



▶ READ ABOUT NWS TALLAHASSEE'S LATEST OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.....1



▶ EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: MEET GENERAL FORECASTER KATIE NGUYEN .....2



▶ CLIMATE RECAP FOR FALL AND OUTLOOK FOR WINTER.....3



# Tallahassee *topics*

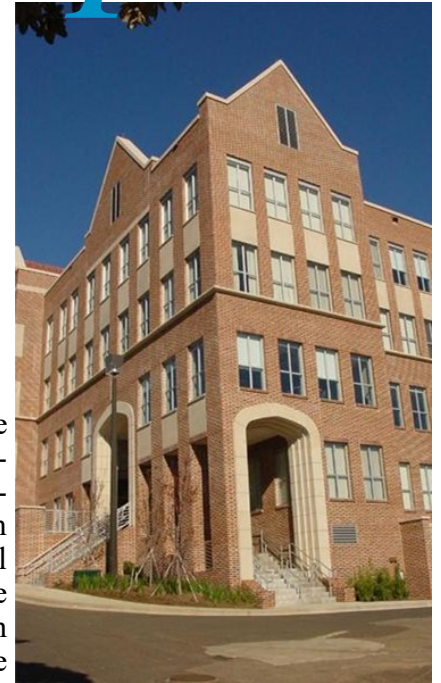
NEWS AND NOTES FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE.

*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.*

## Fall Outreach Activities

By Mark Wool

During the first week of October, the NWS Tallahassee office provided multiple weather briefings to our emergency management partners and local media concerning the expected impacts from Hurricane Nate. Warning Coordination Meteorologist Mark Wool facilitated the final two sessions of a community outreach event called, Public Libraries Advancing Community Engagement: Environmental Literacy through Climate Change Discussion (PLACE). The PLACE events were hosted by the Bay County Public Library on October 3rd and November 7th. On October 25th, Tim Barry spoke at the biannual North Florida Prescribed Fire Council Meeting. The following day, forecaster Andy Lahr and Observation Program Leader Ricardo Humphreys staffed a booth at the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection's Health & Safety Fair in Tallahassee. That same day, forecaster Katie Moore conducted SKYWARN Spotter training in Thomas County, GA as part of that county's StormReady recognition process. For the first time, the entire office provided event-specific Impact Decision Support Services (IDSS) for the National Peanut Festival in Dothan, AL. The festival ran from November 2nd through the 12th. On November 8th, Meteorologist in Charge Jane Hollingsworth attended the quarterly emergency management meeting for GEMA Area 6 in Camilla, GA. Mark and forecaster Justin Pullin supported Alabama's statewide Winter Weather Exercise from November 12-15th by providing test watches and advisories and participating in various briefings. On the 14th, Mark conducted an office tour for the Planning Section Team from the Federal Correctional Facility in Marianna, FL. On the 16th, Justin spoke at Lee County Middle School. On the 22nd, Mark reviewed the busy 2017 hurricane season in an interview with the News Service of Florida. The office provided IDSS for Albany's Marine Corps Logistics Base Career Day from December 1st through 6th. On December 4th, Mark, Electronic Systems Analyst Doug Sherrick, and Electronics Technician Craig Carpenter facilitated a tour of the KTLH doppler radar for representatives from the Instituto Meteorológico Nacional de Costa Rica, the Costa Rican equivalent of the NWS. Finally, on the 14th, Mark spoke at the quarterly emergency management meeting for FDEM Region 2 in Cross City, FL.





## Employee Spotlight: *Katie Nguyen*

*General Forecaster Since April 2016*

*By Mark Wool and Katie Nguyen*

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### **What sparked your interest in meteorology? Any phenomenon in particular?**

I grew up in Pensacola, FL during an active period for tropical cyclones. In 1995, my family and I stayed in our house for Hurricanes Erin and Opal. I remember being so excited when my parents let me go outside with them during the eye of the storm to survey the damage in our neighborhood. Later, in 2004, we stayed in the house again for Hurricane Ivan. Between the scary experience of having a tree falling on our roof in the middle of the night and witnessing the prolonged recovery period for the community after the storm had passed, my interest in weather and the impact it can have on people was fully cemented.

### **How did you get your start in the Weather Service?**

When I was a junior in undergrad at FSU, I applied for a summer mentorship student position at the office and was fortunate enough to have been selected. My mentor, Kelly Godsey, showed me the forecasting ropes and walked me through the life of a forecaster in the NWS- rotating shifts and all. In 2011, when I was in graduate school, there was an opportunity for a paid student position with the NWS and I jumped at the chance. I've been working with the Weather Service ever since!

### **What is your favorite part of your job?**

I love the variety of what we do at the NWS. Producing forecasts, making social media posts and graphics, developing briefing packets for our partners, and issuing warnings are all fun, but I also really enjoy mentoring future forecasters

through our volunteer program, doing outreach with the public, and working with our Emergency Management partners.

### **What's the most challenging part of your job?**

Forecast-wise, I'd say the most challenging part of the job is aviation forecasting. Producing a forecast with the amount of detail our aviation partners need for fog and low clouds can be tough (and humbling) work! Otherwise, that title would have to go to the rotating shift work. Rotating through daytime, evening, and overnight shifts makes it difficult to have any semblance of a routine, or a circadian rhythm for that matter.

### **Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?**

Five years from now, I'd like to be a lead forecaster working in the same city as my husband. Further down the road, I'd love to have the opportunity to be a Warning Coordination Meteorologist, but that would probably be closer to the 10 years part of that time range.

### **What do you like to do when you're off duty?**

As I alluded to in my previous answer, my husband and I have jobs in different cities at the moment, so I spend most of my days off out of town to get some quality time with him. We're Universal Orlando Annual Passholders who are slightly obsessed with Harry Potter, so if we're both off work for a few days, we usually end up visiting Harry Potter World. I also like to do yoga, go hiking, go to the beach, and spend time with my 2 kitten children, Nala and Minerva.

## Office Changes

*By Katie Nguyen*

On October 31, after nearly 25 years of working with the Weather Service, our Administrative Assistant Christine Duggan retired. Christine's retirement party was held at the office and attended by both current and former employees. While the office all pitched in to give Chris a going away gift, Chris had a parting gift of her own to leave us- a giant rubber band ball about 20 years in the making weighing in at over 6 lbs. Enjoy your retirement Chris! Thank you for all the work you've done for us over the years and the lifetime supply of rubber bands!





# Fall Summary

By *Tim Barry*

The climate for Tallahassee during the 3-month period of September through November 2017 saw temperatures that were warmer than normal. The average temperature was 71.2 degrees, 1.9 above normal. The highest temperature recorded this past autumn at the Tallahassee Regional Airport was 95 degrees on September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. The lowest temperature was 33 degrees on November 20<sup>th</sup>. There were a few record high and record low temperatures set in the months of September and October along with four consecutive days of record high minimum temperatures from October 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>. The minimum temperature of 77 degrees on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> also tied the all-time highest minimum temperature for the month of October. Tallahassee experiences two freezes during the fall season with the average date of the first occurrence on November 16<sup>th</sup>. However, there were no freezes this past fall.

Autumn is climatologically Tallahassee’s driest season and autumn 2017 was drier than average. We normally see 11.42” of rain from Sep – Nov but this fall the airport received 7.93”, 3.49” below normal. November was the driest month with only 0.53” of rain recorded at the airport and October was the wettest with 3.97”. The greatest amount of rain in a 24-hour period was 1.42’ on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. The peak wind gust was 55 mph from the northwest on September 11<sup>th</sup> as the center of Hurricane Irma passed to the east of Tallahassee.

## Management-Admin Team

Jane Hollingsworth, MIC  
Mark Wool\*, WCM  
Parks Camp, SOO  
Doug Sherrick, ESA  
ASA (Vacant)  
Toan Tran, ITO  
Kelly Godsey, Hydrologist

## Lead Forecasters

Jeff Fournier\*  
Don Van Dyke  
Donal Harrigan  
Jessica Fioux  
Blair Scholl

## Journeyman Forecasters

Tim Barry\*  
Katie Nguyen\*  
Justin Pullin  
Andy Lahr  
Vacant

## HMTs

Ricardo Humphreys, OPL

## Interns

Claudia (Jeanie) McDermott  
Vacant  
Vacant

## Electronic Technicians

Ron Eimiller  
Craig Carpenter

\*newsletter contributors

# Winter Outlook

By *Tim Barry*

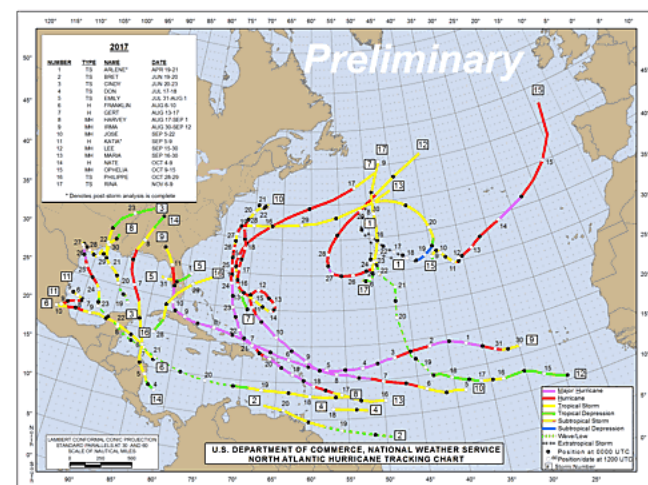
Looking ahead to winter (December through February), the current phase of the El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle across the eastern Pacific is a weak La Nina and it is expected to persist through the winter and possibly extend into the spring of 2018. The impact of La Nina on the southeast U.S. is for drier and warmer than normal conditions during the winter season. The latest Climate Prediction Center’s outlook for this winter calls for an enhanced chance of experiencing above normal temperatures and below normal rainfall for the Tallahassee area. The average temperature for Tallahassee during winter is 53.0 degrees and the average rainfall is 13.09”.

# Hurricane Season Summary

By *Mark Wool*

The 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season was considerably more active than normal in terms of the number of named storms, hurricanes, major hurricanes, and the Accumulated Cyclone Energy (ACE). There were 17 named storms, 10 of which became hurricanes. There were 6 major hurricanes rated category 3 or higher on the Saffir-Simpson scale. When you add in the one tropical depression that failed to strengthen to a storm, 18 tropical cyclones formed in the Atlantic basin this season. In terms of ACE, this was the 7th most active season on record in the basin, behind 1933, 2005, 1893, 1926, 1995, and 2004.

This year, three devastating major hurricanes made landfall (Harvey in Texas; Irma in the Caribbean and southeastern U.S.; and Maria in the Caribbean and Puerto Rico). Harvey was also the first major hurricane to hit the U.S. since Wilma struck Florida in October 2005. Additionally, four other storms hit the U.S., including Cindy in Texas, Emily and Phillipe in Florida, and Nate in Mississippi.



Locally, we saw impacts from both Hurricanes Irma and Nate. Both of these storms brought strong winds and heavy rain. Nate caused some coastal flooding on the Florida Panhandle coastline. Irma on the other hand, which made landfall to our southeast, brought blow out tides, or tides that were well below normal, to the coastline due to persistent strong offshore flow. Irma brought tropical-storm force winds to the entire forecast area while Nate’s impacts were primarily felt across our central time zone counties.

You can read a detailed summary of our local impacts from Hurricane Irma here: <http://www.weather.gov/tae/Irma2017>