

## **Greater St. Louis Chapter AMS Meeting Minutes January 27, 2005**

The January meeting of the Greater St. Louis Chapter of the American Meteorological Society was held on Thursday, January 27, 2005 at the **Bevo Mill** in South St. Louis City. A great crowd of 25 members and guests enjoyed a tasty German buffet. Wayne McCollom acted as our gracious host began the meeting at 8:15 PM CDT.

### **Reports**

Lou Hull read the minutes of the December 2004 meeting at the Grappa Grill in St. Charles Missouri with Dr. Ronald Rinehardt being our guest speaker for the evening. They were accepted as read.

Ron Przybylinski delivered the Treasury Report and reported that our checking balance grew by almost one hundred dollars to \$1311.80. As voted on, \$300.00 was moved to our saving account. Our membership has grown to 32 members.

### **Old Business**

There was no old business.

### **New Business**

Ron made the group aware that the Post Dispatch Science Fair will be held on Friday, April 8, 2005. Several judges from our local chapter will be needed to survey the meteorological-related poster presentations.

The next meeting is slated to be held in early March 2005 near Scott Air Force Base.

### **Speaker**

**Mr. Steve Hillberg**, Director of the **Midwest Regional Climate Center (MRCC)** in Champaign Illinois (and a St. Louis Univ. grad 1972) was introduced and began with a brief history of climatology. His talk was cleverly entitled, "Deja Vu All Over Again." In the early to mid 1970s Steve actively participated in the St. Louis METROMEX project then moved to the Illinois State Water Survey for seventeen years.

"Before Weather Forecasting, all there was - was Climatology", quoted Mr. Hillberg.

The first American weather records came from Wilmington Delaware in 1644.

These type of records were journals, isolated from each other. It was not til over 100 years later when state and federal governments tried to organize the taking and preserving of these observations.

The US Surgeon General in 1814 and Pennsylvania's Climate Network in 1838 made early attempts to set up weather taking arrays. Later in the century the Army Signal Corps retrieved enough synoptic observations to begin plotting them. Weather maps had arrived.

The United States Department of Agriculture took over in 1895. When the United States Weather Bureau was created in 1930, forecasting became the wave of the future. Climatology declined.

In 1952, Asheville North Carolina was selected to be the site for the National Climatic Center, a depository of all our paper weather records. With the arrival of computers, the massive job of entering and organizing these records began.

Steve added that with the increased accessibility to weather data, Applied Climatology began to flourish. In the last 15 years, there has been a renaissance of climatology. Both public and private sectors, government, and military all demanded immediate and complete access to climatic records.

Climatology is now "on-line." Climatology is packaged today. One can ask for ranking of weather events, special events, percent of mean, or anomalies. Data is quality controlled, extrapolated, and interpolated.

Steve stated that in the last six years the influence of WEB technology has tripled the Midwest Regional Climate Center's product request. The 1988 El Nino event and the western United States drought developed weather interest. On the other hand, call and e-mails has decreased in numbers. Fees are charged for on-line special services.

The fear of Global Warming has added an interest for Applied Climatology. Climate forecasting is rivaling weather forecasting. Long and short term oscillations of climate can be generated by the new super computers. The last major El Nino was "predicted."

Steve is worried about the current round of budget cuts proposed. The Midwest Regional Climate Center's budget was cut by 17%. Coop sites were cut by 43%. He spends a good part of each year lobbying Congress for funding.

Wayne thanked Mr. Hillberg for a very informative presentation. The dinner meeting ending at 9:30 PM.

Lou Hull, Secretary  
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