

# **This Week In NOAA**

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**Activities for the week ending**

**January 31, 1986**

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

THIS WEEK IN NOAA

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Frank On CBS Morning News:--CBS Morning News' Maria Shriver interviewed Dr. Neil Frank, Director of the National Hurricane Center, on Thursday, Jan. 30, in Miami. Commenting on the Florida cold snap, Dr. Frank said that without occasional cold weather in the South, Florida might have winter hurricanes.

Radiosonde Project Starts Well:--The Office of Public Affairs' media drive to urge the public to return recovered radiosondes to the National Weather Service for reconditioning received favorable media play, with a major article-and-graphics in USA Today, a story in Sunday's Washington Post, the Miami Herald, and wire service pickup which will move the plea across the nation. The next phase will be the provision of public service announcements to all U.S. TV weather casters, who have been notably cooperative with NOAA. Radiosondes, which originally cost \$54, are parachuted to earth after balloon borne data-gathering flights. The public has been asked to return downed units to NWS's reconditioning center in Kansas City, where they are returned to service for half the manufacture price; over the past decade returns have saved the taxpayers \$10 million. In recent years, however, returns have dropped off. This campaign is an effort to bring the return rate to its previous level.

Pollutants Over The Atlantic:--A press release will reveal that high concentrations of pollutants have been found at two levels as far as 400 miles off the Atlantic coast by NOAA scientists. Studying nature's ability to carry acid rain-producing pollutants long distances through the atmosphere, the airborne researchers found several heavily polluted air masses along the coast at altitudes of about 3500 feet, and another, extending up to 20,000 feet, off Nova Scotia.

School Information Service Distributed:--The February School Information Service Bulletin has been distributed to educational journals and institutions across the nation. Highlights: the radiosonde project, winter fatality statistics, the completion of a 250,000-point geodetic network, a satellite briefing for a princess, a study linking rainfall with estuarine transport, and a wrapup of the 1985 tornado season.

On The Air:--NOAA's monthly taped radio program, The Sea And The Air, has been distributed to more than 600 stations. The January program concerns the Tropical Ocean/Global Atmosphere (TOGA) Program, an international study of sea-air interaction and its possible influence on disastrous climatic change.

Planet Earth:--"The Climate Puzzle," an hour-long segment in the public television series, Planet Earth, involving NOAA science and service, will air over WETA-TV, Channel 26, in Washington on Wednesday, Feb. 3.

Exhibits Policy Overhauled:--More prominent Commerce Department and NOAA identification will be required on exhibits displayed by all NOAA components. Other improvements in the planning stage include the development of generic design standards, colocation of NOAA-agency exhibits at major shows (such as boat, air and fish expositions), and consulting and coordinating service to line organizations.

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OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Dr. King's Birthday Observance - The Office for Civil Rights participated in the planning of the departmental program in observance of the first federal holiday honoring Dr. King. The program, held January 13, 1986 in the HCHB auditorium, was most successful and attracted the largest number of attendees ever for such a program. (R. Gross, 377-0684)

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NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Assistant Administrator Attending WMO Meetings - Dick Hallgren is in Geneva attending a meeting of the WMO Executive Council's Working Group on the Long-Term Plan. The Working Group is putting the final touches on an comprehensive plan for the WMO covering the period 1988-97. Following this meeting he will travel to Tashkent, USSR, for a meeting of the WMO Bureau, February 3-6. The Bureau, a six-member steering group, will deal with preparations for the next session of the Executive Council in June 1986 and the next Quadrennial Congress in May 1987. (Howard April 427-7645)

A Long Partnership - The International Ship Masters' Association (ISMA) is celebrating its 100th anniversary during which time it has made significant contributions to the safety and productivity of the Nation's maritime community. The National Weather Service and ISMA have been close partners in the provision and development of weather services to Great Lakes mariners. Many of the weather services that have evolved over the years originated with ideas and concepts from the ISMA. Programs for ship weather observations, warnings and forecasts, port meteorological services, and weather broadcasts are but a few of the areas where cooperation with ISMA has produced substantial benefits for the Great Lakes marine community. (Paul Jacobs 427-7278)

Aviation Sector Meets on Surface Automation - The Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) recently hosted a workshop to provide a status update on the National Weather Service's (NWS) Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS) and the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS). The workshop provided the opportunity for the aviation sector to ensure that their weather related requirements and concerns about automation are fully understood by the NWS and FAA. Kansas City was chosen as the meeting site because of the NWS's "Kansas Pilot Project" which is evaluating prototype automated systems located at each of six NWS facilities in the State of Kansas. Kansas City is also the location of a joint evaluation by NWS and FAA of an ASOS prototype installed in the air traffic control tower at Kansas City Municipal Airport. Acceptance of ASOS by the aviation community is critical to NWS plans for restructuring. (Steve Short 427-7975)

Advanced Flood Forecasting System - National Weather Service (NWS) hydrologists recently met with officials of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) and Corps of Engineers to discuss development of advanced flood forecasting systems for the Los Angeles River and San Gabriel River Systems. The potential exists in this area for required evacuation of about one million people during a significant flood event in spite of existing flood control works. With limited potential for structural solutions to this flood threat, all parties expressed a commitment to work toward significant improvements in real-time monitoring, forecasting, and preparedness capabilities. Development of a work plans and eventual Memorandum of Understanding between NOAA and LACDPW is underway. (Mike Hudlow 427-7658)

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NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SATELLITE, DATA, AND INFORMATION SERVICE

Tracking and Data Relay Satellite System (TDRSS). TDRSS-west was part of the space shuttle payload destroyed during launch on January 28, 1986. This accident will delay fully operational status for the TDRSS system, which requires two functioning satellites. TDRSS-west would have enabled the U.S. to acquire Landsat data over the western Pacific region that includes Australia, Hawaii, and western Alaska. TDRSS-east, the only functioning TDRSS satellite, is required for Landsat coverage over North and South America, Europe, and Africa. The launch of the third and only backup TDRSS satellite, originally scheduled for July 1986, will be delayed pending NASA's investigation of the accident. (P. Harwood, 763-4522)

Engineering Requirements for Climate Data. At the Winter meeting of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) held in San Francisco January 19-22, 1986, engineers documented requirements for climatic data currently not readily available. These requirements include information on ground (soil) temperatures, diffuse solar radiation, and duration of extreme events. Of particular concern is the direction of episodes when dry bulb temperatures are colder than the ASHRAE-specified design values. During these episodes, heating systems are unable to maintain comfortable indoor temperatures. The engineers also require data and models for cities with significant heat islands. (F. Quinlan, FTS 672-0245)

Applied Climatology Conferences. NOAA's efforts in hosting a well balanced, far reaching conference, Climate and Water Management - A Critical Era, have been paying off. As lead NOAA agency, the National Climatic Data Center has secured some twelve groups as co-sponsors. Sponsored by NOAA and the American Meteorological Society, the conference will be co-sponsored by NESDIS and NWS units, USGS, USDA, Corps of Engineers, TVA, and four private associations and federations. In addition to the water management conference on August 4-14, 1986, a companion conference, The Human Consequences of 1985's Climate, will take place. The Eleventh Annual Meeting of the American Association of State Climatologists is also planned. (S. Doty, FTS 672-0475)

Frost Quakes. A consulting geologist recently requested hourly temperature data for Hanscomb AFB, Bedford, Mass., in his investigation of frost quakes. These quakes are caused by rapid freezing of the ground. In the northern states this freezing can cause a small earthquake that can be so violent that people think their house is exploding. One such frost quake created a fracture in the ground 1/4-inch wide and 100 to 200 feet long. (R. Heim, FTS 672-0682)

Ice Cream Weather. Carvel Corporation is studying its sales of ice cream products in the New York City area over the past three years. Detailed summaries were provided for Central Park for a full year's period to assist them in their project (R. Heim, FTS 672-0682)

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OFFICE OF OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH

Marine Life Yields Novel Substances -- Several new bioactive substances have been identified through research on marine invertebrates. These novel compounds, because of their unusual properties, may have key applications in pharmacology. Manoalide, a substance isolated from a Pacific sponge by California Sea Grant scientists several years ago, will be undergoing clinical tests this year to determine its effectiveness in treating psoriasis, skin cancer, and other epidermal diseases.

Among other compounds identified by California Sea Grant scientists is a new alkaloid structure group that appears to inhibit inflammation. Complex natural products that originate in plants and contain nitrogen, alkaloids include morphine, quinine, and strychnine that have been used throughout history. The new alkaloid class was isolated from a zoanthid anemone off the coast of India and is likely to have originated in the algae found in the cells of the zoanthid.

In a collaborative effort, New York (Cornell) and California (Scripps) Sea Grant scientists conducted research that has yielded several other natural marine products that may be important to the medical field. Unique substances called lamillarins were extracted from a prosobranch mollusk. Prosobranch specimens are rare; those used in this study were collected by hand during a night dive near Koror, Palau. According to preliminary tests, the lamillarins inhibit cell division. In addition, metabolites that exhibit antimicrobial activity and inhibit cell division were found in a Palauan sponge, and the first example of a new class of tricyclic diterpene was isolated from a brown alga in the Indian Ocean.

In further marine biotechnology research, four new metabolites, now called muricins, were observed in two species of subtropical octacorals. California Sea Grant scientists found a lack of biofouling on Muricea fruticosa while a similar coral, Muricea californica, became fouled. They looked for chemical dissimilarities in the coral to explain the difference in fouling. Each coral species contained identical triglycerides and fatty acids, but the Muricea fruticosa contained the four muricins, unusual steroids that inhibit the growth of diatoms. The muricins may explain the clean surfaces of Muricea fruticosa in its natural environment, and they will undergo further study to determine their pharmacological properties. (D. Attaway, FTS 443-5940)

# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

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