

National Holm Award Winners for 2007

Jerald and Bonnie Bergman have been awarded with the John Campanius Holm award, which is one of twenty-five presented this year from the eleven thousand COOP sites located in the USA. Jerald and Bonnie Bergman took over the responsibility for maintaining and collecting weather data for the Sidney COOP site in August of 1980. Jerald and Bonnie, with help from the employees of the Eastern Ag Research Center (EARC) have continued a legacy by consistently and accurately keeping the weather records for the station that was started in March of 1910.

The job around the EARC involves being outdoors many hours throughout the day during all months of the year. The COOP observers are subject to endure temperature extremes from the 20 to 30 below zero range in the winter, along with colder wind chills, to the 90s and low 100s in the summer. Throughout these extreme weather conditions, Jerald and Bonnie have volunteered for the last 26 years to spend additional time outside taking weather observations for temperature, precipitation and evaporation.

The COOP program has continued to evolve over the years requiring COOP observers to learn new tasks and take on more responsibilities to perform the job asked of them. Not all COOP observers are willing to accept these additional duties and challenges. Jerald and Bonnie are dedicated to the task of taking and keeping exceptional weather records and have made a consistent effort to get this valuable data to the Weather Service as early as possible over the years. They accepted a first request to call data into the National Weather Service office by phone in 1982, and then agreed to call the data in daily in 1997 using an automated phone system called ROSA, and then changed again to IVROCS in 2005.

Due to the sparseness of weather observations throughout northeast Montana, climatological weather data is of the utmost importance. The data that the Sidney COOP site provides is used throughout the community, from WFO Glasgow to the local radio stations, to the water and land resources agencies across the area. The COOP data recorded by Jerald, Bonnie and the staff at the EARC is also used to prepare climatologic summaries for local news papers, the local Farm Service Agency and the Wheat and Barley Committee.

Jerald and Bonnie are both severe weather spotters in Richland County located in WFO Glasgow's CWA. As it is well known, northeast Montana is sparsely populated. It becomes a real challenge to find people with the time and commitment to help their community by reporting severe weather that helps WFO Glasgow generate accurate and timely warnings. The willingness to give up more time to benefit others is another example of Jerald and Bonnie's attitude towards civic duties.

Being awarded the John Campanius Holm Award for the time, effort and consistent dedication that they have shown over the last 27 years is a small way to acknowledge the importance and the significance of their efforts.