



NOAA REPORT

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COMING UP

U.S. Air Force Air Weather Service 50th anniversary at Scott AFB, Ill., June 30 - July 2.

NOAA Ship Open Houses: Ferrel in Baltimore, Heck in Annapolis, July 11 - 12.

Satellite Data Users Conference in Boulder, Colo., July 14-16.

DOC Sea Grant Review Panel for Sea Grant 1987 in Washington, D.C., July 19-22.

UNIDATA Policy Committee meeting at University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) in Boulder, Colo., July 20-21.

The Albatross and The Whales:--NOAA's 187-foot research vessel Albatross IV helped the New England Aquarium Monday in its first-of-a-kind effort to return three pilot whales to the wild after they had been beached.

The ship was equipped with special tanks for transporting the whales -- which weighed from 800 to 1200 pounds -- to the open sea where scientists hope they will join a group of other pilot whales spotted last weekend. One by one, the whales were lowered in a sling into a specially designed pen. The first whale, named Notch for an indentation in his dorsal fin, leaped free of the pen almost before touching the water. The other two, Baby and Tag, soon joined Notch, swimming in formation around the ship. Researchers aboard the Albatross reported that, once released, the whales were behaving normally.

All three whales were equipped with radio transmitters, and one with a satellite transmitter, so that they can be tracked over the next month. The transmitters are designed to fall off

after about six months. One of the newly-freed whales exuberantly flipped its transmitter off shortly after entering the water.

The young whales were among a group of about 50 that had beached themselves on Cape Cod, Mass., last December. Although about 25 of the animals died, aquarium officials managed to rescue three. They have been kept in a 60,000-gallon tank at the Boston-based aquarium, being nursed back to health.

While the fate of the whales is uncertain, John Prescott, executive director of the Boston Aquarium, said "If they are not accepted by the pod and they can't find their way, they may die, but we will get valuable information about what we should do for stranded animals later."

Wildfire Activity:--A return to hot weather has heightened the wildfire potential across the west and given National Weather Service fire weather forecasters an early taste of summer action. Numerous lightning-caused fires were set off last weekend. NOAA fire weather teams were dispatched to the "Winter Rim Fire" in eastern Oregon and the "Zipper Fire" west of Las Vegas, Nev. "Red flag" (urgent) watches and warnings were issued for large portions of the western United States as hot temperatures, dry conditions, lightning activity, and strong winds set in.

Satellite Data Users To Meet:--Several hundred users of data from NOAA's polar-orbiting weather satellite system will meet in Boulder, Colo., July 14-16 to share details on how they put the information to work in commercial fishing, assessing the health of vegetation, detecting forest fires, and a number of other purposes. The meeting, sponsored by NOAA and the University of Colorado, is concerned with the NOAA/TIROS-N series of satellites, which were developed initially to provide global weather information for forecasters, but have become invaluable as low-cost sources of information on a variety of subjects. According to David Hastings, of NOAA's National Geophysical Data Center, presentations will be made on hardware, data acquisition and management, and applications. In the last category, he said, papers will be given on how information from the spacecraft is used for agricultural assessment, geological investigations, sea surface temperature analysis for weather forecasting and commercial fishing, topographic mapping, and a number of other land, oceanographic, and meteorological purposes. The meeting, Hastings said, responds to a need for technical and non-technical exchanges between producers and users of NOAA satellite data.

NOAA Corps Awards:--The NOAA Corps recently announced the presentation of awards in four categories:

Winning NOAA Special Achievement Award Medals were Captain R. Lawrence Swanson for sustained superior performance as

Executive Director of the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; Lieutenant Garner R. Yates, Jr., for the development of a flight tracking system for the Office of Aircraft Operations; and Lieutenant (j.g.) Clifford C. Wilson for the development of data transmission software and for his conduct of the first successful program of ozone flights from the South Pole.

NOAA Corps Director's Ribbons were awarded to Captain John K. Callahan, Jr., for his performance as Assistant Coordinator for the 1986-1987 Department of Commerce Combined Federal Campaign; Lieutenant Commander David H. Peterson for his performance prior to the contract award and as the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative on the Lake Superior hydrographic survey; and Lieutenant Commander Andrew M. Snella for development of hand-held calculator software for logging and computing precision three-wire level data.

1986 NOAA Association of Commissioned Officers (ACO) Awards went to Lieutenant (j.g.) Russell E. Brainard and Lieutenant (j.g.) Timothy D. Tisch. The ACO Science Award went to Lt. Brainard for his accomplishments in oceanographic research. Lt. Tisch took the ACO Junior Officer of the Year Award for his superior service as Executive Officer of the NOAA Officer Training Center.

Lieutenant (j.g.) Michael R. Mathwig has been awarded the Society of Military Engineers 1968 Karo Award as a member of the National Geodetic Survey Division's combined geodetic field parties G-03 and G-05. The Karo Award (named for Vice Admiral H. Arnold Karo, a prominent figure in the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and other NOAA predecessors) recognizes an NOS field unit that has made an outstanding contribution in the engineering and scientific field.

May Frozen Seafood Supply Up From April: The May supply of frozen fish and shellfish held in warehouses across the United States increased one percent from the previous month to 281.1 million pounds, according to the Fisheries Service. Among the most important products in storage were 38.3 million pounds of frozen blocks and slabs (mostly cod, flounder, haddock, and pollock), off seven percent from April, and 54.8 million pounds of frozen fillets and steaks (mostly cod, haddock, flounder, and ocean perch), off six percent from April.

Radiological Exercise:--It was only practice, but there was plenty of excitement when NOAA participated in a radiological exercise near Sacramento, Calif., recently. The exercise simulated a midair crash between two aircraft, one of which was supposedly carrying radioactive material. The Weather Service Office in Sacramento provided on-scene support via communications links at the San Francisco forecast office. The NOAA meteorologists determined current and forecast wind speed and direction,

precipitation, and other weather factors which might have affected the dispersion of the radioactive material. The exercise was sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Participants included federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as the military.

Naming NOAA's New Building:--What's in a name? Maybe a \$500 U.S. Savings Bond if it's the one chosen for NOAA's new headquarters in Silver Spring. Washington-area employees are racking their brains for a "succinct, expressive, creative, and dynamic" name for their home-to-be during a contest now under way. The winner will be announced in September.

NOAA Rides With Union Pacific Engineers:--Safe operations of the nation's rail system are being enhanced by NOAA weather forecasts and warnings, according to officials with the Union Pacific Railroad. The company has increased its effort to provide the latest weather information to its train engineers by providing NOAA Weather Radio receivers to each of its trains. The Weather Service has provided the railroad with a list of its radio transmitter sites so the engineers can monitor the proper broadcasts while traveling through different listening areas. (The nominal range of NOAA Weather Radio is a 40-mile radius from the antenna site.) The National Weather Service also is providing the Union Pacific a complete listing of telephone numbers of local forecast recordings from NWS offices. Using these numbers, railroad depot managers will be able to obtain forecasts for points "down the line." This information will be relayed to train engineers who will use it to evaluate weather impact on long distance operations.

AMC Employee of the Year:--Dan R. Munford of the Hydrographic Surveys Branch recently was named Atlantic Marine Center Employee of the Year. The award to the 26-year veteran was announced by AMC Director, R. Adm. Ray E. Moses at the Norfolk, Va., facility's annual picnic.

GLERL Chemist Visits Soviet Union:--Dr. Peter Landrum, an expert in the area of contaminated sediments and toxicokinetics with the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, has just returned from a two-week visit to the Soviet Union where he assessed the nation's analytical, field, and personnel capabilities regarding contaminated sediments, and the potential for developing joint research with Soviet scientists. Dr. Landrum was invited to the USSR by the Soviet leader of a US-USSR joint committee on cooperation in the field of environmental protection.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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