



# The National Cooperative Observer

The National Cooperative Observer is an online newsletter.

<https://www.weather.gov/coop/coopnewsletter>

Spring-Summer 2021

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## Outstanding Observer: Edward H. Stoll Award

Recognizing more than 50 years of dedication and excellence to NOAA's Cooperative Weather Observer program, the National Weather Service has recognized Picabo observer, Nick Purdy, for the Edward H. Stoll Award for outstanding service in the Cooperative Observer Program. This award is presented in honor of Edward H. Stoll, who was the Cooperative Weather Observer for over 76 years at Elwood, Nebraska. Vern Preston, Meteorologist-In-Charge at Weather Forecast Office Pocatello, Idaho, made the award presentation in a ceremony in Picabo, Idaho on May 26, 2021.

During his tenure, Mr. Purdy has recorded observations of daily precipitation and temperature data without interruption. Mr. Purdy's flawless and informative observations have been instrumental in providing the National Weather Service with critical weather information. His dedication earned him the prestigious "Thomas Jefferson Award" in 2012 for outstanding achievement in the field of meteorological observations. It is the highest award the National Weather Service presents to volunteer observers. Assisting Mr. Purdy was Sharon Purdy, Bob Turzian, and Melissa Squires.



*Pictured from left to right: Meteorologist-In-Charge Vern Preston, Melissa Squires, Sharon Purdy, Nick Purdy, and Bob Turzian*

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## A History of Observing the Weather

*The following article is an excerpt from the "NOAA Celebrates 200 Years" Archive. Look for more on the development of weather observation in next month's issue.*

The early American colonial years are peppered with events and stories referencing weather observations. The first systematic weather observations in North America were made in 1644 in Wilmington, Delaware, by Reverend John Campanius Holms. Observations of storm movement and weather patterns were first noticed by Benjamin Franklin when he documented the movement of a hurricane from Philadelphia to Boston in 1743. During the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson noted that the high temperature for Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, was 76 degrees Fahrenheit (24 degrees Celsius). Presidents such as George Washington and Jefferson were some of the first weather observers in the country. And, during their trip to explore the western U.S. in 1804-1806, the Lewis and Clark expedition made regular weather observations.

The importance of weather observations quickly gained a strong foothold in our young nation. In 1776, Thomas Jefferson began to recruit volunteer weather observers throughout Virginia. By 1800, there were volunteers in five other states, including Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New York, and North Carolina.

In 1814, Surgeon General James Tilton issued orders for conducting weather observations at Army posts across the country and thus the idea of a weather network was born. The concept of a nationwide weather observing network took a great leap forward when, in 1848, Secretary of the new Smithsonian Institution Joseph Henry inaugurated a telegraphic network of weather observers "to solve the problems of American storms." Under Henry, 150 volunteers were reporting weather

observations using the newly operational telegraph to "forecast" storms. By 1860, 500 stations, manned by volunteers, furnished daily telegraphic weather reports. This volunteer network was the start of something much larger.



*Brigadier General Albert J. Myer was the first Chief Signal Officer of the weather division of the U.S. Army Signal Corps.*

On February 9, 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant signed a joint resolution of Congress authorizing the Secretary of War to establish a national weather service. Within the Department of War, this weather operation was assigned to the Signal Service Corps under Brigadier General Albert J. Myer. The weather operation was officially called "The Division of Telegrams and Reports for the Benefit of Commerce." Under the direction of General Myer, the first synchronous weather observations were taken on November 1, 1870, at 7:35 a.m., when weather observations at 24 stations were recorded and transmitted to a central site in Washington, DC.

By 1891, the network of volunteer weather observers had grown to 2,000 stations.

*Under Henry, 150 volunteers were reporting weather observations using the newly operational telegraph to "forecast" storms.*

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## 40 Year Length of Service Award



*Pictured left to right:  
Lindon Steadman, Stephen Fenster, and Lois Fenster  
(Photo by Jeff Hutton)*

Cooperative weather observers Stephen Fenster and his wife Lois, both of Healy, Kansas, were presented with a 40 year Length of Service Award on Wednesday, June 16th. Stephen is the primary observer, and Lois is his backup. The award was presented by Lindon Steadman, Meteorologist-in-Charge for the National Weather Service in Dodge City. Also representing the National Weather Service were Jeff Hutton, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, and Jesse Lee, Observing Program Leader. The Fensters have been recording temperature, precipitation, and snowfall data since 1980.

The Healy station has been in the family since 1901. Lois's grandfather, Herlan Stewart Jennison, was the first observer. The station was originally located near Farnsworth, which was about five miles northeast of Healy. Farnsworth was established in 1880 and disestablished in 1891. Nothing remains of this town.

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## 40 Year Length of Service Award



The Newberry family has been taking quality weather observations for the NWS from Cimarron, CO, since 1964. William (Bill) Newberry started October 23, 1964, and his son James has been observing weather for the past 40 years. Presenting the award was DAPM John Kyle.



Helen Kendall was presented with a 40 year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls, MT for reporting precipitation at her weather station located at Hilger, MT. The weather data Helen reports is part of the NWS COOP climate program of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers that collect the Nations official weather records. The records from this station date back to 1939. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS, Great Falls, MT.

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## 35 Year Length of Service Awards



Gary Gollehon was presented with a 35 Year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Great Falls, MT. Gary takes and records official daily weather observations located at his station east of Brady, MT. Gary's observations consist of precipitation, snowfall, and snow depth and are part of the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.

## 35 and 30 Year Length of Service Awards



Jim Beaty, superintendent of the Purdue Agronomy Center for Research and Education until his retirement on December 31, 2020, received his 35 year Length of Service Award this past July. He oversaw the NWS COOP weather observations on what has grown to be a 1,600-acre farm in West Lafayette, 7 miles northeast of the Purdue campus.



Richard and Ann Abel at our Kokomo 3 WSW station in northern central Indiana celebrated their 30th anniversary of unswerving dedication to the Cooperative Observer Program in June. Thank you so much for your service!



David has been an exceptional observer for 31 years, taking more than 11,300 accurate daily observations. The climate for the Ryegate area in Golden Valley County is very arid, and David's observations play a vital role in maintaining the climate record. His region experiences extreme temperatures ranging from the coldest temperature recorded of -42F to a high of 102F, with an annual average precipitation of only 12.83". David is only one of two Cooperative observers in Golden Valley County, covering 1,176 square miles. David is in the livestock and range management business, which is one reason he has been so thorough with his COOP duties. David has been an active member of his community and was a member of the Ryegate School Board for many years. He was also a Golden Valley County Commissioner. Though now retired, David continues to be in touch with various aspects of his community.

## 30 and 25 Year Length of Service Awards



George Dengel was presented with a 30 year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls (GTF) for taking and reporting daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall, and snow depth. The weather data from George's site in Grass Range, MT is part of the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. Weather data from this site goes back to 1934. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.



Todd Amsbaugh was presented with a 25 Year Length of Service Award for his dedication in taking and recording weather observations for the official National Climate COOP network, which consists of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. Todd takes and records daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall, and snow depth at his station near Big Sandy, MT. The weather station was established in 1921 for a period of records expanding 100 years. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.

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## 25 Year Length of Service and Honored Institution Awards



Peggy Gore was presented with a 25 year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls (GTF), MT. Peggy takes daily weather reports consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, as well as daily snowfall and snow depth amounts for the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. The COOP weather station, located south of Lewistown, was established in 1949. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.



Todd and Paula Witt were presented with a 25 Year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Great Falls (GTF), MT. Todd and Paula take care of an automated precipitation gauge that records twenty four hour precipitation amounts at their station located at Russell, MT. Observations from the Witts' station date back to 1939 for a period of records expanding 82 years. The Witts' observations are part of the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.

*Pictured left to right: Paula Witt and Todd Witt*

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## 25 Year Honored Institution Awards; 20 Year Length of Service Awards



Gary and Patsy Betcher were presented with a 25 year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls, MT. Gary and Patsy volunteer their time to take daily weather reports consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, twenty four hour and hourly rain fall amounts, as well as daily snowfall and snow depth amounts for the NWS Official Climate Network. The COOP weather station located in Choteau, MT was established in January 1893 for a period of records spanning 128 years. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.



Durwin and Tammy Williams were presented with a 20 year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls, MT. Durwin and Tammy volunteer their time to take daily weather observations consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, twenty four hour rain and snowfall amounts, and snow depth for the official NWS National Climate Network. Durwin and Tammy took over the COOP weather station located in Chinook, MT in 2001, continuing records that now span 125 years and were originally established in 1896. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observing Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.

*Pictured: Durwin Williams*

## 20 Year Length of Service Awards



Dale Walker with the Clay County Soil & Water Conservation District in West Central Indiana received his 20 year Length of Service Award. Despite his office moving to an unsuitable location not suitable for relocating the equipment to, Dale goes out of his way to visit his former stomping grounds to tend to the rain measuring equipment. The site has been in operation for 80 years as of July 1. Thank you, Dale, for keeping the records going!



*Pictured: Doug Mitchell*

Doug and Jo Ann Mitchell were presented with a 20 year Length of Service COOP award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls, MT. Doug and Jo Ann have volunteered their time to take daily weather observations consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, twenty four hour rain and snowfall amounts, and snow depth for the official NWS, National Climate Network. Their COOP weather station, located south of Chinook, MT was established June of 2001 and is one of about 8,500 official climate stations across the USA. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observation Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.



*From left to right: Don Button, Vivian Button and Jeff Hutton  
(Photo by Rex Beemer)*

Don & Vivian Button, Cooperative Weather Observers of Ulysses, KS, were presented with a 20 year Length of Service Award on Wednesday, July 14th. The Buttons have recorded temperature, precipitation, and snowfall data since 2001. Vivian is the primary observer and Don is the backup. Don is the Director for Grant County Emergency Management and Vivian is the assistant. The Ulysses station has been in existence since 1889. Mrs. H.F. McCall was the longest serving observer from 1917 until 1968. The Buttons took over the station from Lavon Walters in 2001. Presenting the award was Jeff Hutton, Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Dodge City.

## 20 Year Length of Service Awards



*Pictured left to right: Ken Tomayer and Fay Tomayer*

Ken and Fay Tomayer were presented with a 20 Year Length of Service Award for their dedication of taking and recording weather observations for the official National Climate COOP network consisting of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. Ken and Fay take and record daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall, and snow depth at their station near Dunkirk, MT. The award was presented by Observing Program Leader Matt Moorman of the National Weather Service office in Great Falls, MT.



Charlie Liese received his 20 year Length of Service Award from NWS Grand Junction. Presenting the award was DAPM John Kyle. Charlie Liese is a long time employee of Southwest Ag in Bayfield, CO, where he prepares sold tractors and utility vehicles for customers.



Patty Quisno was presented with a 20 year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls (GTF), MT. The award was presented by Observing Program Leader Matt Moorman of NWS Great Falls, MT. Patty takes daily weather reports winter, spring, summer, and fall. These consist of maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, as well as daily snowfall and snow depth amounts for the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. The COOP weather station, located south of Harlem, MT, was established in 2001.

## 20 Year Length of Service Awards



Mary Bartkoske was presented with a 20 Year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Great Falls (GTF), MT. The award was presented by Observing Program Leader, Matt Moorman from NWS GTF. Mary takes care of an automated precipitation gauge that records twenty four hour precipitation amounts at her station located near Swift Dam, MT. Observations from Mary's station date back to 1969, spanning 52 years. Mary's observations are part of the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA.



*Pictured left to right: Dr. Horst Caspari , DAPM John Kyle*

Dr. Horst Caspari received his 20 year Length of Service Award. Viticulture Professor at Colorado State University's Western Colorado Research Center, he studied Agricultural Science at the University of Bonn, Germany, and has a Diplom Agrar Ingenieur (equivalent to Agricultural M.S. degree) and Doctor of Agriculture (equivalent to PhD) from Bonn University. He was a visiting scientist at the Department of Horticultural Science at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand from 1990 to 1993. He held the position of Post-Doc (1994) and Research Scientist (1995 – 2000) with the Horticulture and Food Research Institute of New Zealand prior to joining Colorado State University in July 2000.

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## 15 Year Length of Service Awards



Ken Snyder was presented with a 15 year Length of Service award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls (GTF), MT. The award was presented by Observing Program Leader, Matt Moorman of NWS GTF. Ken takes daily weather reports consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, as well as daily snowfall and snow depth amounts. Ken's weather station is part of the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. The COOP weather station, located in Joplin, MT, was established in 1932 for a recording period of 89 years.



Ed and Jeanne Williams were presented with a 15 year Length of Service award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls, MT. Ed and Jeanne volunteer their time to take daily weather observations consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, twenty-four hour rain and snowfall amounts, and snow depth for the official NWS National Climate Network. Ed and Jeanne took over the COOP weather station located near Ennis, MT, in May 2005, continuing a span of over 100 years of records that were originally established in 1917. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observation Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT.

## 15 and 10 Year Length of Service Awards



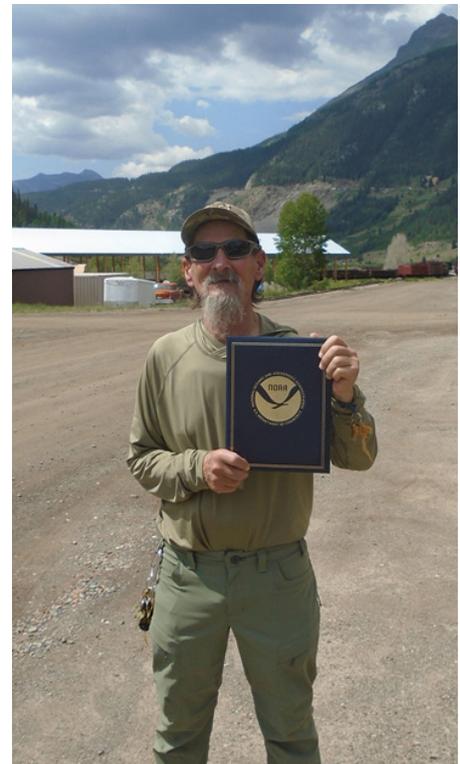
*Pictured left to right: Jeff Hutton and Shari Butler  
(Photo by Jesse Lee)*

Shari Butler, Cooperative Weather Observer at Elkhart, Kansas, was presented with a 15 year Length of Service Award on August 19th from Jeff Hutton, Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Dodge City. Also in attendance for the presentation was Jesse Lee, Observing Program Leader from the National Weather Service in Dodge City. Shari is the Administrative Services Assistant for the USDA Forest Service in Elkhart. She became the primary observer for the Elkhart cooperative weather station in 2005. Along with reporting temperature, precipitation and snowfall data, she also maintains the automated rain gauge. The Elkhart cooperative station has been in existence since 1918, with L.H. Rice as the first observer. The USDA Forest Service took over the observations from Cathy Corpene in 1989.



*Pictured left to right: Beth LaShell and John Kyle*

Beth LaShell received her 10 year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Grand Junction. Presenting the award was DAPM John Kyle. Beth LaShell is an instructor in the Agriculture and Biology Department at Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO. She spends considerable time in the field at the "old fort" southwest of Durango, where she takes daily weather observations.



Freddy Canfield received his 15 year Length of Service award from the NWS in Grand Junction, CO.

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## 15 and 10 Year Length of Service Awards

Jody Jones was presented with a 15 Year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service in Great Falls, MT for his dedication in taking and recording weather observations for the official National Climate COOP network consisting of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA. The award was presented by Observing Program Leader Matt Moorman of the National Weather Service office in Great Falls, MT. Jody takes and records daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth at his station located at the Sand Creek Ranger Station south of James Kipp Recreation area. The weather station was established in June 2005.

Richard Krott was presented with a 10 year Length of Service COOP award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls, MT. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observation Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT. Richard volunteers his time to take daily weather observations consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, twenty four hour rain and snowfall amounts, and snow depth for the official NWS, National Climate Network. Richard's COOP weather station, located at Tizer Gardens south of Helena, MT, was established February of 2010 and is one of about 8,500 official climate stations across the USA.



Leroy Reister was presented with a 10 Year Length of Service Award from the National Weather Service (NWS) office in Great Falls (GTF), MT. The award was presented by Observing Program Leader, Matt Moorman from NWS GTF. Leroy maintains an automated precipitation gauge that records twenty four hour rain and snowfall amounts at his station located in Silverstar, MT. Observations from Leroy's station date back to 1939. Leroy's observations are part of the official National Climate COOP network of about 8,500 volunteer weather observers across the USA.



Ben Wipf was presented with a 10 year Length of Service COOP award from the National Weather Service (NWS) in Great Falls, MT. Presenting the award was Matt Moorman, Observation Program Leader at NWS Great Falls, MT. Ben volunteers his time to take daily weather observations consisting of maximum and minimum temperatures, twenty four hour rain and snowfall amounts, and snow depth for the official NWS National Climate Network. Ben took over the COOP weather station located near Bynum, MT in 2011, continuing records that span 70 years and were originally established in 1951.

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Weather Service  
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# September, October, November Temperature and Precipitation Outlooks From the Climate Prediction Center

