

Monthly Newsletter of the Central North Carolina Chapter of the American Meteorological Society

Volume: 7

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September 2011

UPCOMING EVENTS:

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, September 15, 7:15 PM.

SPEAKER: Darin Figurskey, Meteorologist-in-Charge, National Weather Service Forecast Office - Raleigh

LOCATION: Room 1132, Jordan Hall North Carolina State University

TOPIC: Review of the April 16, 2011 Tornado Outbreak

ABSTRACT/BIO:

Darin Figurskey has been the Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC) at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) Forecast Office in Raleigh, North Carolina since September, 2004. The Raleigh office is one of 122 NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) in the nation and one of 23 in the NWS Eastern Region. WFO Raleigh serves as the liaison office for state government in North Carolina.

As MIC, Darin is responsible for ensuring the citizens in central North Carolina receive timely and accurate weather warnings and forecasts as well as climate and water information. His responsibilities also include maintaining close working relationships with NWS partners in the public, private, and academic sectors, as well as providing severe weather awareness, preparedness and safety education for the public. A key role is interacting with state officials and members of the academic community.

A native of southeast Michigan and a graduate of the University of Michigan, Darin's career began January 16, 1990 at the NWS office in Flint, Michigan. In September, 1991, Darin transferred to the NWS office in Detroit. He spent nearly two years as a forecaster in Lubbock, Texas from November, 1993 to September, 1995, returning to Michigan as a senior forecaster at the Detroit/Pontiac forecast office. Darin became a Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the Detroit/Pontiac office in November, 1997, and in October, 2001, Darin became the MIC of the NWS office in Buffalo, New York.

After arriving in Raleigh, Darin received a great North Carolina welcome from Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne, three of the seven tropical cyclones to affect North Carolina that hurricane season. On Darin's first day at the Raleigh office, September 8, the remnants of Hurricane Frances were giving the state areas of heavy rain and isolated tornadoes. This was followed by the remnants of Ivan and Jeanne in mid and late September. After Darin's first three weeks in Raleigh, he had already been through three tropical systems and two storm damage surveys!

Darin is grateful for the opportunity to work with a dedicated and knowledgeable staff at WFO Raleigh, as well as meeting and working with many individuals both in and outside of NOAA. Darin has been part of the NOAA in the Carolinas Steering Committee since 2005, and is a member of the NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Team (SECART). Darin is married to Deanna, and they have three children, Anastasia, Sullivan, and Adelaide.

As a friendly reminder, dues are \$10 (\$5 for student members) for the year, with half the dues going towards the Academic Achievement Fund. Dues can be paid at the monthly meeting or sent to:

Marilyn Schiermeier
303 Glasgow Road
Cary, NC 27511

Please make checks payable to “CNCC-AMS”. Donations to the Academic Achievement Fund are also welcome, and are tax deductible.

NEWS

Kenneth R. Knoerr (1927-2011)

Kenneth Knoerr, a founding member of our Chapter, passed away April 11. The following is his obituary from the Durham *Herald-Sun*.



DURHAM -- Kenneth R. Knoerr, 83, passed away at home on April 11, 2011 of congestive heart failure.

He was a man of great wisdom, patience and kindness, a man of integrity, courage, intellect and industry, a lover of nature, of science and of understanding at the most fundamental levels.

Ken was born on September 2, 1927 to Bertha Schambaugh Knoerr and Rudolf Knoerr of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. As a teenager Ken worked summers for the U.S. Forest Service at Priest Lake, Idaho, the beginning of his lifelong passions for forestry and the American West.

Ken attended the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and graduated from the University of Idaho in 1952 with a B.S.F. in Forest Management. His studies were interrupted by military service in both WWII and the Korean War. Although he initially desired a career with the Forest Service, he was encouraged to pursue a PhD at Yale University in the young field of forest meteorology; his doctorate, earned in 1961, studied the depletion of soil moisture in the high Sierra Nevadas, an important issue for water managers in western states.

Ken joined the faculty of the School of Forestry at Duke University in 1961 as an Assistant Professor of Forest Climatology, added an appointment as Associate Professor of Biometeorology in the Botany Department in 1968, and achieved the rank of Professor of Environmental Meteorology and Hydrology in 1972. He became Professor Emeritus upon his retirement in 2002, but continued serving as Director of Graduate Studies for Environmental Sciences and Policy (1995-2007).

An expert on mountain meteorology, microclimatology, forest fire behavior and watershed hydrology, Ken was the author of more than 50 peer-reviewed studies, and was widely cited for his research on issues related to the management of forest lands. Together with his graduate students and collaborators he focused on processes by which forests interact with the atmosphere, pioneering the development of physical models for plant-environment interaction and validating those models through extensive micrometeorological experiments.

More recently he was engaged in a retrospective study of more than 100 forest fires in which unexpected fire behavior trapped fire fighters, often with loss of lives. His research aimed at identifying common causes of these events so that forest managers and firefighters could improve safety. Throughout his

career at Duke he was a strong advocate for Duke Forest and for interdisciplinary environmental science. He played an important and enduring role in the evolution of the School of Forestry into the School of Forestry and Environmental Sciences, and in the founding of Duke's Nicholas School of the Environment.

He was a member of the American Meteorological Society, the American Geophysical Union, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and Sigma Xi. He served for over 30 years on the Troop Committee for Boy Scout Troup 440 (sponsored by Watts Street Baptist Church), in which all of his sons participated.

Ken is survived by Aspasia, his wife of 58 years; his brother, Don, of Smithers, British Columbia; three sons: Alan Paul Knoerr of Pasadena, Calif., Eric Robert Knoerr of Panama City, Republic of Panama, and David

Michael Knoerr of Lincoln, Mass.; four grandchildren: Ashley Aspasia Knoerr, Julia Rose Knoerr, Mathew Alan Fenner and Mallory Kathleen Fenner; and 12 nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made to the Triangle Land Conservancy, 1101 Haynes Street, Suite 205, Raleigh, NC 27604, www.triangleland.org.

AMS Introduces Local Chapter Affairs Newsletter

The American Meteorological Society has created a new newsletter focusing on local chapters. The Local Chapter Affairs Newsletter aims to improve the connection between chapters and the National AMS. Published quarterly, the newsletter will have news from AMS Headquarters and information about selected chapters.

Newsletters can be accessed through the AMS Chapter Information page below. The first issue, with information on activities at the AMS Annual Meeting in New Orleans, is now available.

<http://www.ametsoc.org/amschaps/newsletters.html>

Announcements from the Student Chapter

The Student Chapter will hold its first meeting of the semester on Thursday, September 22. The meeting will be their annual back to school picnic at a location soon to be determined.

More details of the picnic should be available next week. For more information, please contact Student Chapter President Ashley McCraney (ajmccran@ncsu.edu).

April Meeting Minutes

Business Meeting Notes:

- 18 people were in attendance.
- Treasurer Marilyn Schiermeier noted that total Chapter assets are \$10,961.42, including \$220.00 in the Academic Achievement Fund. Chapter membership for the year ended with 48 individuals, down from last year's total of 57.
- Chapter Vice President Darin Figurskey reminded members to contact him with any suggestions for topics or speakers for next year's meetings.
- The Chapter CD was renewed for one year at a 0.90% APY.
- The elections to retain the current officers for next year were held.
- Members discussed the local April 16th tornado outbreak and shared personal experiences.

Speaker Notes:

- Dr. Ryan Boyles, Director and State Climatologist, State Climate Office of North Carolina, presented, "Recent Initiatives of the State Climate Office of North Carolina".
- The Southeast Regional Climate Center is a UNC/NCSU partnership and is funded by NOAA, NESDIS, and the NCDC. The region includes the states from Virginia to Alabama, as well as Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands.
- The office provides extension activities, including processing industry and media data requests and developing applied monitoring tools, research activities, and educational services.
- Data provided by the climate office is used for applications involving water, agriculture, and the general public.
- Climate education provides awareness to the public and helps develop sector focused training for groups such as teachers and agriculture specialists.
- A variety of future fire and smoke guidance, high resolution re-analysis, "best estimate" climate observations, and downscale seasonal forecasts are expected to be offered in the near future.

Mark those Calendars!

Here are the tentative dates and speakers for meetings during the 2011-2012 chapter year. We look forward to seeing you.

- September 15: Darin Figurskey – WFO Raleigh
- October 20: Bill Reh – NBC17
- November 17: Dr. Gerald Watson - NCSU
- December 8: Dr. Jack Thigpen – North Carolina Sea Grant
- January 20: Mitch Burton – Progress Energy

February 16: Jessica Losego -RENCI
March 15: Jonathan Blaes – WFO Raleigh
April 19: Paschal Waniha - NCSU

Please be aware that dates are subject to change.

We are interested in any feedback or suggestions you may have. Please feel free to email any of the officers with comments.

President: Frank Schiermeier
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Vice President: Darin Figurskey
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Treasurer: Marilyn Schiermeier
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Secretary: Ryan Cleary
rhcleary@hotmail.com

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maddoxmarvin@aol.com

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From the Archives

This year, we will be presenting documents and items of interest from our archives. We hope you enjoy this trip down memory lane.

The following document concerns the naming of the proposed chapter as a portion of the application process.

Pictures from the 43rd Annual Banquet, held Friday, May 6, at the Bavarian Brathaus in Cary

Above: AMS Academic Achievement Award Winner Morgan Brooks with George Bridgers.

Above: AMS Academic Achievement Award Winner Chana Seitz with George Bridgers.

Above: AMS Academic Achievement Award Winner Andrew Hall with George Bridgers.

Above: Guest Speaker Brian K. Short opening his presentation for the membership.