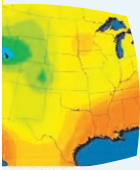




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Tallahassee topics

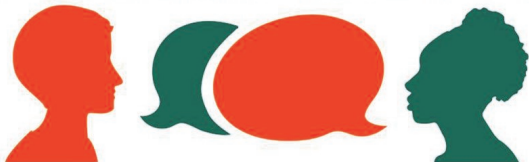
NEWS AND NOTES FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE.

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.

National Preparedness Month

By Katie Moore

DON'T WAIT. COMMUNICATE. MAKE YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN TODAY.



SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH!



Do you have an emergency plan? September is National Preparedness Month and the best time to make an emergency plan is now— before disaster strikes! Make a plan with your community, your family, and for your pets. Know how to stay safe and communicate with everyone during a disaster. We featured tips in the [Spring](#) and [Summer](#) issues of Tallahassee Topics to help you prepare for tornadoes and hurricanes. You can also check out FEMA's [Protect Your Property](#) website to assess your risk of floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, high winds, earthquakes, and more. Then, head to Ready.gov's [Make a Plan](#) website to make sure you have all the details of your emergency plan and ready kit set up. There's even a detailed section for those with [disabilities and/or access and functional needs](#).

Did your organization have a preparedness activity for [National PrepareAthon Day](#)? If so, make sure your activity [gets counted](#).

El Niño Update

By Katie Moore and Mark Wool

The most recent El Niño advisory by the Climate Prediction Center showed a 95% chance that El Niño conditions will continue through the winter and then gradually weaken through spring 2016. El Niño typically features a more active southern jet stream in the winter that produces wetter-than-normal conditions across much of the southern United States, including our area. Although much of our area could use the extra rain, the Tampa area and even parts of the southeast Big Bend may be more vulnerable to flooding this winter, given above normal rainfall in these areas over the summer. Finally, the increased cloud cover and precipitation from the El Niño winter pattern often results in slightly cooler than average daytime temperatures in our area.

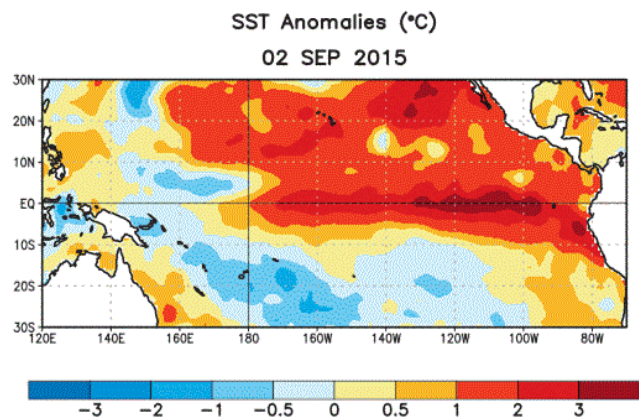


Figure 1. Average sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies (°C) for the week centered on 2 September 2015. Anomalies are computed with respect to the 1981-2010 base period weekly means.



Employee Spotlight: Artie

Service Dog in Training since 2014

By Katie Moore & Jane Hollingsworth

E-MAIL OUR EDITORS:

katherine.moore@noaa.gov

mark.wool@noaa.gov

tim.barry@noaa.gov

Q: How did you become a service dog in training?

A: I was literally born for this work! I was the 3rd in a litter of 4 lab puppies, born to my Mother, Justice, and my Dad, SSD Carbon. My name is Artie, named after the father of my very cool Sponsor, Laurie Walmsley, a veterinarian in Sarasota. I am the only yellow pup, my siblings are all black labs. We were specifically bred to become Guide Dogs, based on our parents health, temperament, intelligence, and other characteristics, such as love of life and people!

Q: What type of disability services does your organization provide training for?

A: Southeastern Guide Dogs (SEGD) specifically breed, raise, and train their dogs for working with blind or visually impaired people. SEGD also has a very active program to provide Guide Dogs for Veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD. We become partners with individuals that have disabilities, helping them attain independence and a new lease on life!

Q: What does your training entail?

A: Right now I am learning good house manners and to be a gentleman. I have to learn to walk calmly on a leash without pulling, which is really really hard because I love to sniff and I like to greet other dogs. Plus there are lizards, rabbits and squirrels that I need to chase! I am not allowed to have people food, which is OK because I get a lot of treats! I am also not allowed on furniture, although I occasionally sneak a nap on the couch when my partner is away (shhhh, don't print that). I go to a lot of different public places like the grocery (I like the meat and fish counter!), restaurants, the library, and to work each day at the National Weather Service in Tallahassee. I've been to a couple of weddings, volleyball games with my puppy-sitter, Dena, and church. I have even gone to puppy camp with another puppy raiser, Sharon, where I get to swim and play with other SEGD puppies. She takes me to church and has to nudge me when I snore during the sermon. I have flown on airplanes, ride in the car a lot, and have taken the bus. I'm pretty easy-going and really like all of these experiences.

When I am about 15 months old or so (I am 10 months old now), I will go back to the SEGD campus to attend college. This will be 4-6 months

of formal training where I learn to really be a Guide Dog. What's exciting about that is that I will be reunited with my siblings and will live with a roommate in the Boy's Dorm!

Q: How did you start working at the NWS?

A: The Meteorologist in Charge, Jane Hollingsworth, has wanted to be a puppy raiser since she toured the SEGD facility about 20 years ago. Once she moved to Tallahassee, she realized she was close enough to do this, and now works with a group of other puppy raisers out of Gainesville. So Jane and I are partners - she said that she feels very lucky that she got me because she is active and wanted a big yellow lab - which I am! We have a lot of fun together and take care of each other. I also really like my puppy-sitter, Dena, because she has 2 of her own dogs and a pool!! My Area Coordinators in Gainesville, Cindy and Sharon, are wonderful, too. I love the meetings twice a month because I get to play with other SEGD puppies.

Q: What's your favorite/least favorite part of your job?

A: When I am working, I wear my blue SEGD vest, and I also carry my ID card. The favorite part of my job is getting to go to all kinds of cool places, and meeting so many friendly people, including kids. They all like to make a fuss over me, but I can't let them pet me when I am wearing my vest. I especially like going to work at the NWS. All of the staff seem to like me and they are very nice to me. I am getting pretty good at Upper Air Balloon launches, too. The least favorite part of my job is having to concentrate on controlling my temptation to chase squirrels and lizards, and I really think that I would enjoy napping on the couch more.

Q: What do you like to do in your spare time?

A: I guess I'm a pretty typical teenager, because I like to hang out with my friends. I love to swim and play ball, and also really like to sleep. As my puppy camp counselor said, "Artie has the relaxation protocol down pat!" I like to hang out with my partner and play with other dogs when I can, and I love to vacation over at my friend Dena's house and go to Puppy Camp with Sharon.

October is Disability Employment Awareness Month

ARTIE is a puppy with Southeastern Guide Dogs (SEGD), based in Palmetto, Florida, operating since 1982. They specifically breed, raise, and train their dogs for working with blind or visually impaired people. ***The SEGD mission is to create and nurture a partnership between a visually impaired individual and a guide dog, facilitating life's journey with mobility, independence and dignity!*** *SEGD is a non-profit organization that operates entirely on donations. All services that they provide are without cost to the qualified individual and they receive no government funding. SEGD serves more than 400 graduates across the country, and they place over 100 dogs each year into careers benefitting people with visual impairments, as well as with Veterans. For more information check out www.guidedogs.org.*

(Note: Florida Statute 413.08 (&) / Chapter 2002-176 states: "Any trainer of a dog guide or service dog, while engaged in the training of such a dog, has the same rights and privileges with respect to access to public facilities and the same liability for damage as is provided for those persons accompanied by dog guides or service dogs.)"

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This Quarter's Focus: *NWS Tallahassee Fire Weather Program*

By Tim Barry

In the late spring and early summer of 1998, Florida experienced its most costly fire season. Wildfires broke out all over the state from a prolonged period of hot and very dry conditions mainly during late spring and early summer. Florida had the three largest wildfires in the country that year. Over 500,000 acres were scorched from approximately 2,200 individual fires and an estimated total of over 10,000 firefighters from 45 states were involved in the battle to contain the fires. This massive response to these fires combined local, State and Federal resources and was the largest ever assembled in the United States at that time. Before this event, the National Weather Service (NWS) in Tampa had the sole responsibility of issuing fire weather products for the entire state of Florida. Today, all NWS offices in Florida and around the country have developed a fire weather program and issue fire weather products that are tailored for their specific forecast area of responsibility.

The products that the NWS issues provide support to national, regional and local land management agencies such as the U. S. Forest Service. The most visible product is the Fire Weather Planning Forecast, issued twice daily, which gives a detailed forecast of numerous weather elements and indices that are critical to our various partners in the fire weather community. This product includes some elements and indices that are not found in any other NWS issued product, such as lightning activity level (LAL), mixing height, transport wind speed and direction, dispersion index and low visibility occurrence risk index (LVORI). Planning forecasts are used for issuing burn permits for fire pre-suppression (prescribed burn) and also can provide agencies initial attack readiness for existing wildfires. A prescribed burn is a cost-effective tool to reduce fuel buildups which can cause dangerous wildfire conditions, thus providing increased protection to people, their homes and the forest. It is a recommended method of land management agencies, such as the Florida Forest Service (FFS), for preventing wildfires. The FFS's motto is, "Good fires prevent bad fires." When a local government agency gets ready to conduct a prescribed burn, they will request a spot forecast from the NWS. Spot forecasts are issued for the burn to fit time, topography and weather conditions at a specific location.

Other products that the NWS issue on an as needed basis are Fire Weather Watches and Red Flag Warnings. The purpose of these products is to alert state and federal fire managers of critical fire weather conditions that will increase fire danger in a significant way. A Fire Weather Watch is issued when critical fire weather conditions are expected over the next 24 to 72 hours. A Red Flag Warning is issued when critical fire weather conditions are expected within 24 hours and are issued on a county by county basis. One of the challenges that we have here at the NWS in Tallahassee is that we issue watches and warning for parts of three states, each having different criteria for red flag conditions. The red flag conditions are generally a combination of low relative humidity and/or low fuel moisture, and elevated wind speeds.

Also, included in the Fire Weather Program is the Incident Meteorologist Program (IMET). Some offices have specially trained meteorologists that are dispatched into the field for on-site support in the fighting of significant wildfires. There are currently four IMETs working at the NWS offices in the state of Florida.

Recent Office Staffing Changes

By Katie Moore

This summer, we've had four forecasters temporarily deployed to our office to help, one new permanent team member, and two on station promotions. The week of June 28- July 4, Adam Baker from the Peachtree City/ Atlanta forecast office visited Tallahassee to help out on the forecast desk. The next week, July 5-July 11, Dennis Cain was deployed from the Dallas/Ft. Worth forecast office to forecast for the Tallahassee area as well. Our most recent visitor was Greg Jackson from the forecast office in Midland, TX, who came to Tallahassee August 23- September 5. Jessica Fieux (right), from the Peachtree City/Atlanta office, was temporarily deployed to our office from July 12-25, but joined our team permanently on August 23rd as one of our new lead forecasters. Jessica Fieux is an FSU graduate who worked with Dr. Reasor, Dr. Cunningham, and Dr. Hart on her master's thesis research. We also had two lead forecasters promoted within the Tallahassee office- Donald Van Dyke and Donal Harrigan. You can read [DVD's](#) and [Donal's](#) employee spotlight interviews in previous issues of Tallahassee Topics.





Management-Admin Team

Jane Hollingsworth, MIC
 Mark Wool, WCM
 Parks Camp, SOO
 Doug Sherrick, ESA
 Chris Duggan, ASA
 Toan Tran, ITO
 Hydrologist (Vacant)

Lead Forecasters

Jeff Fournier
 Don VanDyke
 Donal Harrigan
 Jessica Fioux
 Vacant

Journeyman Forecasters

Tim Barry
 Kelly Godsey
 Alex Lamers
 Vacant
 Vacant

HMTs

OPL (Vacant)

Interns

Katie Moore
 Claudia (Jeanie) McDermott
 Emma Weston

Electronic Technicians

Ron Eimiller
 Clifton Bennett

Outreach Efforts

By Mark Wool

NWS Tallahassee’s outreach program remained active over the summer months. In June, Asst. Warning Coordination Meteorologist (WCM), Kelly Godsey, gave a hurricane season briefing to the Marine Corps Logistics Base personnel in Albany, GA. WCM Mark Wool conducted SKYWARN spotter training in both Holmes and Walton Counties. In July, Mark delivered a hurricane season preparedness briefing to personnel at the Florida Office of Financial Regulation in Tallahassee. He also visited the Walton County FL Emergency Operations Center to verify that county’s *StormReady* status. The county was recognized as *StormReady* at a ceremony on the steps of the Walton County Courthouse in De Funiak Springs, FL (pictured). Mark also visited with the folks at the South Walton Fire District office in Santa Rosa Beach, FL to discuss that organization’s proactive efforts to keep beachgoers apprised of the latest risk for rip currents. Mark conducted SKYWARN spotter training for employees at Tallahassee Community College while also verifying that institution’s readiness to be declared *StormReady*. In August, Katie Moore staffed a booth at that college’s Safety Day Event. Over the course of the summer, the following groups toured our office on the Florida State University campus: FAMU’s Bay Watershed Education and Training Program, Walton County and TCC emergency management officials, and the Governor’s Council on Indian Affairs Summer Youth Program.



Climate Recap for Summer

By Tim Barry

The climate for Tallahassee during the 3-month period of June through August saw temperatures that were well above normal. The average temperature this past summer was 84.0 degrees which was 2.6 degrees above normal. This makes the summer of 2015 the 4th hottest on record for Tallahassee. Also of interest, three of Tallahassee’s hottest summers have occurred in the last six years and six of the hottest summers since 1998. All three months this year experienced above normal temperatures with July being the hottest with an average temperature of 85.4 degrees, 3.4 degrees above normal. July 2015 was the 2nd hottest on record and missed out on tying for the hottest July, occurring back in 1932, by only five-hundredths (.05) of a degree. The hottest temperature recorded at the Tallahassee Regional Airport this summer was 100 degrees occurring on four different days in July. The lowest temperature was 65 degrees on August

27th. Despite being one on of the hottest summers on record, there were no record high temperatures tied or broken at the airport. However, there were a few record high minimum temperatures either tied or broken all occurring in mid to late July.

Rainfall at the Tallahassee Regional Airport this summer measured 19.21”, which was 3.04” below normal. All three months saw below normal rainfall and June was the wettest with 6.99”. The greatest amount in a 24-hour period was 1.63” on August 20th. Tallahassee’s year-to-date rainfall at the end of August was 37.74”, which was a deficit of 6.17”. A severe thunderstorm occurred at the airport on June 30th and measured a peak wind gust of 60 mph from the west.

Outlook for Fall

By Tim Barry

The latest outlook for fall (September through November) from the Climate Prediction Center calls for an enhanced chance of experiencing above normal temperatures for our southeastern counties and enhanced chances of experiencing above normal rainfall across our area. The average temperature for Tallahassee during fall is 69.3 degrees and the average rainfall is 11.42”. Fall is on average our driest season.

Early to mid-September is the climatological peak of the hurricane season which runs through the end of November. As of this printing, there have been 10 named tropical systems with 2 of them reaching hurricane status.

