



NORTHEASTERN STORM BUSTER Emergency Manager & Storm Spotter Magazine



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IRENE INUNDATES OUR REGION... WITH DESTRUCTION

Hugh Johnson

Meteorologist, NWS Albany

It's been more than a decade since our region was directly impacted by a Tropical Storm. Our area has often felt the indirect impact of tropical systems, even as recently as last year, with the remnants of Nicole bringing over half a foot of rain to portions of the region. However, our last direct hit from a Tropical Storm was by Floyd back in September 1999. That storm brought a quick end to a drought that summer, and produced moderate to major flooding to many of our watersheds, with 6 to 12 inches of rainfall.

While the tropical season had been active this year, it was only the ninth tropical system that was the first to strengthen into a hurricane. That storm was Irene, which had been a well-defined tropical wave that formed off Cape Verde on August 15th and headed west. It became the season's first hurricane, ironically only after it had made landfall a number of times, firstly in Puerto Rico on August 22nd. It then began to turn north, battering much of the Bahamas, and briefly spinning up to a major Category 3 hurricane as it moved perilously close to the east coast of Florida.

Irene had actually weakened a touch as it tracked toward North Carolina, making its first U.S. landfall at Cape Lookout on August 27th as a high-end Category 1 hurricane, with sustained winds of up to 85 mph. The storm then tracked northward around 15 mph, the eye becoming cloud-filled, and dry air beginning to entrain into its southwest side - hopeful signs that the storm might weaken.

However, even after tracking over land for 80 miles, Irene maintained Category 1 hurricane strength as it moved into the mouth of Chesapeake Bay very early on August 28th. It then turned slightly northeast just off the Delmarva Peninsula, making its second U.S. landfall

at Little Egg Inlet in southern New Jersey. It was the first hurricane to make direct landfall in New Jersey since 1903! As it churned up the Jersey coast, it finally weakened to a high-end tropical storm before making its third and final landfall on Coney Island, in Brooklyn, New York City, at 9:00 a.m.

It then accelerated and tracked more northeast through western Connecticut and the Connecticut River valley of western Massachusetts and Vermont, and then turned more east northeast across Southern New Hampshire into Maine. The storm passed about 60 miles to the east of Albany at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, the 29th. The barometric pressure fell to 28.89 inches, the lowest August barometer reading on record at Albany.

Heavy bands of rain showers well ahead of the main storm began falling in our southern zones early Saturday morning. Then the rain shield directly associated with Irene overspread the region Saturday evening from south to north. Rainfall rates quickly increased to between one half and one inch per hour by Sunday morning. In the immediate Capital District, the wind increased out of the north, reaching a maximum sustained speed of around 25 mph, and gusting over 50 mph, by mid-morning.

The gusty winds, coupled with fully-leaved trees and very wet ground, began producing a plethora of power outages during the morning, spreading from our southern areas northward, to include most of the region by midday. Unlike Floyd, the ground was well-saturated before the rains of Irene arrived, thanks (but no thanks) to several heavy rainfall events earlier in August.

As a result, flooding and flash flooding commenced quickly, and an historic event unfolded. The worst thing about the storm was the flooding. Total rainfall, most of which fell in under a 24-hour period, ranged from around 3 inches in extreme northern Herkimer County, to a phenomenally high 13.80 inches at Durham, in Greene County! Most areas received around 5 to 10 inches of rainfall. The swath of heaviest rainfall was generally across the higher terrain to the west of the Hudson Valley. The 4.69 inches that fell at Albany International Airport on August 28th smashed the old record for the date of 3.50 inches set in 1971, and produced the second-wettest day on record at Albany. The storm total rainfall was officially 4.83 inches.

Most of our rivers and streams rose rapidly to produce major or record flooding. Floods of record included: many points on the Schoharie Creek; Granville

on the Mettawee River; Cold Brook (Mt. Tremper) on the Esopus Creek; Rosendale on the Rondout Creek; Canajoharie on the Canajoharie Creek; Poughkeepsie on the Hudson River; Rockinhgham on the Williams River; Bennington on the Walloomsac River, and; Saxtons on the Saxtons River.

Many towns in the vicinity of the watersheds were damaged or destroyed, and millions of dollars in crops were lost. Dozens of roads were washed out, especially in the state of Vermont, where whole towns were physically cut off from the surrounding areas. Several people were swept away by the torrents of water. Monday dawned a beautiful day with lots of sunshine, lowered humidity, and a sense that the atmosphere had finally calmed down. However, the sunshine also revealed the unprecedented damage brought on by Irene. It took over a week for all 300,000 residences and businesses who had lost power to have it restored. It will take years for many of the towns to rebuild.□

SEPTEMBER EF1 TORNADO STRIKES EAST CENTRAL NEW YORK

*Thomas A. Wasula
Meteorologist, NWS Albany*

The National Weather Service at Albany conducted a damage survey on September 5, 2011, confirming an EF1 tornado that occurred the day before this Labor Day, in eastern Montgomery and northern Schenectady Counties between 5:20 p.m. and 5:35 p.m. The tornado touched down about two miles southwest of Cranesville, in Montgomery County, near the town of Florida, and moved northeast into West Glenville, in western Schenectady County, before dissipating. The damage was most widespread in the town of Cranesville, with numerous hardwood and softwood trees snapped and uprooted, windows broken on some homes, and roofs partially damaged. Many outdoor sheds were destroyed. Amsterdam Town Supervisor Thomas DiMezza gave the NWS survey team an extensive tour of the damage in Cranesville. The damage swath of the tornado was about a half mile wide and 7 miles long. There were no injuries or fatalities from the tornado.



Figure 1: This home along Riverview Rd. in Cranesville had windows blown out, shutters damaged, blinds mangled and in disarray, and some roof damage, from the EF1 tornado. (NWS at Albany Photograph).



Figure 3: Trees and power poles snapped and in different directions along Riverview Rd. in Cranesville from the EF1 tornado. Several dozen utility crews were brought in to help restore power quickly to the community. (NWS at Albany Photograph).



Figure 2: A large tree uprooted by the tornado near Cranes Hollow Rd. (NWS at Albany Photograph).

Based on examination of the damage, the estimated maximum wind speeds were 110 mph. This classifies the tornado as a high-end EF1. The operational Enhanced Fujita Scale is a set of wind estimates based on the degree of damage. The tornado damage scale (formerly known as the Fujita Scale) was updated February 1, 2007 by a team of meteorologists and engineers. The EF scale itself runs from 0 to 5, and has estimated 3-second wind gust ranges expressed in miles per hour. An EF0 has estimated 3-second wind gusts of 65-85 mph, and an EF1 has gusts of 86-110 mph. An EF2 would have gusts of 111-135 mph. The estimates of the damaging gusts are based on the subjective judgment by the survey team of 8 levels of damage to 28 structural and vegetation indicators. More information on the EF scale and the transition from the Fujita Scale can be found at the following website: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/satellite/satelliteseye/educational/fujita.html>.

This was the first September tornado in the east central New York portion of the Albany Forecast Area since 2003. On September 28, 2003, an F1 tornado caused \$10,000 in damage in Fishkill, Dutchess County. Last year, an EF1 tornado struck Auriesville, in Montgomery County, with multiple touchdowns. Montgomery County has had seven tornadoes since January 1950. This was only the third tornado to strike Schenectady County since then, and was the first in 40 years, the previous being an F0 on August 21, 1971!


**FALL SKYWARN SPOTTER
TRAINING SESSIONS...
TO BE ANNOUNCED SOON!**

Check for them at:
<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/er/aly>

The other Schenectady County tornado occurred on June 24, 1960, a significant F3 tornado that touched down just east of the City of Schenectady, and moved northeast nearly 11 miles into southeastern Saratoga County, before ending south of Round Lake. There was approximately \$25 million worth of damage, and nine injuries, associated with this long-tracked tornado.

The September 4th tornado was the third one to have occurred in the NWS Albany Forecast Area this year. Typically, the forecast area that covers east central New York and western New England averages 2-3 tornadoes a year, according to the 1950-2010 tornado climatology. The other two tornadoes this warm season occurred on April 28th and June 9th. The April tornado was classified as an EF1, striking portions of southern Herkimer County, including Frankfort Center. Winds were estimated to be as high as 100 mph, with siding stripped off some homes, and structural damage to roofs. It was noted from the damage survey that a garage was moved off its foundation. The tornado occurred early in the morning at shortly after 4:00 a.m. local time. Another brief EF1 tornado touchdown occurred near Woodbury, Connecticut. The NWS survey team noted mostly straight-line wind damage from this event. However, eyewitness video and photos show a funnel cloud having moved over the damage area. The brief touchdown occurred at 140 Great Hollow Road, in southern Litchfield County. The vast majority of the damage was from a microburst that snapped or uprooted numerous hardwood trees. The Cranesville-Glenville tornado had both the widest damage path width and longest path length compared to the other two tornadoes. There were no injuries or fatalities from any of this year's three tornadoes in NWS Albany's Forecast Area.□

***SUMMER OF 2011 TO BE REMEMBERED
FOR BOTH HEAT AND LOTS OF RAIN***

*Evan. L. Heller
Climatologist, NWS Albany*

Albany has just experienced one of its summers of record. But this wouldn't have been the case had it not been for just one day in August. As Hurricane Irene made its way from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina up the east coast, rain overspread eastern New York and

western New England. The track of the center of the storm was up through extreme southeast New York, extreme northwest Connecticut, and western Massachusetts, into southern Vermont. Rain began late on Saturday, the 27th, but brought only 0.14" to Albany International Airport for the calendar day. It was the 4.69" Irene dumped on the 28th when she made landfall the next morning that placed Albany in the record books for daily, monthly and seasonal rainfall. In fact, four records were established that very day (Table 3c), as well as a seasonal record. First off, the 4.69" on the 28th blew away the previous record for the date of 3.50" from 1971, impressive in its own right. That 1971 record had been the result of the track of Tropical Storm Doria, which had taken about a week after its birth to reach the northeastern U.S. The track was eerily similar, if not nearly identical, to that of Irene, skirting the northern shores of the Caribbean, churning northward and crossing extreme eastern North Carolina, and tracking up through the New York City area on up into New Hampshire and Maine.

Prior to the 4.83" rainfall of the 27th and 28th, the monthly total was only up to 5.58". Had Irene not occurred, and Albany had remained dry for the balance of the month, August of 2011 would have wound up as only the 165th-wettest month in Albany. However, by the close of the month it was in firm at number 4! The second-greatest daily rainfall of the season helped place August way up high in the monthly record books. The 2.67" of rainfall that fell on the 15th broke the previous record for the date of 1.95", established in 2004. This previous record rainfall was the result of a nearby frontal zone interacting with the remnants of Hurricane Charley as it turned out toward eastern Long Island and Cape Cod. Finally, at number two, August 2011 is the wettest August in Albany since 1871. The two precipitation record dates also wound up being two of the Top 200 precipitation dates in Albany's history. Most notably, the 4.69" total is the second-wettest date on record in Albany, surpassed only by the 5.60" produced by the remnants of Hurricane Floyd on September 16, 1999. One more, the 2.00" total of June 11th, comes in in a 2-way tie at #102. Until August, it was tied at #100.

In comparison, June and July were far less impressive for rainfall. In fact, just two days in June accounted for over three-quarters of the total rainfall for the entire month. One of these days, the 22nd, received a dump of 1.52", breaking a 110-year-old record (Table

3a). The other amount, the 2.00" on the 11th, fell short of a daily record. And July's 3.04" total was actually slightly below normal for the month.

But June, and even more so, July, will be remembered for the heat. A total of eight days, six of them in July, reached high temperatures in the 90s (Table 2). Most notable was July 21st, when the mercury reached 99 degrees (Table 1). This was the first time since July 14, 1995 that the temperature got this high in Albany. In fact, this 99 degree reading persisted for about an hour in the late afternoon, and it is believed that we missed hitting 100 degrees by only a whisper. The average annual number of 90+ degree days in Albany is about 10. Even more impressive is the fact that at a mean temperature of 87.5°, July 21st is the hottest day recorded in Albany in 75 years! (Table 3b). The highest temperature recorded at any time during August was only 89°. This occurred on the 1st, and it can be considered the last day of our spell of extreme heat. There was actually only one heat wave this season. The four days spanning from July 20th to the 23rd were marked by daily high temperatures of 90 degrees or more. A minimum of three consecutive days at this threshold is required to qualify as a heat wave. The daily temperature records included one maximum tied in June (table 3a), and both a high minimum and high mean broken on July 21st (Table 3b).

Hurricane Irene did produce the strongest wind gust of the summer, 54 mph from the north (Table 4c). Needless to say, it was the windiest day, overall, with an average speed of 22.0 mph. It was an active weather season on the convective 'front', as well. Albany recorded 19 thunderstorm days during the summer (Tables 4a-c), just a bit higher than the 15 days that is normal.

Not only was August 2011 Albany's fourth-wettest August, June through August of 2011 wound up being its fourth-wettest summer, with a total of 18.12", falling just short of number 3 summer 2009's 18.51" total. While the summer of 2011 was very notably wet, not even July managed to break into any July Top 10 temperature charts. The only non-daily temperature record of note is the fact that July 2011 comes in tied at #28 on the 200 Hottest Months chart (Table 3b). All but five of the higher positions are also occupied by July months.

STATS

	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEASON
Avg. High/Dep. From Norm.	77.8°/+0.3°	85.8°/+3.6°	80.5°/+0.7°	81.4°/+1.6°
Avg. Low/Dep. From Norm.	58.0°/+3.0°	64.0°/+4.0°	61.1°/+2.8°	61.0°/+3.2°
Mean/ Dep. From Norm.	67.9°/+1.6°	74.9°/+3.8°	70.8°/+1.8°	71.2°/+2.4°
High Daily Mean/date	78.0°/1 st & 8 th	87.5°/21 st	78.5°/7 th	
Low Daily Mean/date	60.5°/5 th	66.5°/1 st	63.0°/29 th	
Highest reading/date	93°/1 st & 8 th	99°/21 st	89°/1 st	
Lowest reading/date	43°/4 th	54°/1 st	50°/30 th	
Lowest Max reading/date	66°/11 th	76°/25 th	68°/15 th	
Highest Min reading/date	66°/9 th , 10 th & 23 rd	76°/21 st	70°/6 th	
Ttl. Precip./Dep. Fm. Norm.	4.67"/+0.93"	3.04"/-0.46"	10.41"/+6.73"	18.12"/+7.20"
Ttl. Snowfall/Dep. Fm. Norm.	0"/-	0"/-	0"/-	0"/-
Maximum Precip./date	2.00"/11 th	0.90"/26 th	4.69"/28 th	
Maximum Snowfall/date	0"/-	0"/-	0"/-	

Table 1

NORMALS, OBSERVED DAYS & DATES

	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEASON
NORMALS				
High	77.5°	82.2°	79.7°	79.8°
Low	55.0°	60.0°	58.3°	57.8°
Mean	66.3°	71.1°	69.0°	68.8°
Precip	3.74"	3.50"	3.68"	10.92"
Snow	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"	0.0"
OBS. TEMP. DAYS				
High 90° or above	2	6	0	8/92
Low 70° or above	0	5	1	6/92
High 32° or below	0	0	0	0/92
Low 32° or below	0	0	0	0/92
Low 0° or below	0	0	0	0/92
OBS. PRECIP. DAYS				
Days T+	12	11	17	40/92/43%
Days 0.01+	12	9	14	35/92/38%
Days 0.10+	7	7	10	24/92/26%
Days 0.25+	3	4	6	13/92/14%
Days 0.50+	2	3	5	10/92/11%
Days 1"+	2	0	2	4/92/4%
PRECIP. & SNOW DATES				
1.00"+ value/date	2.00"/11 th	-	2.67"/15 th	
1.00"+ value/date	1.52"/22 nd	-	4.69"/28 th	

Table 2

RECORDS

ELEMENT	JUNE
Maximum Temperature/Date Previous Record/Year	93° (tie)/8 th 93°/1984
Precipitation/Date Previous Record/Year	1.52"/22 nd 1.08"/1901
Top 200 All-Time Wettest Dates Value/Date/Rank/Remarks	2.00"/11 th /#100 Tied with 3/13/77

Table 3a

ELEMENT	JULY
High Minimum Temperature/Date Previous Record/Year	76°/21 st 74°/1926
High Mean Temperature/Date Previous Record/Year	87.5°/21 st 86.0°/1926
Top 200 All-Time Hottest Months Value/Rank/Remarks	74.9° (tie)/#28 Tied with 2010
Heat Wave (3 or more consecutive days with high temp. of 90°+)	20 th thru 23 rd 4-day stretch
Notable Hot Day (Mean Temperature 84.5°+)	87.5°/21 st Hottest since 7/9/36
95+ Degree Date	99°/21 st -
95+ Degree Date	95°/22 nd -

Table 3b

FALL 2011 SKYWARN SPOTTER TRAINING SESSIONS

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**JACK EVANS HONORED
AS 2010 HOLM AWARD WINNER**

*Aula Evans DeWitt
Guest Contributor*

*Timothy E. Scrom
Cooperative Program Manager, NWS Albany*

ELEMENT	AUGUST	
Precipitation/Date Previous Record/Year	2.67"/15 th	1.95"/2004
Precipitation/Date Previous Record/Year	4.69"/28 th	3.50"/1971
Top 10 Wettest Augusts Value/Rank/Remarks	10.41"/#2	-
Top 200 All-Time Wettest Months Value/Rank/Remarks	10.41/#4	-
Top 200 All-Time Wettest Dates Value/Date/Rank/Remarks	2.67"/15 th /#30	Prior to 8/28 record.
Top 200 All-Time Wettest Dates Value/Date/Rank/Remarks	4.69"/28 th /#2	-

Table 3c

ELEMENT	SUMMER	
Top 10 Wettest Summers Value/Rank/Remarks	18.12/#4	-

Table 3d

MISCELLANEOUS

JUNE

Avg. wind speed/Dep. Fm. Norm.	5.7 mph/-1.9 mph
Peak wind/direction/date	48 mph/WNW/8 th
Windiest day avg. value/date	14.5 mph/2 nd
Calmmest day avg. value/date	0.6 mph/27 th
# Clear days	1
# Partly Cloudy days	21
# Cloudy days	8
Dense fog dates (code 2)	22 nd & 29 th
Thunder dates (code 3)	1 st , 8 th , 9 th , 17 th , 22 nd , 25 th & 28 th
Sleet dates (code 4)	-
Hail dates (code 5)	-
Freezing rain dates (code 6)	-

Table 4a

JULY

Avg. wind speed/Dep. Fm Norm.	5.5 mph/-1.5 mph
Peak wind/direction/date	41 mph/NW/6 th & NNW/13 th
Windiest day avg. value/date	11.3 mph/12 th
Calmmest day avg. value/date	1.2 mph/15 th
# Clear days	3
# Partly Cloudy days	24
# Cloudy days	4
Dense fog dates (code 2)	-
Thunder dates (code 3)	3 rd , 6 th , 8 th , 18 th , 23 rd , 25 th & 26 th
Sleet dates (code 4)	-
Hail dates (code 5)	-
Freezing rain dates (code 6)	-

Table 4b

AUGUST

Avg. wind speed/Dep. Fm Norm.	5.4 mph/-0.9 mph
Peak wind/direction/date	54 mph/N/28 th
Windiest day avg. value/date	22.0 mph/28 th
Calmmest day avg. value/date	1.4 mph/4 th & 20 th
# Clear days	4
# Partly Cloudy days	21
# Cloudy days	6
Dense fog dates (code 2)	20 th
Thunder dates (code 3)	9 th , 18 th , 19 th , 21 st & 28 th
Sleet dates (code 4)	-
Hail dates (code 5)	-
Freezing rain dates (code 6)	-

Table 4c

On Friday July 22, 2011, John "Jack" Evans, a long-time Weather Observer and Bennington County resident, received the prestigious John Campanius Holm Award, at a gathering at Bailey Hall in East Arlington, Vermont. This award recognizes outstanding accomplishments in the field of meteorological observations by Cooperative Weather Observers, volunteers all. It is named after a Lutheran minister, the first person known to have taken systematic weather observations in the American Colonies. Reverend Holm made weather observations, without the aid of instruments, in 1644 and 1645, near the present site of Wilmington, Delaware. His son later had these observations published. From hundreds of nominations each year, no more than twenty-five of these awards are presented annually to the volunteer observers.

Jack's interest in meteorology began in the 1940's while he tackled the Boy Scout requirements to earn a badge in weather. About forty years later, this interest would become a defining passion when Jack became a member of the Capital District Weather Net, a volunteer group of ham radio operators who meet at 6 o'clock every morning via radio to report local weather conditions. These reports are submitted to the National Weather Service, helping catalogue temperature, visibility, precipitation amount and type, and other similar data, at specific locations. The information is then used in developing weather predictions for those same areas. Jack's is the only Vermont station reporting into this particular net.

In the 1990s, when the National Weather Service asked to place state-of-the-art weather monitoring equipment on the Evans' property, there was no hesitation in agreeing, and the installation was soon scheduled, with newer equipment arriving through the years as technology advanced. Between the verbal reports given every morning on the net, and the every-six-second data blast to the geo-synchronous satellite, information regarding the weather in Sunderland flows

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daily without fail.

Jack has spent untold hours: meticulously recording observational data; driving daily to various rivers to obtain the current depth and flow information from those stations; teaching Boy Scouts, his own children and grandchildren, and; participating in other events as requested. As the technology has evolved, his ham radio station now also includes a computer and phone, installed to help him continue to meet reporting requirements.

So, on July 22, the National Weather Service honored Jack for his 21 years of service. Six members of the Albany Weather Service Office staff trekked to East Arlington, Vermont, including: Tim Scrom - Cooperative Program Manager; Ray O'Keefe - Meteorologist In Charge; John Quinlan - Senior Meteorologist, and; Thomas Wasula - General Forecaster. All spoke while presenting Jack with a large, framed certificate honoring his 21 years of volunteer service, along with: congratulatory letters from U.S. Representative Bernie Sanders and U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy; a baseball cap; a water bottle, and; two coffee mugs. Also honored was Jack's wife, Aula Evans, for her quiet, ongoing support behind the scenes. The other Albany Office representatives in attendance were Britt Westergard - Service Hydrologist, and Brian Frugis - Meteorologist Intern.

During the speeches by the Weather Service personnel, friends and family learned that Jack's reports on three tornadoes that hit the Bennington area led to more accurate assessments of the tornadoes themselves, and their effect on the area. The importance of maintaining long-term observations at the same reporting station were outlined, and personal memories of events related to Jack's work were shared, before a buffet luncheon was served.

Tomorrow it may rain or snow, or the temperatures may reach well into the 70s with low humidity. Whatever it does, one thing is pretty certain...Jack will be stationed at his ham radio at 6 a.m., with his weather observations meticulously recorded in the appropriate log book, ready to be reported in as his turn comes on the Capital District Weather Net. □

A NEW FORM OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE WEATHER SERVICE AT ALBANY

*Brian J. Frugis
Meteorologist, NWS Albany*

The recent tropical systems, flooding and severe storms affecting Albany's County Warning Area have all demonstrated the need for increased communication between the National Weather Service at Albany and emergency managers, media and the public. Thankfully, a new form of communication has been implemented between our office and our partners.

Facebook has been making headlines for the past several years, and it's easy to see why. Developed in 2004 by a Harvard college student, Facebook was originally designed for college students to be able to share photos and information with one another. With its success and popularity, it was expanded to include the general public. Facebook allows users to create their own pages with photos and information about themselves. People can request and approve others as their friends, and allow these people to see this information, and, as well, to post messages and photos to their page. Facebook eventually permitted organizations and businesses to get in on the act of creating pages for sharing information with their users.

On a national level, the National Weather Service decided to try out Facebook experimentally, to see if it could be a successful way of communicating with our users. National Weather Service offices are creating pages to help spread information about the weather and our services. Our local office here at Albany launched a Facebook page in early August 2011, just in time for all the flooding that came later in the month. You don't need your own Facebook page to view the site, but if you'd like to send us comments, you'll need to "like" our page. You can find our page at <http://www.facebook.com/US.NationalWeatherService.Albany.gov>.

We encourage everyone across our County Warning Area who has their own Facebook account to "like" our page. This will allow any content that we post to be included on your own Facebook's "News Feed." Our page has become a valuable resource, both for our users and our operations. At the height of both Hurricane Irene and the remnants of Lee, we received numerous real-time photos and rainfall reports from our

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users. This helped us in: making decisions about expanding flood warnings; determining which areas received the heaviest rainfall, and; assessing how good of a job our radar was doing in estimating rainfall in remote areas. Users can even post links to a video, like the video we received showing the September 4th tornado in the Mohawk Valley. In addition, we were able to post information directing people to our products, such as the Public Information Statement containing rainfall totals. We also were able to post our own photos containing information about the forecast, such as expected rainfall and wind gusts. While we may post information about warnings from time to time, we urge people to obtain their warning information from our main website (<http://www.weather.gov/albany>), or from NOAA Weather Radio, as this time-sensitive information may not be posted on our Facebook page.

We will also be posting information about National Weather Service outreach and other upcoming events. A link to our list of Fall SKYWARN training sessions will soon be posted to our page. In addition, when we have our Winter Weather Awareness Week in late October, we will post daily links regarding this important information.

There are other forms of communication that may be implemented later this year. We hope to try out a program called NWSChat later this fall. It allows emergency managers and media to directly communicate with our office in real-time via an instant messaging service. This will help answer questions about products, and help clear up any confusion that may arise during the forecast process.

As always, you may contact us via telephone, or email (alb.stormreport@noaa.gov), 24 hours a day. Any information about ongoing weather, especially when watches or warnings are in effect, is always appreciated.□



From the Editor's Desk

It's probably safe to say that the summer of 2011 won't soon be forgotten. Tornadoes, the remnants of both a Hurricane, and then a Tropical Storm in early

September, a very hot July with a heat wave, and not to mention all the record flooding and flash flooding that resulted from all the rain. Three of this season's articles deal with some of these events. Probably the most notable single event was Hurricane Irene, and thus we open with an article covering that event. Next up, we have an article on one of the tornadoes that hit our area. Then, our climate report takes a look at some of the record values of the season. Also included in this edition is a tribute to one of our long-standing Cooperative Observers, and we round out the Features section with an introduction to our new Facebook page. As I write this, the Autumnal Equinox is less than 24 hours away, and we've already had a taste of the cool season. Enjoy the articles...and the cooler weather.□

WCM Words

Steve DiRienzo

Warning Coordination Meteorologist, NWS Albany

The devastation brought on by the heavy rain and high winds of Hurricane Irene will be forever etched in our minds. This was an epic event that brought death, destruction and great sadness to our community.

Here at the National Weather Service, we have begun the process of assessing our performance: Assessing the quality of our forecasts, assessing our understanding of the implications and impacts of those forecasts, and assessing our ability to communicate those impacts to both emergency management officials and the general public.

We have also begun the scientific process of studying the storm: Studying why it made so much rain in so little time, studying why the winds caused damage in one location and not another, and learning where we can make improvements to computer model physics and forecast techniques so we can better forecast such a storm and its impacts in the future.

Here at the National Weather Service, we strive to be the source of unbiased, reliable and consistent weather information. We're here to answer your weather and water questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you have concerns, please call us. If you have comments on StormBuster, or any of the operations of the National Weather Service, please let me know at Stephen.Dirienzo@noaa.gov.□