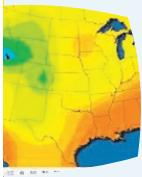




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○ ISSUE 11 | ○ Summer | ○ 2015



Tallahassee *topics*

NEWS AND NOTES FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE.

The National Weather Service (NWS) office in Tallahassee, FL provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for Southeast Alabama, Southwest & South Central Georgia, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend, and the adjacent Gulf of Mexico coastal waters. Our primary mission is the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the local economy.

Hurricane Preparedness

By Katie Moore

The Atlantic Hurricane season runs from June-November 30. Although this year's outlook calls for "below normal activity", or a lower number of named storms than the average year, it only takes one storm impacting your local area to disrupt your life and that of your community. We want to encourage the local community to prepare for storms before they even develop.

Know Your Risks

First thing's first- know whether or not you live in an evacuation zone. If you're not sure, you can find out here: <http://goo.gl/bIDPHU>

- Everyone, no matter how far inland, is at risk of flooding from heavy rains in tropical cyclones. The closer you are to the coast, the higher the chances are that you could also sustain flood damage from storm surge, or water and waves from the ocean that are pushed inland by a storm. Learn the elevation level of your home and whether the land is flood-prone.
- Tropical cyclones produce strong winds. The closer you are to the coast, the more likely you are to receive the peak winds of the storm. However, even people who live hundreds of miles from the coast can receive damaging winds. Make plans to secure your property by covering windows

with exterior-grade or marine plywood or with permanent storm shutters. Keep shrubs and trees trimmed and clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts. Plan to bring in any outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans, and anything else outdoors that may be blown away.

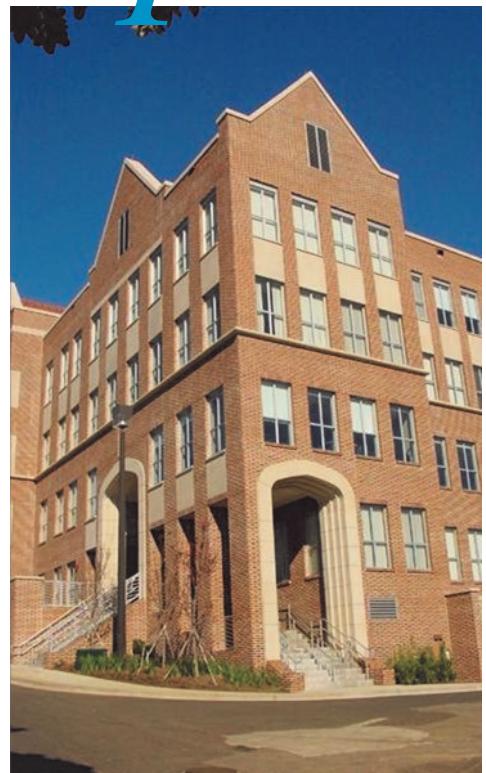
- Tropical cyclones can also produce tornadoes that threaten life and property. They most commonly form in the front right quadrant of the storm. See our [Spring Issue](#) for tips to prepare for tornadoes.

Build an Emergency Kit

Have at least a 3-day supply of food, water (1 gallon per person per day), and medications, along with other supplies, such as a flashlight and battery-powered radio, on hand. Keep in mind you may lose power and phone lines during a hurricane and that after a storm, tap water may no longer be safe to drink.

Have a Communication Plan

Have a set meet-up point if you get separated from your family during a disaster and have a method to communicate. Texting is generally better than calling in emergencies. Local phone calls may be difficult to make during the aftermath of a storm, so consider having your family members check in with an out-of-town relative if possible.



2015 Atlantic Basin Names

Ana	Henri	Odette
Bill	Ida	Peter
Claudette	Joaquin	Rose
Danny	Kate	Sam
Erika	Larry	Teresa
Fred	Mindy	Victor
Grace	Nicholas	Wanda



Employee Spotlight: Donal Harrigan

General Forecaster since 2012

By Katie Moore & Donal Harrigan

**E-MAIL OUR
EDITORS:**

katherine.moore@noaa.gov

mark.wool@noaa.gov

tim.barry@noaa.gov

Q: What got you interested in meteorology?

A: Going into college, I actually wanted to be a pilot. I went to Florida Institute of Technology and enrolled in their flight program. There were a couple of majors to choose from in the school of aeronautics and I chose what looked to be the most interesting, Aviation Meteorology. The flight school thing ended up not working out, so I pursued the meteorology side of my degree.

Q: You did broadcast meteorology before you joined the weather service. What are some of the differences between the two work environments?

A: One major difference, at least for me, were the different aspects of the job that created a high pressure environment (no pun intended). In television, not only do you need to have an accurate forecast, but you need to deliver it as smooth as possible on live television; it was tough for me not to stumble over my words! At the Weather Service, the high pressure environment presents itself during severe convection. Warning decision making can be the most challenging part of our job sometimes. Ultimately, I feel more comfortable doing that and it's part of the reason I made the switch. A couple of other differences that swayed me in favor of the National Weather Service were: increased job security, better pay, and more tools and resources available for research and personal development.

Q: What's the best/worst part of your job?

A: Let's start with the worst. Shift work! Though my reason for disliking shift work may be different than others. I don't mind the midnight shifts as much as I mind having to adjust quickly to different shifts. I like the diversity in my work schedule, working M-F, 9-5 would drive me crazy! So the worst part is adjusting from days, to evenings, to midnights rather frequently.

The best part of my job are the challenges I'm faced with everyday. Constantly trying to play detective to figure out why different weather phenomena are occurring is extremely fun and rewarding (especially when you get it right).

Q: You and Jeff Fournier are our Graphical Forecast Editor (GFE) gurus. What first got you interested in development in GFE?

A: When I started graduate school I knew nothing about computer programming. As my time in school went along, and I realized how powerful computers were and how much time they can save you, my passion for programming developed. When I joined the NWS I was excited to find out that the forecasters helped maintain the computer software that was being used, and also did a lot of development work to make operations more efficient. Naturally, I was drawn to it.

Q: Do you have any tips for people interested in gaining programming skills?

A: The best advice I can give is to not try to learn computer programming by just reading a book. Come up with a project and learn how to program while you develop your project. Also, the first thing you need to learn to do is how to debug code; you'll never get it right on the first try!!

Q: What do you like to do when you're off duty?

A: My wife and I like to run, go to the beach, paddle board, play with our two crazy labs, and most importantly...sleep!!!

Hurricane Season Outlook

By Tim Barry

June 1st marked the first day of hurricane season which runs through the end of November. The official outlook from NOAA calls for a 70% chance of a below-normal season, 20% chance of a near-normal season, and only a 10% chance of an above-normal season. NOAA predicts a 70% likelihood of 6 to 11 named storms, 3 to 6 of which could become hurricanes (winds of 74 MPH or greater), including 0 to 2 major hurricanes (Category 3, 4, or 5; winds of 111 MPH or greater). The main reason for this year's suppressed outlook is the anticipated strengthening of El Niño which is already affecting wind and pressure patterns. El Niño causes stronger wind shear, which reduces the number and intensity of tropical storms and hurricanes. El Niño can also strengthen the trade winds and increase the atmospheric stability across the Atlantic, making it more difficult for cloud systems coming off of Africa to intensify into tropical storms.



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Spring Recap and Summer Outlook

By Tim Barry

The climate for Tallahassee during the 3-month period of March through May was the hottest on record with an average temperature of 72.8 degrees, 5.9 above normal. All 3 months experienced above normal temperatures with April having the largest departure. In fact, April 2015 was the hottest April on record for Tallahassee with the average monthly temperature 7.8 degrees above normal! The main reason that April was so hot was due to the minimum temperatures averaging 12.7 degrees above normal. The maximum temperature recorded at the Tallahassee Regional Airport during spring was 95 degrees which occurred on 5 days in May. The lowest temperature was 36 degrees on the 7th and 8th of March. There were 5 maximum temperature records either tied or broken; 3 in March and one each in April and May. Climatologically, spring is Tallahassee's driest season with April on

average the driest month of the year. This spring was drier than normal with rainfall at the Tallahassee Regional Airport measuring 9.34", 3.13" below normal. The greatest amount in a 24-hour period was 2.02" from April 19th – 20th. A severe thunderstorm produced a peak wind gust of 60 mph at the airport on May 19th.

For the summer months (June through August) the Climate Prediction Center calls for an enhanced chance for experiencing above normal temperatures and above normal rainfall. The average temperature for Tallahassee during summer is 81.4 degrees and the average rainfall is 22.25 inches. On average, about 38% of Tallahassee's annual rainfall occurs during summer which is Tallahassee's convective season.

Outreach Efforts

By Mark Wool

NWS Tallahassee maintained an active outreach program during the spring months. In March, Katie Moore served as a judge at the Buck Lake Science Fair in Tallahassee. WCM Mark Wool spoke about the office marine and surf zone forecast program at a Shell Point Sailboard Club Meeting. Mark and intern Jeanie McDermott staffed a booth at the annual Springtime Tallahassee festival. In April, forecaster Alex Lamers spoke at the 19th International Boating & Water Safety Summit in Miramar Beach, FL. Mark travelled to Savannah, GA to attend the Emergency Managers Association of GA Summit where he discussed the NWS *StormReady* program. In May, fore-

caster Tim Barry staffed a booth at the annual 4-H Ecology Day in Tallahassee. Tim also discussed weather safety with 5th graders at Sabal Palm Elementary School in Tallahassee. Mark attended the annual Governor's Hurricane Conference in Orlando FL. Assistant WCM, Kelly Godsey gave hurricane season briefings to officials in Calhoun County FL, Lowndes County GA and the City of Tallahassee (at the TLH airport). Finally, Mark and Kelly were assisted by volunteers Molly Merrifield and Wright Dobbs in conducting a day-long tropical table-top exercise and training session for area EMs held in Thomasville GA on May 28th.

Recent Office Changes

By Katie Moore

On March 16, WFO Tallahassee upgraded its computer software to AWIPS II, the second version of the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System. AWIPS II incorporates all of our model and forecast data into one Common AWIPS Visualization Environment (CAVE). Tim Barry and Katie Moore were deployed to WFO Jacksonville, our primary backup office, to make the TAE forecast remotely while the upgrade occurred at Tallahassee and we had two information technology officers from the Jacksonville, FL and Nashville, TN offices here at the office to help get the new system set up.

If you regularly read our forecast discussions, you may have noticed a few new names on our discussions this May. That's because we've had two guest forecasters in our office recently who were here on temporary duty assignments to help alleviate strain on the staff due to several long-term vacancies. Tim Destri came from WFO New Orleans, LA to help us from May 3-May 16 and Patrick Blood (at right with Tim Barry) came from WFO Houston, TX to help us from May 17- May 30. Thank you for your help, Tim and Patrick!

