

NOAA REPORT



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Satellite Signal Saves Rower: An emergency signal from a rowboat in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean saved the life of Tori Murden, who was attempting to become the first American and first woman to row across the Atlantic Ocean alone and unsupported. Murden's boat *American Pearl* had capsized, and Murden had banged her head several times.

The signal from Murden's Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon was first detected by the international Cospas-Sarsat system on Sept. 7. NOAA represents the United States in this international program. The U.S. Rescue Coordination Center contacted the Rescue Coordination



Commerce Secretary William Daley (second from left) travelled to a research site in Alaska's Prince William Sound during his August trip. He was accompanied by (left to right) David Kennedy of the NOS Office of Response and Restoration, NMFS researcher Bruce Wright (head down), and A.B. Cooper, crewman on the NOAA ship *Rainier*.

News Briefs

Center in Falmouth, England, which investigated and broadcast a "mayday" call. A nearby container ship, *Independent Spirit*, responded to the call and assisted Murden, but rough wind and seas prevented them from recovering the rowboat.

Appointments Named: Dr. Alan Thomas has assumed new responsibilities as NOAA's senior advisor for Arctic research efforts and Louisa Koch was named the OAR Deputy Assistant Administrator last month.

As senior advisor on Arctic activities, Thomas will promote, coordinate and implement a unified approach to the management of NOAA's Arctic research programs.

Before joining NOAA, Koch worked at the Office of Management and Budget, most recently as Commerce Branch Chief. She played a major role in June's first annual National Oceans Conference. 

Secretary Daley Surveys NOAA Services in Alaska

There it is, on the right," Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley shouted to his fellow passengers and pilots of a WW II-era Grumman Goose seaplane as the aircraft banked into Bay of Isles on Knight Island in Prince William Sound, Alaska.

Daley had spotted the gleaming white hull of the NOAA hydrographic survey ship *Rainier* on the water below. The seaplane swooped over the ship, over streams filled with spawning salmon, then glided to a landing on the water.

The visit to Knight Island in August was just one of many stops for Daley in an Alaskan trip that began in Anchorage with his announcement

of millions in Federal aid for last years' salmon fisheries disaster in the state, and ended in Juneau with a tour of a NOAA fisheries lab.

In an Anchorage news conference with Senator Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) and Governor Tony Knowles, Daley said that \$7 million in federal aid is available for state programs to help fishermen and communities recover from last year's low returns of salmon in the Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim regions. The state also made available \$2.33 million as its share of the aid package.

"We have worked diligently with our state partners to develop an assis-

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NOAA Commissions New Fisheries Ship in Pascagoula; Honors Gulf Scientist

During a traditional maritime ceremony that marks the passage of a ship into Federal service, Commerce Secretary William M. Daley ordered the NOAA ship *Gordon Gunter* to be placed into commission.

The Aug. 28 ceremony took place in Mississippi at NMFS' Pascagoula Laboratory pier, where the *Gordon Gunter* will be based. The ship, the second largest fisheries research vessel in the United States, will serve the Southeast Fisheries Science Center by conducting scientific surveys and collecting data on the health and abundance of fishery resources in the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea.

The ship, a former Navy T-AGOS ship called the *Relentless*, was renamed in honor of one of the Gulf region's most eminent marine scientists. Dr. Gordon Gunter's career as a marine biologist and leader in marine research and education has spanned more than 60 years, including 16 years as director of the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory.



CHRIS SMITH

Celebrating the dedication of the Gordon Gunter were (left to right) NOAA Corps Cmdr. Craig McLean, NOAA Corps Director RAdm. William Stubblefield, NMFS Director Rollie Schmitt, Commerce Secretary William Daley, NOAA Administrator D. James Baker, and NOAA Deputy Under Secretary Scott Gudes.

"We are especially pleased to name the ship after Dr. Gordon Gunter, who has dedicated his life to the study and teaching of marine science in the Gulf region," Daley said. "His pioneering work has substantially increased the scientific body of knowledge, and set the standard for continuing research.

This new ship will help the National Marine Fisheries Service and its Mississippi Laboratories ensure that we have a consistent and reliable source of solid data."

Despite an illness that has left him nearly incapacitated, Dr. Gunter was present at the ceremony along with members of his family. His son spoke with emotion on his behalf, thanking NOAA for honoring his father's contributions to marine science.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) was keynote speaker at the ceremony. Lott's support in Congress was instrumental in obtaining the funding needed to convert the *Relentless* into a fisheries research ship.

Joining Daley and Lott at the podium were Dr. and Mrs. Gunter; NOAA Administrator Dr. D. James Baker; NMFS Director Rollie Schmitt; NOAA Corps Director RAdm. William Stubblefield; Marine Centers Director RAdm. John

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CHRIS SMITH

NOAA Corps Cmdr. Craig McLean, commanding officer of the Gordon Gunter, gives a tour of the ship to Commerce Secretary William Daley and NOAA Administrator D. James Baker.

Unified Assessment of Nation's Watersheds Is Nearing Completion

The Clean Water Action Plan, a comprehensive interagency initiative to make the nation's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters fishable, swimmable and drinkable, is starting to take shape.

Federal agencies will soon be evaluating and analyzing information provided by the states and tribal nations to determine the overall health of the Nation's watersheds—an important first step in the plan.

The Clean Water Action Plan, launched in February by President Clinton and Vice President Gore, challenged state, tribal and Federal agencies to assess the health of watersheds and identify areas in need of restoration, preventative action to sustain good water, and extra protection for pristine or sensitive watersheds. A Unified Watershed

Assessment (UWA) process was designed to support, strengthen and coordinate the national effort.

Over the past five months, local, regional, state and Federal agencies, and tribal nations have worked together to produce the watershed assessments. These assessments are an important step toward controlling point source discharges, reducing polluted runoff, enhancing sensitive natural resources such as wetlands and coastal waters, and protecting drinking water supplies.



Restoring & Protecting America's Waters

CLEAN WATER ACTION PLAN

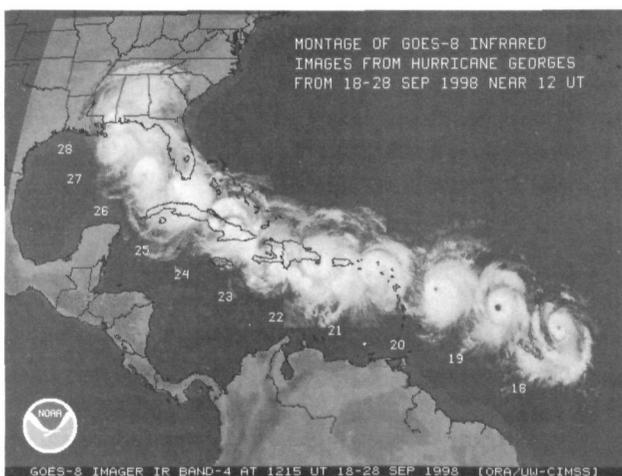
The U. S. Dept. of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency are the lead Federal agencies in the Clean Water Action Plan; however, the plan is based on strong partnerships among nine Federal agencies, states, communities and tribes.

The National Ocean Service's Office of Coastal Resource Management is coordinating NOAA's overall involvement in the project. The National Marine Fisheries Service and the National Ocean Service assisted states and tribes during the critical UWA process, according to Dr. Nancy Foster, Assistant Administrator for the National Ocean Service.

"The Fisheries Service provided fish habitat data, and the Ocean Service's data sets for coastal land uses, environmental quality, and biological resources were essential to state governments and tribal nations involved in the assessment effort. We now have plans from more than 40 tribal nations, and all 50 states have submitted draft assessments and Watershed Restoration Priorities for Federal review," she said. Final assessments are expected soon.

For more information on the Clean Water Action Plan and the UWA process, visit the plan's Web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/cleanwater/uwafinal/appc.html>.

—Kim Swaggard ☺



Composite Image Shows Track of Georges

This montage of Hurricane Georges was generated by the NOAA team at the University of Wisconsin. The montage shows Georges every day as it moved from the Atlantic Ocean on Sept. 18 across Puerto Rico, Cuba, and eventually into Mississippi on Sept. 28. The images were taken by GOES-8, a geostationary weather satellite

positioned 22,300 miles over the Equator at 75 degrees West longitude.

NOAA scientists from NESDIS are working with colleagues at the Cooperative Institute for Meteorological Satellite Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where the image was generated.

—Pat Viets ☺

Focus On...

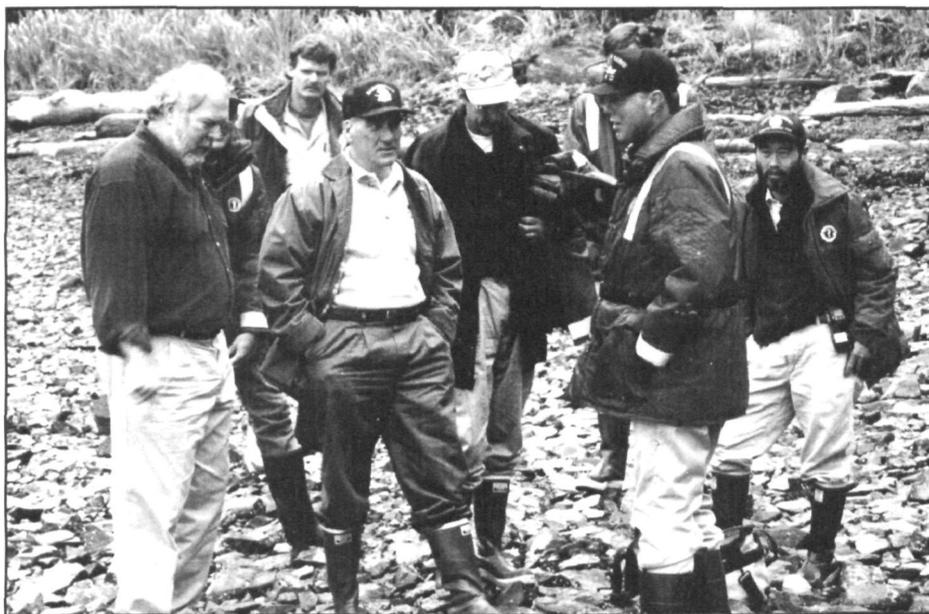
Secretary Daley Goes North to Alaska

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tance program to ensure the \$7 million in Federal aid reaches the residents of the Bristol Bay and Kuskokwim regions without delay," Daley said. "I would like to recognize the efforts of Senator Stevens and Governor Knowles in pursuing the development of this disaster assistance program to address last year's fisheries failure. It was through their coordinated efforts that this funding was made available."

The next day Daley joined up with NOAA oil spill and fisheries experts for a seaplane tour of the Kenai Peninsula and Prince William Sound. Their seaplane left Anchorage and flew south. The clouds were too thick at Portage Pass, the first choice for getting over the mountains to Prince William Sound, so the seasoned Alaskan pilots worked their way down the Kenai Peninsula. This route gave Daley and his party a chance to see some spectacular scenery, and pass over Seward, site of the newly opened Alaska SeaLife Center recently selected by Coastal America as a Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center.

Daley almost got to see Kachemak Bay, the newest and largest of NOAA's National Estuarine Research Reserves, near Homer, but there was just too much Alaska in the way. "They told me we were flying over the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, and I could see on the map that the



Sec. Daley, second from left, examining a section of cleanup site of the Exxon Valdez, ten years after the oil spill. Joining him were (left to right) David Kennedy of NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration, NMFS researcher Bruce Wright, Lt. Cmdr David Kruth of the NOAA ship *Rainier*, and Gary Shigenaka of NOAA's Hazmat office.

southern end of the refuge met Kachemak Bay," Daley said. "I asked someone to point out Kachemak Bay, but we couldn't see it—even at an altitude of 4,000 feet, the wildlife refuge stretched all the way to the horizon."

Once Daley's plane reached Prince William Sound, the group headed for Knight Island. Dave Kennedy, chief of NOAA's National Ocean Service Office of Response and Restoration, and Bruce Wright from the National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Oil Spill Damage Assessment and Restoration in Juneau, showed the Secretary one of some 30

research sites that NOAA has been studying for nearly a decade since the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

"I'm glad I got to see this first hand," said Daley. "A decade after the spill, we're still studying the effects of the weathered asphalt and oil that remains in some areas."

After inspecting the spill site, Daley went aboard *Rainier*, where Captain Alan "Buffalo" Anderson briefed the group on the ship's hydrographic work in the area. Accurate surveys are an important part of preventing shipwrecks and oil spills. NOAA and *Rainier* have played a key role in a

comprehensive multi-agency, user-focused navigation safety improvement project in Prince William Sound.

In Alaska, two things are always subject to change—the weather, and travel plans. As the Secretary's party ate lunch, the seaplane pilots announced that changes in the weather made it unsafe to fly from Knight Island to Cordova as planned, and the group continued their voyage across Prince William Sound aboard *Rainier*. NOAA program experts used the extra travel time to give Daley additional briefings on the next stops on their Alaska trip, and update him on other Alaskan projects such as next year's Exxon Valdez Oil Spill 10th Anniversary Symposium as the party set sail for Cordova aboard the survey ship.

The group dodged sea otters as it made its way into Cordova in one of *Rainier's* acoustic survey boats. Then Daley's party boarded a plane to begin the last leg of its Alaskan visit. The night sky was glowing green with a spectacular display of the Northern Lights as the plane flew above the clouds, but upon landing in Juneau at 1 a.m., the group was greeted by the trademark Southeast Alaska climate—rain.

The soggy weather didn't dampen Daley's enthusiasm for the NOAA fisheries programs or the National Marine Fisheries Service lab at Auke Bay, just north of Juneau.

"It's remarkable, the quality and quantity of research that has taken place at Auke Bay Lab," Daley said. "This research has affected policy, regulations, and legislation such as the Forest Practices Act, high seas drift gill netting, marine mammal research, and resource management support."

Overall, Daley was impressed with the dedication of NOAA people, and the impact of NOAA services in Alaska. "All parts of NOAA, especially the Fisheries Service, the Ocean Service, and, of course, the Weather Service, make a real differ-

ence in the lives and livelihoods of the people of Alaska," Daley said.

"Our work in oil spill research shows the people of Alaska that we're serious about science, and we're reliable partners over the long haul," he said. "The new research reserve in Kachemak Bay, the tremendous navigation safety work being done by the Ocean Service, Coast Survey and NOAA Corps, and crucial work of the fisheries management and research teams, means a great deal to Alaska and the nation. There is so much to see, I wish I could have stayed longer," Daley added.

—Dan Dewell ☺



A *Rainier* skiff transports the party to the research site on Knight Island in Alaska's Prince William Sound.

Data Buoy Center Creates 'Dial-A-Buoy,' Coastal Weather Service for Mariners

Picture up-to-the-minute information from your favorite Web page. Then, imagine hearing it read to you over a telephone when you were away from your computer. That's the vision the National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) had when it created *Dial-A-Buoy* for mariners this summer.

Now, three months later, mariners are placing 700 calls each day to *Dial-A-Buoy* to obtain the latest coastal and offshore weather observations and forecasts. *Dial-A-Buoy* provides wind and wave measurements taken within the last hour at any of NDBC's 65 moored buoy and 54 Coastal-Marine Automated Network stations located in coastal waters around the United States and in the Great Lakes.

Large numbers of boaters use the observations, in combination with forecasts, to make decisions on whether it is safe to venture out to sea. Many have said the reports have saved them wasted trips to the coast; some even claim that the reports have saved lives.

NDBC, a part of NOAA's National Weather Service located at Stennis Space Center, Miss., began posting

August Sets Global Temperature Record

August 1998 was the warmest August on record globally, according to NOAA researchers. The average global temperature (land and sea) for the month was 61.4 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 1.3 degrees above the long term mean of 60.1 degrees for August. August 1998 broke the previous record of 61.1 degrees set in 1997.

For the year to date, from January through August, the average global temperature of 58.5 degrees Fahrenheit was also 1.3 degrees above the

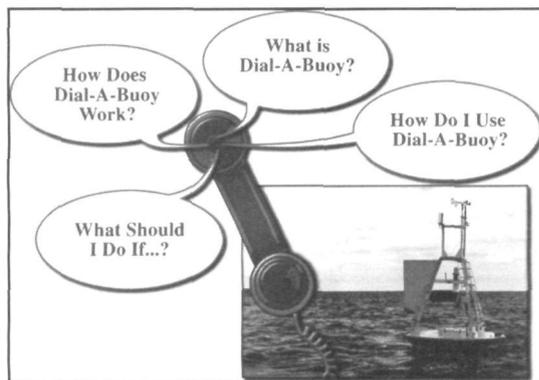
observations on its Internet Web site <http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov> in 1996. The Web site's popularity grew rapidly, and now serves more than one million inquires, or hits, every month.

"*Dial-A-Buoy* is an audio extension to our Web page," said David Gilhousen, a meteorologist with the Data Buoy Center. "It was created in response to mariners' comments asking for a way to get the information while offshore."

The reports include the latest wind direction, speed, gust, air temperature, water temperature, and sea level pressure. Buoy reports also provide details on significant wave height, swells and wind wave heights. Some buoys also provide wave direction.

long term mean of 57.2. The long term mean is based on data from 1880 to 1997. During August, surface warmth was evident over much of the globe, with cool areas in Europe, Alaska, Siberia, Bangladesh, the south Atlantic, and the central Pacific. In the central Pacific, sea surface temperatures were below normal, commonly referred to as La Niña, although ocean temperatures off the northwest South American

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To access *Dial-A-Buoy*, dial (228) 688-1948 using any touch tone or cell phone. Enter the five-digit (or character) station identifier in response to the prompt to hear the latest buoy or Coastal-Marine Automated Network observation read via computer-generated voice. Telephone users also have the option to receive a location map by fax that lists station identifiers. *Dial-A-Buoy* callers can search an index of stations by geographic area to find the appropriate station identifier – the search requires the latitude and longitude for the area of interest. A complete list of station identifiers also is available on the National Data Buoy Center Web site.

The *Dial-A-Buoy* system uses a computer to answer the phone at Stennis Space Center in Mississippi. The computer runs commercial software to control the dialog and read the forecasts and observations from the buoy center's Web site.

"*Dial-A-Buoy* is an eight-line demonstration system," added Gilhousen. "We started this with the goal of showing its value to mariners. We've been seeking involvement from the private sector to expand the availability of *Dial-A-Buoy* and several companies have expressed interest in offering a similar service at another location." ☺

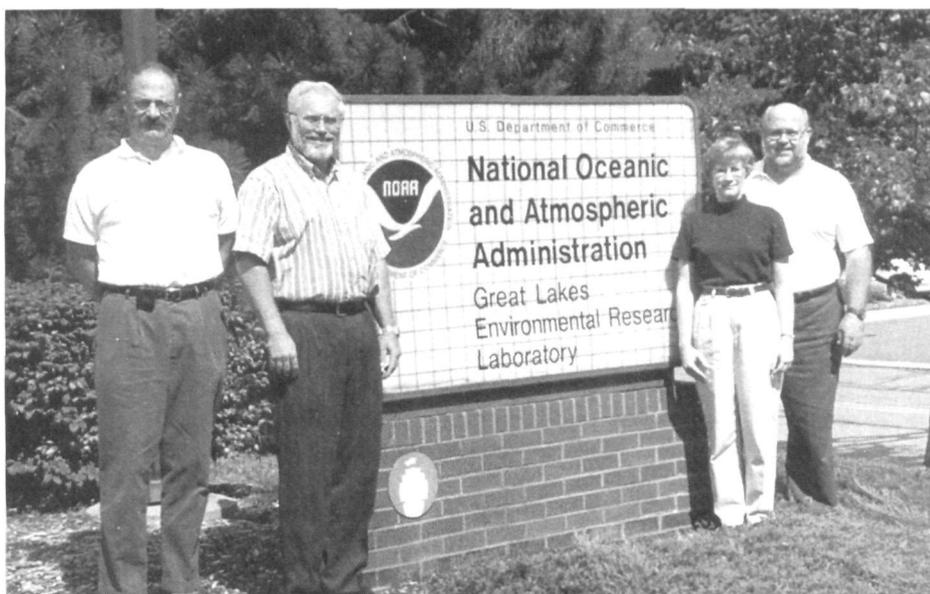
NOAA Laboratory Scores Scientific Hat Trick

In hockey, a player earns a “hat trick” by scoring three goals in one game. NOAA’s Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory (GLERL) in Ann Arbor, Michigan, recently achieved the scientific equivalent of a hat trick. For the third time this year, GLERL scientists have been notified that a scientific publication they authored has been selected as “best paper” in a peer-reviewed journal published by a leading professional society.

GLERL scientists Deborah H. Lee, Thomas E. Croley II and Frank H. Quinn are recipients of the prestigious Boggess Award, to be presented by the American Water Resources Association (AWRA) at its 1998 Annual Conference in November.

The Boggess Award, established by AWRA in 1973, honors the authors of the best paper published in the *Journal of the American Water Resources Association* during the previous year.

The winning paper, “Lake Ontario Regulation under Transposed Climates,” assesses Lake Ontario management under climates with



From left to right, GLERL scientists Tom Croley, Frank Quinn, Deborah Lee, and David Reid received three separate scientific “best paper” awards between them in 1998.

changed means and variabilities from those of the present climate. Transposed climates from the southeastern and south central continental United States were applied to thermodynamic models of the Great Lakes and to hydrologic models of the watersheds to provide alternative scenarios of water supplies to Lake Ontario.

The Boggess Award is the third best-paper award given this year for a publication involving GLERL scientists. Dr. Croley also received the *Journal of Hydrologic Engineering’s* Best Paper Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers at its 1998 conference, for his paper, “Using NOAA’s New Climate Outlooks in Operational Hydrology.”

Earlier this year GLERL scientist David Reid was one of three NOAA scientists (the others were Troy Holcombe and Lisa Taylor with the NESDIS National Geophysical Data Center) who received the Chandler-Misener Award from the International Association for Great Lakes Research. The award honored their paper, “Lakefloor Geomorphology of Western Lake Erie,” as the best scientific paper appearing in a recent volume of the *Journal of Great Lakes Research*. The award was presented at the Association’s 1998 conference in Hamilton, Ontario. ☺

Gordon Gunter is Dedicated in Miss.

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Albright, NOAA Corps; and NOAA Corps Cmdr. Craig McLean, commanding officer of the *Gordon Gunter*.

A feature that sets the *Gordon Gunter* apart from other fishery research vessels is its acoustic quietness. According to NOAA Corps Director RAdm. William Stubblefield, “The *Gunter* ushers into the United States the important characteristic of not scaring

away the fish while an attempt is being made to study them. Future fishery research ships, which are so urgently needed by NOAA to ensure the sustainable management of our nation’s fisheries, will build upon the acoustic quietness of the ship that we see before us today.”

The *Gordon Gunter* replaces the *Chapman*, which was decommissioned last May.

—Jeanne Kouhestani ☺

Do You Have a Multi-Lingual Ear?

NOAA's Office of Diversity and the Howard University School of Continuing Education have partnered to develop a training course entitled *Developing a Multi-Lingual Ear*. The course address the need for NOAA employees to develop and use listening skills and techniques essential to communicating more effectively with fellow NOAA employees and customers whose native language is not English.

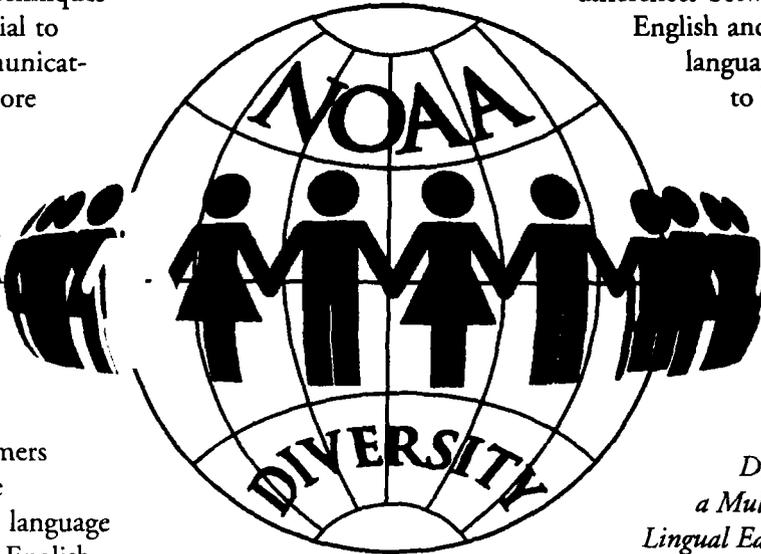
This course is designed to:

- heighten sensitivity to the circumstances of non-native speakers at work,
- understand the challenges non-native speakers face when dealing with native speakers, and
- better understand the accents, grammar and sentence construction of non-native speakers.

The course, the first of its kind offered in the Federal and private sectors, focuses on the phonetic practices common to various language groups. It was developed to help employees better understand non-native speakers of English, to understand common grammatical

differences between

English and other languages, and to learn how to ask questions that help communications.



Developing a Multi-Lingual Ear is open to any NOAA

employee who manages or works with employees who speak with foreign accents as well as employees who are non-native speakers of English. The Office of Diversity contacts course participants prior to the class to identify the types of accents or languages they encounter in the workplace. This information is provided to the instructors who

record the voices of non-native speakers of these languages. Audio-tapes of these voices are played to the class participants who try to decipher what they hear. By the end of the session, students learn how to become better listeners, become more sensitive to the needs of non-native speakers and learn how to exercise patience when listening to non-native speakers.

"I learned that even though I speak English as a first language, I must be sensitive to the fact that others use English as a secondary language and I must do what I can to ensure that both of us understand each other," said an employee who attended the course. Another participant said, "The course heightened my awareness of the barriers non-native speakers face." One attendee states that "The information provided in this course will help me perform my job better when I deal with non-native speakers."

This class is in the process of being scheduled for FY 1999. If you are interested in attending, please contact the Office of Diversity at 301-713-1966. ☺

August Sets Global Temperature Record

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Coast remained warm. Nationally, January through August has been the fifth wettest and fourth warmest on record. For the year to date, the nation has had 22.77 inches of precipitation. The normal for the period is 20.05 inches. The wettest January through August was in 1979, with 23.34 inches of precipitation.

The year 1934 was the warmest January through August with a record 56.9 degrees. In 1998, the temperature for the period was 56.2 degrees. The normal for January through August is 54.3 degrees. Information for the year to date can be found at: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/ol/climate/research/1998/aug/aug98.html>. ☺

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Address comments to:

Editor

NOAA Report

NOAA Office of Public Affairs

14th St. & Constitution Ave. NW

Room 6013 HCHB

Washington, DC 20230-0001

202-482-6090 (voice)

202-482-3154 (fax)

Banyan E-Mail: jerrys@pa@noaa

Internet: jerry.slaff@noaa.gov

NOAA Report Online: <http://www.publicaffairs.noaa.gov/nr>

Lori Arguelles Director, Office of

Public Affairs

Jerry Slaff Editor

Jeanne Kouhestani Associate Editor

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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