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Jefferson Award Winner Clocks 40+ Years



Observing Program Leader (OPL) **Rick Krolak**, NWS Bismarck, ND, presents the Thomas Jefferson Award to **Arlene Bernhardt** of Taylor, ND. Photo by NWS Meteorologist **Zack Hargrove**.

OPL **Rick Krolak** presented the Thomas Jefferson Award to Arlene Bernhardt of Taylor, ND, during an award ceremony at the NWS Bismarck, ND, office.

The ceremony included a congratulatory phone call from **Chris Strager**, Director of the NWS Central Region Headquarters in Kansas City, MO. North Dakota State Climatologist F. Adnan Akyüz, PhD., also congratulated Arlene on her achievement. Even with all the instrumentation and models, Akyüz commented the information still needs to be verified by human observers.

Arlene is without a doubt one of our top notch observers. She is only the sixth observer in the state to receive the very prestigious Jefferson Award.

Arlene has been taking weather observations for more than 40 years from her farm northwest of Taylor, ND. She measures the 24-hour precipitation in the morning, reporting the daily high and low temperatures in the evening, and finally logging the maximum wind speed and direction at the end of the evening.

Arlene combines these observation tasks with her daily routine. She calls the office every day to inform the staff of the daily precipitation totals and reports the remaining temperatures and wind information on the monthly form, then promptly mails it to the office.

During a news interview one day she said "I will keep doing this even if I have to crawl

Here were some punishments for derelictions of duty that were peculiar to the Signal Corps organization, such as, digging post holes for telegraph lines...

out there to do so. I just hope that I don't have to crawl though."

Arlene was born just east of Taylor in Richardton, ND, and has lived in the Taylor area all her life. She has 6 children, 14 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. Arlene's son Dave began taking observations at the Taylor site in 1976 when he was a student studying weather. Dave left the family farm to pursue a career as a NWS weather forecaster so Arlene assumed the duties. That was more than 40 years ago. The daily observations still keep rolling into the office. Her calls have become a part of our routine that we all look forward to.

Besides watching the weather, Arlene's interests include crocheting, reading, gardening, tending her chickens, and canning.

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. John P. Finley is well known for the many contributions he made to the field of severe weather forecasting. He was convinced that tornadoes, like other weather phenomena, could be forecast. He set precedents in weather forecasting which are valid today.

Personal View of John P. Finley

I reported for duty at the Signal Service School of Instruction at Fort Myer, VA, on March 8, 1877. There were several officers of infantry, cavalry and artillery at the school taking the regular course in Signal Corps work. Line officers who developed a liking for weather work might be given a detail on that duty at the Office of the Chief Signal Officer of the Army in Washington after completing the course at Fort Myer.

Such a detail might involve office work in Washington or field work in various parts of the country. The former duty comprised the following:

Weather forecasting

Testing meteorological instruments and cleaning them

Editing and compiling the *Monthly Weather Review* and the *Summary and Review of International Meteorological Observations*

Charting weather data

Conducting special studies in meteorology and climatology

Writing notes and professional papers for publication as public documents

Serving as Officer in Charge of the printing and lithographing division, the meteorological records division, the telegraph lines and cables, or the Signal Service stations

Serving as Executive Officer or Property and Disbursing Officer

Field work embraced the following:

Inspection of Signal Service stations

Establishment and inspection of river stations for recording and reporting the rise and fall of the principal rivers of the country

Operation and maintenance of the military telegraph lines and cables for military and commercial purposes. These lines and cables were sold to the public as fast as they became converted to commercial use.

The old Signal Corps was provided with two classes of officers: those detailed from the regiments of the Line of the Army and those promoted by selection and examination from the non-commissioned officers of the Signal Corps. The latter, when fully trained for the duties of the Signal Corps, were detailed so as to release line officers for duty with their regiments, a course of action very much desired by the War Department.

The promotion of non-commissioned officers to commissioned grade was also an incentive to better work in the Corps, where there was opportunity for distinguished service in signalling and in weather work. More than 300 individuals passed through the Signal Service School of Instruction.

There were some punishments for derelictions of duty that were peculiar to the Signal Corps organization, such as, digging post holes for telegraph lines on the Carolina



John P. Finley

coasts and repairing cables in exposed situations from Florida to Massachusetts. According to the strict interpretation of the regulations, legitimate duty could not be imposed as a punishment, but an occasional dose of the laborer's job was considered good medicine for the recalcitrant observer.

The military instruction at Fort Myer was of varied character, embracing some features of all branches of the Line of the Army (infantry, cavalry and artillery) in addition to that feature of the Staff of the Army, which included military telegraph lines and cables, and military signalling. The instruction made a good foundation for the arduous, exacting and never-ceasing duties of the meteorological observer on station.

Many of these stations were isolated, exposed, lonesome and not free from danger. Observations must be made at precise moments of time and on all days of the year with unfailing accuracy.

Then came the process of enciphering certain data that had been carefully computed, and finally the telegraphing of the perfect message to the central office in Washington. Therefore, the course of instruction at Fort Myer involved both military and scientific training and the weeding out of those men who were unfit for the exacting duties on station. Some men, when tried out on station, would never qualify for higher duty than an assistant to the Observer in Charge.

Military signalling at Fort Myer embraced both day and night work at the school, at distances varying from 1-40 miles or more. The drill in telegraph line building and cable work was carried on at the school. Lines of a mile or more had to be constructed with lance poles and suspending insulators, then a message or more put through, after which the entire construction was dismantled, wire reeled up, poles lowered and the whole equipment placed on trucks, horse drawn, and returned to the school storehouses. The men were then marched back to quarters and barracks.

After some time on station, I was ordered to duty at the Chief Office in Washington and came under the supervision of Prof. Abbe. While working with him, my attention was called to a book by Prof. William Blasius, entitled, *Storms, Their Nature, Classification and Laws*, published in Philadelphia, May 10, 1875. In this volume, special consideration is given the tornado of August 22, 1851, at West Cambridge, MA. His analytical map of the storm track is one of the best ever published for this class of storms. Prof. Blasius spent 5 weeks making the survey of the path over a distance of 2.5 miles.

My attention was later attracted to an incomplete list of 16 tornadoes published by Prof. Elias Loomis of Yale, the author of a well-known treatise on that subject. I discussed the Blasius book and the Loomis list with Prof. Abbe on various occasions, and he urged me to make a special study of tornadoes and improve on the work of these earlier investigators.

This was the inception of my work on local storms. From January 1, 1880, to July 1, 1891, I prepared and then published a list of 57 papers and articles. Since that date, the list of titles has increased by numerous other papers and articles.

Among the most important occurrences during my tour of duty under the Signal Corps administration, was my investigation of the tornadoes of May 29-30, 1879, in the states of Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa. This investigation involved extensive travel in these states and the survey of many storm tracks.

Read more about Mr. Finley in the spring edition of the National Cooperative Observer.

Many of these stations were isolated, exposed, lonesome and not free from danger.

John Campanius Holm Awards



NWS Bismarck, ND. OPL **Rick Krolak**, right, presents the John Campanius Holm Award to **Roland Bromley** of Drake, ND, at a ceremony held at the NWS Bismarck office. Photo by NWS Meteorologist **Zack Hargrove**.

Roland Bromley of Drake, ND, is a consistent and dedicated observer. He has been recording daily data for more than 23 years from his farm. His observing tasks consist of measuring the 24-hour precipitation and reporting the daily maximum and minimum temperatures. Since he began observing in September 1993, Roland has submitted detailed and consistent observations.

Roland recalls a particular October weather event several years ago when he was measuring heavy rain while his cattle farm, just to his south, was receiving heavy snow at the same time. He drove from his home in heavy rain to his farm a few miles south into heavy snow to drop off hay for his cattle.

Larry Weiser, right, of Giddings, TX, was presented a John Campanius Holm award by NWS Austin/San Antonio Meteorologist in Charge (MIC) **Joe Arellano**. Larry has taken observations in Giddings since October 1990. He is recognized for his 26 years of dedicated weather observations, his commitment to sharing weather data with local and state agencies, and for serving his community in many capacities. Photo by NWS Hydrometeorological Technician (HMT) **Cory Van Pelt**.



125 Year Honored Institution Award



NWS Bismarck, ND, presented the **Jamestown State Hospital** with a 125 Year Institution Award. Receiving the award from left are Plant Director **Todd Wilen** and Plant Manager **Duane Duff**. The award was presented by OPL **Rick Krolak**. Photo by NWS Meteorologist **Zack Hargrove**.

The **Jamestown State Hospital** staff members have taken weather observations daily, without fail, since the hospital became part of the voluntary Weather Observation Program in 1891—two years after North Dakota gained statehood. Heating Plant Supervisor **Duane Duff** has been an observer for 30 years. He said, “This is an award for the hospital, not an individual, because it is due entirely to the diligent efforts of each former and current Heating Plant team member that these readings have been taken every day for 125 years.”

The state hospital is one of the oldest continuous weather observation stations in North Dakota. North Dakota has stations dating to 1876!

75 Year Family Heritage Award



From left, NWS Great Falls, MT, Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM) **Megan Syner**, awardees **Willard and Nancy Tonne**, and Meteorologist **Scott Coulston**. Photo by NWS Meteorologist **Zack Hargrove**.

Willard and Nancy Tonne were presented with a 75 Year Family Heritage Award and individual 30 Year Length of Service Awards from NWS Great Falls, MT. Willard and Nancy record and report daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth at their station in Stanford, MT. The climate records for the Tonne’s site go back to 1927. The observing tradition is in the family. Nancy’s mother, **Mira Vinion**, recorded weather at her NWS site in Fort Benton, MT, for 45 years.

50 Year Honored Institution Award



NWS Wichita, KS, presented a 50 Year Honored Institution Award to **Keith Nickell** of the **Humboldt Municipal Water Plant** in Humboldt, KS. Since August 1966, employees from the water plant have observed temperature and precipitation for NWS Wichita.

From left, are Humboldt City Manager **Cole Herder**, Acting MIC **Ken Cook**, Water Plant Supervisor **Keith Nickell**, and OPL **Scott Smith**.

45 Year Dick Hagemeyer Service Award

Dee Roberts, center, observer in Altamont, UT, was recently presented with the Hagemeyer Award for 45 years of exemplary service. Dee is a dedicated and outstanding cooperative observer in this remote area of Utah. Award presentation by MIC **Randy Graham** and OPL **Lisa Verzella**, NWS Salt Lake City. Photo by Dee's daughter, **Diana Hamilton**.



45 Year Dick Hagemeyer Service Awards

Don Olson has been measuring daily precipitation observations for NWS Bismarck, ND, on his farm outside Montpelier since 1971. Don is a dedicated, consistent observer. He makes sure the weather service receives noteworthy data in a timely manner whether it is snowfall, rising creek levels, severe thunderstorm or hail damage data. Don also meticulously maintains the Fischer-Porter gauge and the standard 8-inch rain gauge. Both gauges are always in top-notch condition.

Don also is an active member of his community, helping the local school and small businesses with his weather data. When water levels rise on the creek, Don contacts several downstream residents to alert them to possible flooding. Don won the Thomas Jefferson Award in 2011 and the John Campanius Holm Award in 2000.



NWS Bismarck, ND, OPL **Rick Krolak**, right, presented the Dick Hagemeyer Award to **Marie and Donald Olson** of Montpelier, ND. Photo by Meteorologist **Zack Hargrove**.



Jim Ligon, left, of Sandy Springs, SC, was presented with the Dick Hagemeyer Award for his 45 years of dedicated service in the NWS Cooperative Observer Program.

Jim is the proprietor of the Rocky Retreat B&B, operating in the Boone-Douthit House, ca. 1849, a National Register of Historic Places site. NWS Greenville-Spartanburg, SC, MIC **Steve Wilkinson** presented the award. Photo by OPL **Chris Horne**.

40 Year Length of Service Awards

Judy Blumberg, has been the observer at the **Palm Springs, CA, Fire Department** for 40 years.

Judy began her career with the department in 1976. One of her first duties was getting the daily highs, lows, wind and rainfall observations from the firefighters and calling in the report to the NWS, the Riverside County Flood Control District and the local water agency. She has been using WxCoder for several years now to submit the daily observations. She has kept all 40 years of weather reports for historical purposes but also has observations since the early 30s from her predecessors!



From left, Deputy Chief and Fire Marshall **Ron Beverly**, Awardee **Judy Blumberg** and NWS Lead Forecaster **Joe Dandrea**.
Photo by OPL Noel Isla.



NWS Bismarck, ND, honored **James Jansky** of Towner, ND, with a 40 Year Length of Service Award at the NWS Bismarck office. Jim has been recording temperatures and precipitation since December 1976.

Pictured from left is MIC **Jeff Savadel**, James' son **Scott Jansky**, Awardee **James Jansky** and OPL **Rick Krolak**.
Photo by Meteorologist **Janine Vining**.

35 and 30 Year Length of Service Awards



Randy Grossman, right, of Denison, IA, receives his 35 Year Length of Service Award. Randy's exceptional commitment has been recognized with both the Holm and Jefferson Awards. **Tom Hamilton**, left, also of Denison, has assisted Randy with the weather observations over the years. Tom was presented with a Certificate of Recognition for his service. Both Randy and Tom are employees of **KDSN Radio** in Denison. The award was presented by OPL **Brad Fillbach**, NWS Des Moines, IA.

Nadine Hass, observer at the Limon Hass Ranch in western Colorado, was presented with a 35 Year Length of Service Award. The presentation and photo are by OPL **Jim Kalina**, NWS Boulder, Co.



Ed Bandel, right, was presented with a 30 Year Length of Service Award for taking and reporting daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth near Carter, MT. Ed's son, **Jess Blandel**, took over as primary observer at this location back in 2012, keeping the weather records in the family. Photo by OPL **Matt Moorman**, NWS Great Falls, MT.



30 Year Length of Service Awards



Dr. Richard A. Keen, with his wife, **Helen**, of Coal Creek Canyon, CO, receive a 30 Year Length of Service Award from OPL **Jim Kalina**, NWS Boulder, CO. In 1969, Richard was drafted into the U.S. Army, and assigned as a field meteorologist. He took hourly MetObs at an air field, launched Radiosondes and Rocketsondes, provided artillery support, did micrometeorology and wrote daily climate records. When Richard moved to Coal Creek Canyon in 1984, the first thing he did, even before putting a bed in the house, was to set up a NOAA specs climate station. Ten years later he became an NWS observer. As a kid, Richard wanted to live at a weather station somewhere with plenty of exciting weather. In addition, in those 30 plus years of weather records, he hasn't missed a single day.

NWS Bismarck, ND, presented **Joe Muller** of Glen Ullin, ND, with a 30 Year Length of Service Award. Joe served as an observer since 1986. Joe's daily duties consisted of observing daily precipitation readings from the standard 8-inch rain gauge, along with the monthly Fischer-Porter rain gauge data. Joe recently retired from the observer program and will be missed. Photo by OPL **Rick Krolak**.



Carol Sluggett was presented with a 30 Year Length of Service Award from Great Falls, MT, OPL **Matt Moorman**. Carol takes and reports daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth. Carol's site is near Valentine, MT. Weather data from this site goes back to 1907.

30 and 25 Year Length of Service Awards



NWS Bismarck, ND, presented **Randy Wagner** of Max, ND, with a 30 Year Length of Service Award. Randy has been reporting the daily temperatures, precipitation and snowfall data since May 1986.

Presentation and photo by Meteorologist **Michael Mathews**.

A 30 Year Length of Service Award was presented to **Andy Weir**, of Chester, SC. The award was presented by OPL **Chris Horne**, NWS Greenville/Spartanburg. Andy took over from his father, **Leonard A. Weir**, who was the observer from 1954 to 1986.



George Dengel of Grass Range, MT, was presented with a 25 Year Length of Service Award by OPL **Matt Moorman**, NWS Great Falls, MT, George takes and reports daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth. George continues weather records for this site that go back to 1934.

25 and 20 Year Length of Service Awards



Colleen Ingersoll was presented with a 25 Year Length of Service Award from OPL **Matt Moorman**, Great Falls, MT.

Herf Ingersoll (not present) received a 20 Year Award for recording and reporting daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth. The station dates back to 1964.



Russ Barrett shows his 20 Year Length of Service Award presented by OPL **Matt Moorman**, NWS Great Falls, MT. Russ has been reporting daily maximum and minimum temperatures, precipitation, snowfall and snow depth since 1996. His station is located at the **Greenfields Irrigation Office** in Fairfield, MT, which dates back to 1927.



Vernon Erickson of Elgin, ND, received his 20 Year Length of Service Award. Photo and presentation by NWS Bismarck, ND, Meteorologist **Zack Hargrove**.



Homer E. Hill, observer at Shaw, CO, was presented with a 20 Year Length of Service by OPL **Jim Kalina**, NWS Boulder, CO.

20 Year Length of Service Awards



Alana Hastings, observer at Ulm, MT, was presented with a 20 Year Length of Service Award from OPL **Matt Moorman**, NWS Great Falls, MT. Alana reports daily rainfall amounts during the summer months, continuing precipitation records from her family since 1946.



From left, **IPS Superior Energy Service** employee **Socho Nishihira Jr.** accepts a 20 Year Length of Service Award at the Kaunakakai office in Molokai. The award was presented by NWS Honolulu Forecaster **Henry Lau**. Photo by OPL **Mark Farnsworth**.



Alan Schweitzer, right, observer for the **Johnson City Power Plant**, was presented with a 20 Year Length of Service Award by OPL **Jesse Lee**, NWS Dodge City, KS. Alan was also the observer in Ashland from 1981-91. Photo by MIC **Larry Ruthi**.



John Podgorniak of Northwood, IA, receives his 20 Year Length of Service Award. OPL **Brad Fillbach**, NWS Des Moines, IA, presented John with his award.

20 and 15 Year Length of Service Awards



Bill Whitaker, observer at the Johnson ranch in Campo shows his 20 Year Length of Service Award presented by OPL **Noel Isla** and Met Intern **Brett Albright**, NWS San Diego, CA. Since May 2000, he has been backed up by **Arvilla and Larry Johnson**. Bill originally took over for Arvilla's parents, **Archie and Gwendolyn Leach**, who started taking observations in 1931 and were dedicated observers for more than 60 years.



NWS San Diego, CA, OPL **Noel Isla** and Met Intern **Brett Albright** presented 15 Year Length of Service Awards to **Arvilla and Larry Johnson**. In addition to observations, the Johnsons also call in during storms, wildfires and more. The Johnsons continue the family tradition started by Arvilla's parents, **Archie and Gwendolyn Leach** in 1931. Archie was a recipient of the Holm award in 1982. From left are Larry Johnson holding Warner Ludwig, Arvilla Johnson, Amanda Ludwig, and Alyvia Ludwig holding Sheryl Harpel.



John Gulliksen, right, observer at Estes Park, CO, was presented a 15 Year Length of Service Award by OPL **Jim Kalina**, NWS Boulder, CO.



Jeff Elliott, center, observer for the **KSU Agricultural Research Center** in Garden City, was presented with a 15 Year Length of Service Award by NWS Dodge City, KS, OPL **Jesse Lee**, left, and WCM **Jeff Hutton**. The station opened in 1940 at the Department of Agriculture Experiment Station but moved to the old Garden City Airport that same year and then into Garden City in 1947 before relocating to its current location in 1951. Jeff became the primary observer in 2001. Photo by NWS Information Technology Officer **Scott Reiter**.

10 Year Length of Service Awards



Deborah Lee Anderson was presented with a 10 Year Length of Service Award from NWS Great Falls, MT, OPL **Matt Moorman** for reporting precipitation at her weather station near Millegan, MT. The records from this station date back to 1939 and have been in the family at this location since 1946.



Phyllis Hall, of Lewistown, MT, was presented with a 10 Year Length of Service Award from NWS Great Falls, MT, OPL **Matt Moorman**.



Tim Devlaeminck, of Minneota, SD, shows his 10 Year Length of Service Award. The station dates back to July of 1948. The award was presented by OPL **Brad Adams**, NWS Sioux Falls, SD. In his spare time, Tim enjoys fishing and hunting. He travels across the Northern Plains searching for that big game trophy.



Paul Overlie, of Chester, MT, was presented with a 10 Year Length of Service Award by NWS Great Falls, MT, OPL **Matt Moorman**. Data for Paul's site goes back to 1900 with a break in the records from 1920 to 1942.



Bill Prellwitz of Willow City, ND, displays his 10 Year Length of Service Award presented by NWS Bismarck, ND, OPL **Rick Krolak**.



Janell and Lony Shaw, with future observer daughter **Lauren**, were presented with a 10 Year Length of Service Award from NWS Great Falls, MT, OPL **Matt Moorman**. The station at Twin Bridges, MT, has been in the family since 1961 and continues the records for that area dating back to 1899.

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