayne has served as the observer at Cape May, NJ, since April 1, 1975, and was recognized for excellence with his observations of temperature, precipitation, snow and hourly precipitation at the southernmost cooperative observing site in the Garden State.

Wayne's detailed remarks also include wind and barometric pressure readings from numerous nor'easters, and thunderstorms and tropical systems over the last 44 years, including Superstorm Sandy in 2012. Joining Wayne for this event were several local officials and media partners.

NWS Detroit, MI, presented a Holm Award to **Steve Sobel** of Farmington, MI. Steve has dedicated more than 30 years to the observer program. Those in attendance included staff from the NWS Detroit/Pontiac, MI, and Meteorologist Paul Gross, at WDIV-TV.

Steve has not only been an asset to the NWS with his detailed observations, but also assists WDIV by sharing his observations. Both the NWS and Channel 4 know they have a trusted source for weather observations. Steve has always gone above and beyond, and his enthusiasm for the weather is shown daily in his work.

His wife, Linda, also assists with observations and Steve trains his pet sitters and neighbors to take observations while on vacation. The staff at NWS Detroit/Pontiac would like to extend a very special thank you to Steve and Linda for all their efforts over the years and look forward to many more!



NWS Detroit, MI, OPL **Sara Pampreen** and Observer **Steve Sobel**. Photo by Michael Kuentz from Visual Ronin Media.

75 Year Family Heritage Award



Gayle Warzecha, right, of Falls City, TX, holds a 75 Year Family Heritage Award. Her son **Anthony**, left, assists with weather observations on occasion and we hope may someday help the family reach the 100-year mark. Photo by Hydrometeorological Technician (HMT) **Cory Van Pelt**, NWS Austin/San Antonio, TX.

Gayle Warzecha of Falls City, TX, was presented a Family Heritage Award in recognition of the 75 years that she and her family have served the nation as Cooperative Observers.

The family weather record began on March 16, 1943, when Gayle's grandfather, **Isidore Korzekwa**, began reporting rainfall data from the family's property near Falls City. After her grandfather passed away in 1946, her uncle, **Leonard Korzekwa**, assumed the duties and served as observer through 1949.

Gayle's father, **Bonnie Skloss**, took over in January 1950, reporting not only rainfall amounts, but making daily river measurements. On many occasions over those years, during heavy rains, he would stay up all night to make interim river level measurements and call them in to the local NWS office. This admirable effort gave forecasters a source of river level information that would have otherwise been unavailable in the days before satellite-delivered river data.

Gayle took over weather observing duties from her father in 2001, bringing the family to the 75-year mark. She gets occasional help with observations from her son, **Anthony**, who might someday help the family reach 100 years!

"It is an honor and privilege to serve as a volunteer Cooperative Weather Observer for the National Weather Service, and I will continue to do so as long as possible," Gayle said.

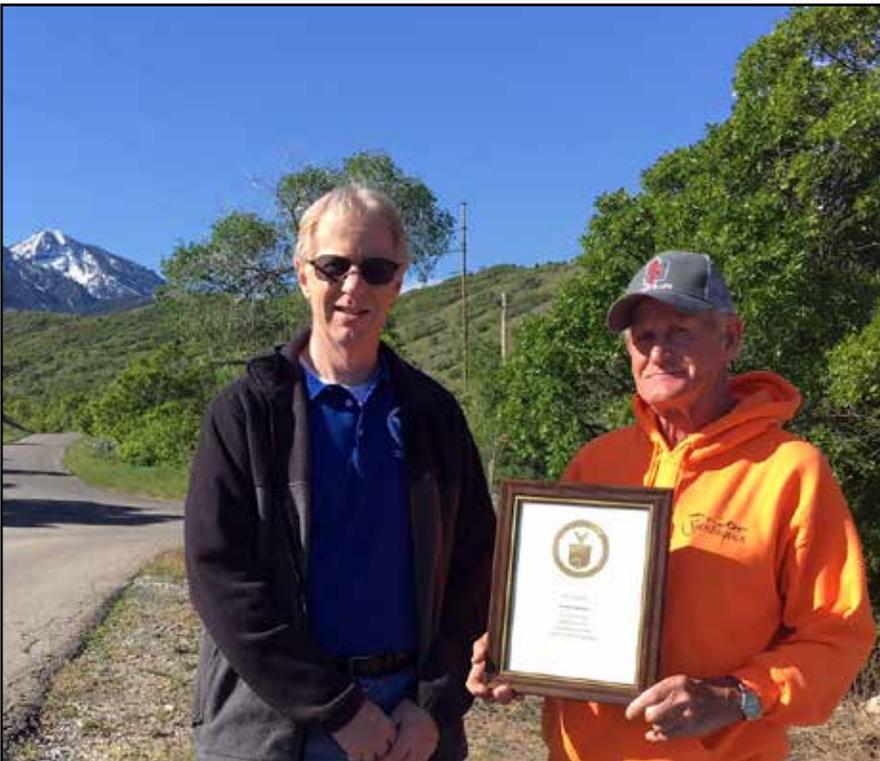
Edward R. Stoll 50 Year Awards

NWS Fairbanks, AK, OPL **Craig Eckert** presented the Edward Stoll Award to **Beth Jacobs**, wife of **George Jacobs** (deceased) to honor her late husband for providing 50 years of service as an observer at their home near Tok, AK.

Tok is a small community of about 1,200 people near the Canadian border at the junction of the Glenn Highway and the Alaska ALCAN Highway. NWS Fairbanks appreciates not only George, but also all the dedicated cooperative observers across the United States.



40 Year Length of Service Award



Santaquin, UT, observer **Dennis Barnes** was presented with a 40-year award by NWS Salt Lake City, UT. Dennis observes and reports temperature, rain and snow data every single day. The **Santaquin Chlorinator Coop** site began in 1913 under the US Weather Bureau and Santaquin City.

Pictured from left are NWS Salt Lake City MIC **Rusty Billingsley** and Observer **Dennis Barnes**. Photo by OPL **Lisa Verzella**.

40 and 35 Year Length of Service Awards



Clint Dietz of Plevna, MT, was recognized for his 40 years of dedicated service. Presenting the award to Clint is Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) **Tom Frieders**, of NWS Billings, MT.

NWS Binghamton, NY, presented **David Mattice** from Emmons, NY, with his 35 Year Length of Service Award. David is a 2016 Holm Award recipient who provides timely and reliable daily observations to the office.

Pictured from left are HMT **Joanne LaBounty**, NWS Binghamton, NY, Observer **David Mattice**, and MIC **Douglas Butts**.



Dorothy Jean Stanley of Volborg, MT, was recognized with a 35 Year Length of Service Award. Presenting the award to Dorothy is WCM **Tom Frieders**, NWS Billings, MT.

30 and 25 Year Length of Service Awards



Ogden Sugar Factory
Observer **Steve Woody**, left, was presented with a 30 Year Length of Service Award. Steve and his weather team in Ogden diligently send automated precipitation data each month. The Ogden Sugar Factory site dates back to 1924. The award was presented by NWS Salt Lake City, UT, MIC **Rusty Billingsley**. Photo by OPL **Lisa Verzella**.

From left, **Rollie and Ward Deering**, observers at Yuma, CO were presented with a 30 Year Length of Service Award. The presentation was made by OPL **James Kalina**, NWS Boulder, CO.



A 25 Year Length of Service Award was presented to **Melvin Dahlberg**, observer at **Greenland, CO**. OPL **Jim Kalina**, Boulder, CO, made the presentation.



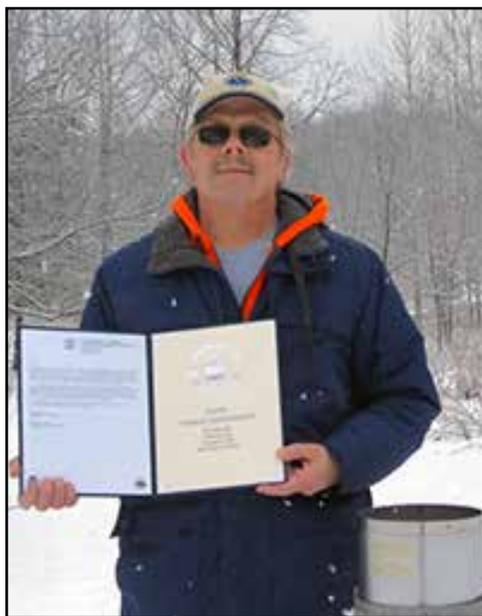
25 and 20 Year Length of Service Awards



Bob and Connie Moore, of Clearmont, WY, were presented a 25 Year Length of Service by HMT **Vickie Stephenson**, NWS Billings, MT.



Weber Basin Water Pump Plant Observer **Jeff Connor**, center, was presented with a 20 Year Length of Service Award. Jeff and his team in Layton, UT, measure rain and snow data. The site began in 1962 under the **Weber Basin Water Conservancy** at the same location. The award was presented by Salt Lake City, UT, OPL **Lisa Verzella** and MIC **Rusty Billingsley**. Photo by Weber Basin Water Conservancy staff.



Thomas Shieldsmith of Nashville, IN, shows his 20 year award, a great milestone to meet before moving and retiring. Tom, a confessed weather nut since junior high school, worked in Bloomington, IN, as a Maintenance Supervisor for a large biopharmaceutical manufacturer. Tom and his wife enjoy bicycling riding, wood-turning, camping, and spending time with their 2-year old grandson. Photo by HMT **Bradford Herold**, NWS Indianapolis, IN.



Julie Cooper of Circle, AK, was presented a 20 Year Length of Service award by NWS Fairbanks, AK, OPL **Craig Eckert**.

15 Year Length of Service Awards



Deanna Baker of Washington, IN, is celebrating 15 years of outstanding service. In addition to taking and recording weather observations, Deanna enjoys gardening (see the spectacular black-eyed Susans behind her). Photo by HMT **Bradford Herold**, NWS Indianapolis, IN.



Nephi, UH, Observer **Donald Ball** was presented with a 15 Year Length of Service Award. Donald measures and reports temperature, rain and snow data every single day. The Nephi site began in 1904 and was taken over by the Ball family in 1999. The award was presented by NWS Salt Lake City, UT, OPL **Lisa Verzella**. Photo by Salt Lake City, UT, HMT **Patricia Tamrakar**.



NWS Glasgow, MT, presented a 15 Year Length of Service Award to **Pat Doucette**. Pat records precipitation at his station north of Dodson, MT. From left are NWS meteorologist **Virginia Rux**; Pat's daughter, **Reba Doucette**, Observer **Pat Doucette** and NWS Meteorologist **Brad Mickelson**. Photo by OPL **Brian Burleson**.



The observer at Hysham, MT, is **Lee Howard**, right, shown accepting his 15 Year Length of Service Award. The award was presented by HMT **Vickie Stephenson**, NWS Billings, MT.

15, 10 Year Length of Service Awards



John Klose of Bertram, TX, received a 15 Year Length of Service Award. John is continuing a 51 year family weather record. He took over from his father in 2004. His father had reported rainfall amounts from the family farm since 1968. Photo by HMT **Cory Van Pelt**, NWS Austin/San Antonio, TX.



Spanish Fork, UT, Observer **Chad Napp** was presented with a 15 Year Length of Service award. Chad leads a team of observers at the **Spanish Fork Power House** that measures and reports temperature, rain and snow data. The site began in 1909 within a few hundred feet of its current location. Pictured with Chad is NWS Salt Lake City OPL **Lisa Verzella**. Photo by Meteorologist **Monica Traphagan**.



Former **Bullfrog Basin**, UT, Observer **John Quigley** was presented with a 15 Year Length of Service Award. John is part of the weather observation team at the Price, UT, **Bureau of Reclamation** office. The Bullfrog Basin Coop site began in 1967. Photo by Salt Lake City, UT, OPL **Lisa Verzella**.



Sue Claassen, Observer for Richfield, KS, was presented with a 10 Year Length of Service Award by MIC **Larry Ruthi**, right, NWS Dodge City, KS, and OPL **Jesse Lee**. **Leo**, Sue's husband, and WCM **Jeff Hutton**, also attended. Sue carries on a long tradition. Sue took over from **Helen Esther Johns**. The station was started in 1889 by **H.G. Allen**. The station's longest serving observer was **Evelyn Behm**, who served from 1943 until 1992.

10 Year Length of Service Awards

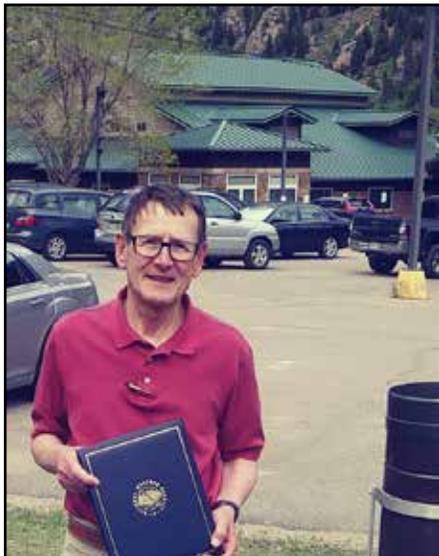


From left, **Alex Desmet**, Meteorologist at NWS Pocatello, ID, and **Michael Coats**, chief Meteorologist at KIFI-TV. Photo by NWS Senior Meteorologist **Dan Valle**. Michael station is the only official source of snowfall and snow depth data for the Idaho Falls/Ammon area. KIFI-TV's viewing area spans most of east Idaho and western Wyoming including Pocatello, Idaho Falls, Jackson WY, and the surrounding National Parks.



Harold Dohlen, right, was presented a 10 year length of service award from the NWS Glasgow, MT, by OPL **Brian Burleson**. Harold's grandfather, **H. O. Dohlen**, began recording the weather in Opheim, MT, in 1930. Harold's father, **Erling**, took over the station in 1958 and moved it to its present location a few miles southeast of Opheim before passing it on to Harold in 2009. Erling was a 2007 recipient of the Thomas Jefferson Award.

Photo by HMT **Rex Morgan**.



A 10 Year Length of Service Award was presented to **Robert Loeffler**, an observer at Georgetown, CO. The award was presented by OPL **James Kalina**, Boulder, CO.



Hugh McCoy of Burnet, TX, was presented a 10 Year Length of Service Award. Hugh reporting temperatures and rainfall from Burnet. Photo by HMT **Cory Van Pelt**, NWS Austin/San Antonio, TX.

10 Year Length of Service Awards



Bernice White of Norwood, CO, receives her 10 Year Length of Service Award from the NWS Grand Junction, CO. Presenting the award is NWS DAPM **John Kyle**.



Trenton, UT, Observer **Chuck Spackman** shows his 10 Year Length of Service Award. Chuck measures daily temperature and precipitation at this northern Utah rural site, entering data into WxCoder every day. The Spackman family took the helm at the Trenton site in 1992; the site dates to 1944. Photo by NWS Salt Lake City, UT, OPL **Lisa Verzella**.



Ray Stegman, center, observer for Greensburg, KS, was presented with a 10 Year Length of Service Award by NWS Dodge City, KS, MIC **Larry Ruthi**, right, and OPL **Jesse Lee**. Ray records temperature, precipitation and snowfall data. Ray took over from **Chance Little**. The station was destroyed by the 2007 EF-5 tornado but started up again 9 months later in 2008. The station was started in 1891 by **M.M. Lee**. The longest serving observer for Greensburg was **C.C. Raymond** who served from 1907 until 1930. Photo by WCM **Jeff Hutton**.



Jesse Thompson, a Dam Operator at **Cachuma Lake**, was presented his 10 Year Length of Service Award by OPL **Bonnie Bartling**, NWS Oxnard, CA. Jesse is a dedicated observer who also enters the WXCoder data and monitors the MMTS-W Test Equipment.

**The National
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