

2013 WeatherFest Report
93rd Annual AMS Meeting, Austin, Texas
Submitted by Teresa Eastburn, UCAR/NCAR
May 30, 2013

WeatherFest 2013

The WeatherFest Committee at the 93rd Annual AMS Meeting in Austin, Texas consisted of the following individuals in 2013:

Ron Grid (NOAA), co-chair
Teresa Eastburn (NCAR), co-chair
Claudia Gorski (AMS)
Jenn Rosen (AMS)
Chris Samsury, 1st year committee member, (Weather Channel)
Steven Graham, (NASA)
Brenton MacAloney, (NOAA)
Kirsten Gurkpa, (NOAA) – who was replaced in Austin by Veronica Holtz and
Stephanie Bealle. (Local AMS Chapter) – On-site Volunteer Coordinators
Hector Ibarra, Scouting 101 event for Boy Scouts

Others involved in WeatherFest programming:

Mike Passow, Teacher Workshop programming
Jill Hasling, Teacher Workshop sponsorship
Morgan Yarker, Scholarship Selection Committee

There were 48 exhibitors at WeatherFest 2013 (42 were signed up by 11/15 and 47 by 12/15). Exhibitors were less than the ideal “60”, but somewhat expected due to tight budgets and reductions at numerous AMS member agencies and organizations. In fact, long-time co-chair Ron Gird and two other committee members, Brenton MacAloney and Kirsten Gurkpa were unable to attend. Nevertheless, the three of them contributed a great deal to the overall planning during the year of preparation. In all, it is estimated by AMS and volunteers that the event drew 2000 from the Austin community.

Committee member Chris Samsury made it a priority to observe traffic and what was well received at the event. Our minutes of his observations reflect the following:

1. Engagement by presenters made a world of difference. It’s not what booth’s did but how exhibitors engaged their audience;
2. Booths that had newer technology were very impressive and engaging. Technology should be encouraged;
3. Perhaps in the future focus awarding WeatherFest scholarships on those that utilize more technology;
4. DOW was great draw and added a “Wow” factor;
5. Broadcast meteorologists presence will be important in Atlanta as it was in Austin. They add a credibility factor;

6. WeatherFest Passport was a terrific idea and gave kids reason to go around to other booths on a mission;
7. Pencils for Passports for exhibitors should be distributed for booths needing them (pencils for public were provided).

As noted in Chris' comments, a Passport was designed for use in 2013 and future WeatherFest events. 1500 of the two-sided card were printed, which was sponsored by NCAR. An image of the Passport is included at the end of the report. When children participated in the passport program, they received diffraction glasses upon their departure from the event, also provided by NCAR.

Likewise, an evaluation component was added to the event with those in attendance filling out surveys aimed at capturing overall event satisfaction and any improvements that they would suggest. A compilation of the responses is attached. Of particular interest was the number of attendees who heard about the event, not via television as expected, but through local Austin websites listing current public events and happenings. Consequently, the Committee will maximize similar marketing vehicles for the 94th Annual Meeting's WeatherFest event in order to maximize attendance.

Lastly among the new additions in 2013, a video was produced and viewable on the AMS WeatherFest page and on YouTube and Vimeo that captured the various activities and atmosphere of the event. T. Eastburn produced the 2012 event with the assistance of the additional event photographers, Bob Henson (NCAR) and Jane Whitcomb (NOAA). Teri has agreed to continue to provide it to AMS for the website as well as upload it to YouTube and other appropriate sites.

Sponsorships/Funding

WeatherFest

Unfortunately, \$15,000 sponsorship was lost from NOAA for WeatherFest 2013 due to The national budget situation and sequestration concerns. Sponsorship remained, however, from Lockheed Martin (\$2000 I believe) and Eileen Shea (\$1200 I believe). Additional sponsorship occurred through door prize donations (many various), passports, surveys, and raffle tickets (NCAR). Additional AMS secured 75 drops for electric from the Convention Center.

Additionally, AMS conveys to the Committee the number of scholarships available for teachers to attend WeatherFest from within the state and nationally. This year 12 national scholarships were awarded, 7 chosen and 5 for educators chosen to assist with the Teachers Workshop on Tuesday or Wednesday at the Marriott Courtyard. Recipients included:

Lisa Bastiaans*
Frances Hess

Dominic Cammarota*
William Huskin

Dave Chapman
Ann Kelly (replaced Rita Kaplan)

Hector Ibarra
Mike Passow*

John Moore*
Kitchka Petrova

Kathleen Murphy*
Craig Wolter

*Educators who were selected for scholarships but did not apply through WeatherFest channels. Instead, they were funded so as to assist with the Teacher Workshop.

This was the first year where applicants had to be turned away, with 14 applying for 7 national scholarship awardees. Applications for local scholarships were minimal. This was exacerbated by the fact that teachers had just returned to school following winter break in Austin.

In addition to WeatherFest, Weather 101 took place directly before it from 10 to 11:45am for Boy Scouts and drew well known broadcast meteorologists and other AMS notables. Hector Ibarra led the effort. In 2014, it has been suggested that the event be a simple "thank you" for all students that take part in the AMS Local Community Event currently being lead by Marshall Sheperd and others verses a programmed event, although the agenda and focus has yet to be decided.

Changes for 2014

A new WeatherFest committee structure was approved and adopted by AMS leadership and the Human Resource and Education commissioner, Dave Smith, in 2013. Basically, it provides for 3 co-chairs (past, present, and incoming) and up to six committee members (2 per year for a 3-year term). At this time, the Teacher Workshop also falls under the WeatherFest Committee, which may be appropriate with a three-person leadership structure. That is something to think about in 2014/2015. Viviane Silva with NOAA's Climate.gov joined the committee as co-chair (incoming) in 2013. Teri Eastburn is currently serving as the present co-chair. Ron Gird will rotate off after WeatherFest 2014 in Atlanta, and a new incoming co-chair will be selected.

The WeatherFest Committee discussed a way of conducting basic assessments of the exhibit booths funded through AMS. For example, rating on a 1-3 scale to determine if the booth is worth funding should an applicant reapply in future years. Evaluation factors could include quality of activity, age appropriateness, takeaways, etc. This will assist the selection committee in making sponsorship selections. The current committee is pondering this currently.

In the past, the National Weather Service has provided about 75% of the WeatherFest volunteers. Due to budget issues, it was substantially less in 2013. Stephanie Bealle and Veronica Holtz from the local AMS Chapter did an excellent job recruiting volunteers despite these changes. They had tough shoes to fill with Kirsten Gurka unable to attend. (The ideal number of volunteers is about 40 total.) Jenn Rosen with AMS ensured all the details were carried out without a hitch as she does with such efficiency from year to year. The event would not take place without her working her magic!

TEACHER WORKSHOPS: TUESDAY (K-8); WEDNESDAY AMS SHORT COURSE (HS)

Tuesday's Teacher Workshop for elementary and middle-school teachers received more attention as in past years, but probably to a degree that is unrealistic to replicate with a committee of volunteers. Jill Hasling went above and beyond to secure a great deal of support and sponsorship and Mike Passow pulled together an amazing collection of presenters. Jill also arranged for a bus for teachers to attend Kerry Emanuel's talk at the University of Texas, however, after a long day, few of the educators joined in the event.

52 people participated in some capacity on Tuesday. The breakdown is as follows:

- 21 attendees; 12 no shows (33 registered in all; 3 of the 21 received scholarship)
- 52 people in all participated in some capacity:
 - 27 guests, speakers, and organizers (including 9 scholarship recipients)
 - 4 AMS staff

Teacher Workshop Sponsorship

Jill Hasling did an exceptional job of securing funding for the teacher workshop. Exact figures will need to be obtained from Stephanie Armstrong with AMS but my notes and WeatherFest minutes show that \$9700 was raised for sponsorships:

Sponsorships included:

- \$3600 for workshop registration, \$200 per teacher (18 is ideal)
- Ball Aerospace sponsor the Wednesday's lunch during the AMS Short Course
- Hotel rooms sponsored at Courtyard: 1 room 4 nights; Hilton, 3 rooms; 8 room nights total
- Tuesday's Teacher luncheon sponsored by Earth Networks: \$1500 (50-60)
- I also believe WeatherBug provided some funding, although I do not have the specifics.

Teacher Scholarships for WeatherFest and Teacher Workshop (optional for recipients to attend the Teacher Workshop)

The Selection committee consisted of Teri Eastburn, Ron Gird, Chris Samsury, Morgan Yarker. The Committee selected seven people for national scholarships to exhibit at WeatherFest. Five additional scholarships went directly to those assisting with the teacher workshops. Only a very few applied for one of the twelve local scholarships offered, most likely because of the timing of the workshop coinciding with a return to school following Winter Break.

All in all, the workshop worked but it lacked a cohesive, well thought out and integrated agenda. Teacher assessments gave it good reviews, however, improvements can be made that will allow the workshop to be less work, more effective, and more sustainable from year to year. Generally speaking, the workshop needs to be more active, include less PowerPoint presentations, and present

more classroom ready activities than content alone. Also, it is important to remember that “more” is not always better, especially in professional development offerings. I’m confident 2014’s workshop will build upon the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of 2013’s workshop.

Changes for 2014

- Presenters will apply to present and be self funded. A selection committee will determine the agenda for the workshop, soliciting involvement of known experts if necessary in any given year. The emphasis will be on materials that are presented by the creator whenever possible and that exemplify exceptional content, standards aligned, and that will likely appeal to our audience’s needs.
- Scholarship awards will be solely for WeatherFest educator exhibitors as was originally intended and as preferred by AMS. Those securing scholarships, however, can choose to enroll in the Teacher Workshop if they would like to attend. They can also be encouraged to participate in the share-a-thon during the workshop. Also, anyone can submit to present.
- Sponsorship will be sought for a continental breakfast and lunch, but that is all in regard to the Teacher Workshop.
- The workshop will take place on the Saturday before AMS, which is preferred by AMS. It may change to meet the best day to secure an ideally free location at a hotel or a convention center.
- Both the application to enroll in the Teacher Workshop and the application to present will be available on the AMS website, ideally in a “form” format beginning in early summer each year, or sooner.

Wednesday, AMS Short Course for High School Teachers

This was a workshop under the leadership of AMS so would be inappropriate to include it in this report. However, I do want to say that Lisa Bastiaans did a terrific job as a primary presenter for AMS. Kuddos to Jim Brey!

To close, I would like to express my thanks to Keith Seitter and all of AMS; Dave Smith, current chair of the Education and Human Resource Committee; Claudia Gorski and Jenn Rosen, who have been exceptional in supporting every effort of the WeatherFest Committee and in providing guidance as needed; and Jim Brey. My fellow colleagues and committee members involved in WeatherFest and the Teacher Workshop have been truly supportive and insightful, especially Ron Gird, outgoing co-chair. I am excited to be working with Viviane Silvia with NOAA’s Climate.gov, especially in creating a sustainable structure for an exemplary Teachers’ Workshop. I look forward to working with the 2013/2014 Committee (member list follows), the local committee, and Marshall Sheperd, current AMS President, to make the 94th Annual Meeting one of organization’s finest with the help of my colleagues.

WEATHERFEST COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP
(Updated 13 March 2013)

National Members

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Term: 2014

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Term: 2015

Local Committee

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AMS Staff

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2013 AMS WeatherFest Public Survey

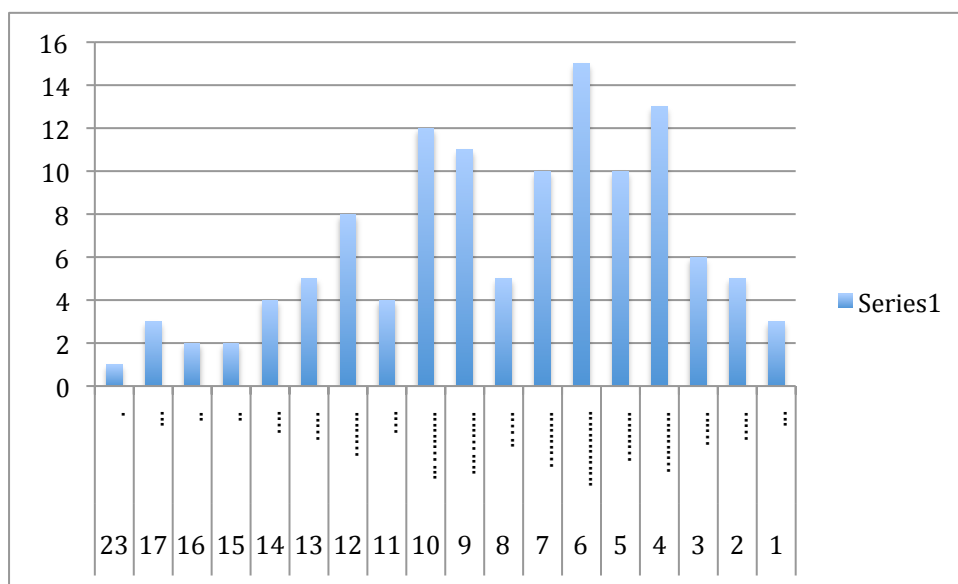
To what extent did today's event:	High	Some	Little
...increase your child's interest in science?	68 responses	14 responses	No responses
...help your child learn science content?	65 responses	17 responses	No responses
...expand your child's understanding of and interest in weather-related science careers?	56 responses	23 responses	3 responses
Meet your expectations as worthwhile...	79 responses	3 responses	1 responses
<p>What booth did your child enjoy the most?</p>	<p>Top 5: DOW (12), AMS, All/Everything (5), smoke ring, TWC (4) Zoo, Water tank, layers, Fire/Dow, tornado spin, Wx 101, hair dryer, smoke ring, cocorahs, air balloon, nasa, DOW, all, ams, trivia corner, DOW, Ball, DOW, ams, DOW, clouds/uv, activities, DOW, NASA globe , wx.com, tornadoes, nasa, Lockheed, Smk ring/DOW, tornado Bottles, chute/smoke, satellite, spin wx, Huskin/cake, TWC, Wx, static Elec., space Satellite, Lockheed. PA AMS, All, electricity, pressure, smoke, DOW, NASA, oceangraphy, Interactives, cotton Clouds, Ball's Build Sat., AMS, cocorahs, DOW, everything, Fire boat, Nasa, interactive globe, many, all, DOW, parachute, AMS, DOW, tornado simulation, wx.com, boiling ice, trivia, AMS, Lockheed, KVUE, Spark, cake, Northrup, DOW, Northrup</p>		
<p>Was there an activity that taught him/her something new & exciting?</p>	<p>Top 5: Flood Waters Management, Boiling Ice, DOW, Electricity, cloud seeding (all received 3 votes) WX ch. "Make your own", electricity, pressure, smoke rings, DOW, NASA, oceanography, Interactives, cotton Clouds, Ball Build Sat., AMS, cocorahs, DOW, everything, Fire boat, nasa interactive Globe, many, all, DOW, parachute, AMS, DOW, tornado. Simulation, wx.com, spin, boiling, trivia, AMS, Lockheed, KVUE, spark, cake, Northrup, DOW, Northrup, Water tank, reporting, flood waters, parking lot, core drilling, space, fire boat, rain/hairdryer, severe wx, DOW, solar energy, cloud ice hail, CocoRahs, news 36KXAN, boiling ice, Lockheed, clouds, Wx Spin, boiling ice, electricity, DOW, Univ. Ok, tornadoes, fake wx??, Almost all, Flood Mgmt, HL Pressure, all, Windsock</p>		

How did you hear about today's event?

Free Fun in Austin (25)
 Online/internet (10)
 Family member or friend - word of mouth (8)
 Austin Families in Nature Club (6)
 TV News or TV Facebook (6)
 Scouts (3)
 Attendee (3)
 CoCoRAHS (2)
 GIS event in San Antonio (2)
 School/College (2)
 GIS event in San Antonio (2)
 Luck (1)
 work (1)
 AMS (1)
 Invite (1)
 Email (1)

Ages of children that came to WeatherFest with you today?

Ages Reported



82 surveys were completed (usually per family)

Of those that completed the WeatherFest Survey upon departing, 40 families had 2 or more children; 24 families came with one child; 18 did not answer the question.

It's estimated that approximately 15% of families filled out a single WeatherFest survey.

Please note that responses for favorite booths, most educational, etc. were extremely variable. Most booths received at least one mention. Also, it was difficult to allot "votes" to appropriate booths when general science was mentioned (such as weather or clouds) as both concepts were the focus of many booths. Suffice it to say, the variety of responses illustrate both the age distribution and variety of activities appropriate for students of different developmental stages, and the variety of science activities and concepts focused upon by exhibitors. I see the diversity of booths mentioned to be a huge plus.

It will be good to discuss the survey with the committee and look for areas of improvement, such as career info perhaps or attracting students 11-15 yrs, targeting middle schools with marketing in additon to K-5.

Exhibitor survey input will follow, however, we received few exhibitor surveys (8) so they will not be as informative or adequately represent the exhibitor experience.



The American Meteorological Society promotes the development and dissemination of information and education on the atmospheric and related oceanic and hydrologic sciences and the advancement of their professional applications.

The American Meteorological Society's Teacher Workshop exists to present the best educational resources, scientific tools, and research in the atmospheric and related sciences to teachers. Its primary purpose is to promote relevant STEM learning and an awareness of AMS, its services, and its leadership in the field.

AMS 94th Annual Meeting - Atlanta, GA
Workshop Date: Saturday, February 1, 2014
Teacher Workshop Presenter Application

Application deadline is 8/01/2013

1. Please check if you are applying to present a workshop session, share-a-thon session, or both:

_____ Workshop Session (workshop sessions are restricted to a 90 minute block. 60 minutes is preferred).

_____ Share-a-thon offering (1-hour block along w/ other share-a-thon presenters)

_____ Both a workshop and share-a-thon session

Please address the following questions in your application.

1. Provide a brief description of the presenter(s) experience offering teacher professional development.
2. What is the workshop title or share-a-thon activity focus being proposed?
We encourage collaboration and integrated involvement of AMS scientists and new and relevant educational content, especially involving the AMS meeting theme, "Extreme Weather—Climate and the Built Environment: New Perspectives Opportunities, and Tools"
3. Are you and the organization you are affiliated with the creators of the resources being shared? If not, have you obtained permission to present another's materials from their source?
4. Please offer a brief description of the activities you will conduct, appropriate grade-levels, and educational standards addressed (add URL).
5. What materials will you be providing to the 35-50 educators attending the workshop and/or share-a-thon (handouts, notebook, website where workshop resources are located, etc.)?
6. If you have information available online regarding the workshop or share-a-thon content, activities, and/or materials, please provide relevant links to the information.

Please check Y (yes) or N (no) for each of the questions that follow:

Are the resources you're presenting immediately "classroom ready"? Yes No

Is your proposed workshop aligned with the AMS Meeting Theme? Yes No

Are you an AMS member or do you represent an AMS member organization? Yes No

Will a scientist be involved in your session: Yes No

Have you attended AMS in the past? Yes No

If your workshop or share-a-thon is accepted, what is the likelihood that you will be available to attend and present – with full support from your organizational affiliation should one exist?

Virtually Certain 75% Certain 50% Certain 25% Certain or less

Please be sure to include the following information for each proposed session:

Primary Presenter:

Your Organization affiliation (if any):

Address

Email

Phone (work)

Phone (mobile)

Phone (home)

How did you hear about the workshop and/or share-a-thon?

Please add names and affiliations of additional presenters as necessary:

1. _____ Affiliation _____

2. _____ Affiliation _____

3. _____ Affiliation _____

4. _____ Affiliation _____

Presenters will be notified by September 15, 2013 with an agenda and timeline provided once acceptances have been received.

Thank you for your interest in sharing your educational and content expertise with Atlanta area educators!