

SEPTEMBER 1991: As mentioned on the cover, September brought slightly cooler than normal temperatures to DCA for the first time this year as well as the first month since September 1990, bringing an end to the record equalling 11 consecutive months of above normal temperatures. As midnight struck on September 1st, the first significant cool air mass since early June swept into the Washington area ending yet another stretch of summer heat and humidity. It was the first of several refreshing Canadian air masses that the Washington/Baltimore area enjoyed this month as an upper-level northwesterly flow took control of the mid-Atlantic region. Maximum temperatures on several days remained in the sixties despite bright sunshine while minimum temperatures dropped to near or below fifty on several occasions at DCA, including a low of 47 °F on the 28th. Dulles reached a chilly 35 °F the same day. Yet the month did not completely shake off the summer-time heat and humidity. A brief, but intense three day heat wave from the 16th-19th sent maximum temperatures to record levels of 96 °F on the 16th and 17th and 90 °F on the 18th, culminating in 59 days with 90 °F or greater readings at DCA for 1991, eight shy of the record 67 days recorded in 1980.

Rainfall was above normal at DCA for the first month since March. This was the result of three major precipitation events with the first occurring from September 4-5, producing about an inch of rain. Thunderstorms during the evening of the 17th brought about two-thirds of an inch while more than an inch fell on the Washington area from the 24th-26th. The former and latter events were general soaking rains throughout the region, and while not alleviating the very dry conditions, they provided beneficial surface moisture. Up to 2.5 inches of rain were recorded in portions of Montgomery County from the 24th to the 26th and similar amounts also fell in parts of Prince William and Fairfax counties with thunderstorms on the 17th, bringing monthly rainfall to over five inches across these areas. Still, long-term dryness values remain in the severe to extreme range with an annual deficit of over eight inches at DCA, through September. Both BWI and ADW recorded their sixth consecutive drier than normal month.

SEPTEMBER 1991 WEATHER STATISTICS FOR THE WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE AREA:

Station <u>Location</u>	<u>Temperatures (°F)</u>					<u>Extreme/Day</u>		<u>Precipitation (In)</u>		
	<u>AvMx</u>	<u>AvMn</u>	<u>AvgT</u>	<u>NmT</u>	<u>DepNm</u>	<u>MaxT</u>	<u>MinT</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Norm</u>	<u>DepNm</u>
National (DCA)	79.9	62.0	71.0	71.1	-0.1	96/16*	47/28	3.50	3.22	+0.28
Baltimore (BWI)	79.9	58.1	69.0	68.9	+0.1	98/16	42/28	3.05	3.46	-0.41
Dulles (IAD)	80.3	54.8	67.6	67.4	+0.2	97/16*	35/28	3.25	3.26	-0.01
Ft. Belvoir (DAA)	80.7	57.0	68.8	69	0	96/17	39/28	3.69	3.6	+0.1
Andrews AFB(ADW)	78.4	56.2	67.3	69	-2	95/17	40/28	2.31	3.6	-1.3

Other dates of occurrence: * September 17th;

LOOKING AHEAD TO OCTOBER: THE FIRST FROST OR FREEZE

October is usually the month when we often think about the first frost or freeze in the Washington/Baltimore area, especially outside the city. Below is a listing of the dates with the first 32 °F reading at National during the past 10 years, along with the earliest and latest freezes on record, courtesy of the Washington WSFO, Sterling, VA.

<u>Year</u>	<u>First 32°F date</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>First 32°F date</u>
1990	Nov. 19	1985	Dec. 2
1989	Nov. 18	1984	Nov. 20
1988	Nov. 25	1983	Dec. 2
1987	Nov. 11	1982	Nov. 6
1986	Nov. 13	1981	Nov. 23
Earliest freeze: Oct. 10, 1895		Latest freeze: Dec. 14, 1980	