



**Under the Big Sky E-Letter**  
**September 25, 2008**

**Autumn arrived this week:** The first day of fall started out our week. At 944 am MDT on September 22, 2008 we left another summer behind. Some of the trees started a bit early though as we have tons of yellow and red dotting the landscape already.

**Hurricane Ike:** The last edition of the e-letter was sent with Hurricane Ike bearing down on the gulf coast. I'm sure many of you have seen and heard of the devastation in that region. Below are a few links, one showing the NOAA satellite imagery of the devastation along the coastal region, and two more with some amazing photographs of the impacts from the storm.

<http://ngs.woc.noaa.gov/ike/IKE0000.HTM>

[http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2008/09/the\\_short\\_but\\_eventful\\_life\\_of.html](http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2008/09/the_short_but_eventful_life_of.html)

<http://texastailchaser.com/chases/Hurricanes/Ike/album/>

There was one home in Gilchrist, TX that withstood the hurricane winds. There are photos online of it. The contractor built the home to withstand a cat 5 hurricane:

<http://www.ireport.com/blogs/ireport-blog/2008/09/18/the-last-house-standing#comment>

Lastly, there was a diving vessel out in the gulf during the hurricane. Not sure why they decided to stay out there when this was a well warned hurricane, but you can see some video of them out there at: <http://luminatti.blogspot.com/2008/09/hurricane-ike-on-galveston-bay.html>

Newsweek did an article on why people don't evacuate when mandatory evacuations are called. <http://www.newsweek.com/id/158660> Overall it covers some of the psychological aspects, but it doesn't cover the economic ones. I heard people on TV broadcasts make comments that they had already evacuated during Gustav, and couldn't afford to do so again. I also heard some comments that people expected the hurricane to be bad, but it was the aftermath that surprised them. They stayed and made it through the hurricane, but now they have no food, water or electricity and that is causing additional problems on top of the destruction.

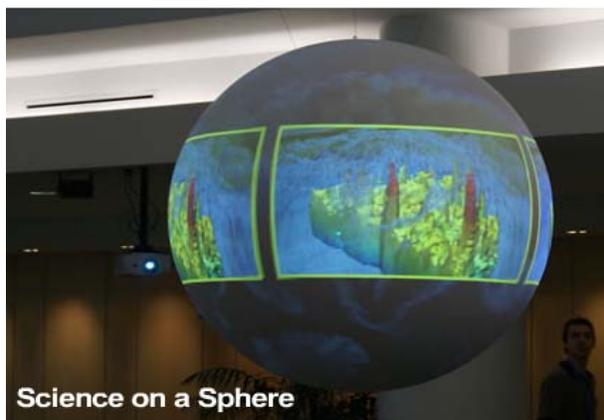
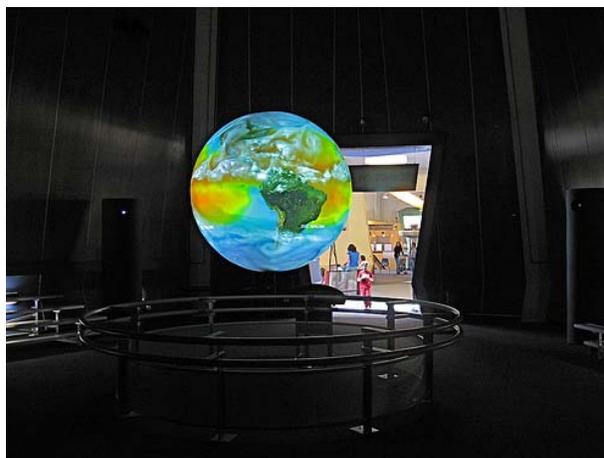
**While our gulf coast counterparts are learning some lessons the hard way, it's my turn to bug you and remind you that September is National Preparedness Month. Do you have enough water stocked up? What is your alternate heat source? Do you have extra canned food and dried goods that you can use if we lose power for a prolonged time?** It was Nov 1, 2000 when much of extreme eastern Montana was slammed by sleet and a blizzard. It was several days before power was restored, and a second storm on Election Day, seven days later just exacerbated the problems.

### Visit to the National Weather Center:

The featured photo this week is of the National Weather Center in Norman, OK. We've had two people in the office visit in the last two weeks. The first was our meteorologist in charge (MIC), Steve Apfel who went for a conference of all the Western Region NWS MIC's. I also got my first visit of the center last week in evaluating the future of the hazardous weather testbed, and what NWS warnings may look like in 10-20 years. Our Science and Operations Officer, Bill Martin, was a researcher at the NWC prior to joining the NWS here in Glasgow. The National Weather Center is a facility that is on the University of Oklahoma campus. It houses several departments:

- OU School of Meteorology (300 undergraduate and around 100 graduate students)
- NOAA National Severe Storms Laboratory
- NWS Storm Prediction Center
- NWS Norman/Oklahoma City forecast office
- NWS Radar Operations Center
- NWS Warning Decision Training Branch
- several private sector meteorology/hydrology companies.

I was told that the NWC is the most toured facility on the campus, outside of the football stadium. It even had the "Dorothy" tornado probe machine that was used in the movie Twister. The coolest thing though was the "Science on a Sphere" a large floating globe of the earth that can display many types of imagery on a global scale.



For more information, visit:  
<http://nwc.ou.edu/> or <http://sos.noaa.gov/>



HMT Jim Branda discusses tornados with a NEAT attendee who gravitated to our booth several times during his visit at the Valley Event Center. We think we may have a future meteorologist with this young man!

**N.E.A.T:** Several staff members at WFO Glasgow participated in the Northeast Aviation and Technology event that brought school kids from the region to Glasgow for a career/college fair, presentations by professionals in the science, aviation and technology fields (including three presentations from our office) and an additional two days of events where students were able to see some hands on information from different agencies and companies on what they do. The NWS booth included a "teaching tornado," videos, and space weather information. Jim Branda from the NWS Glasgow office has been on the planning committee for this large event for the past year and we appreciate all his time and effort into planning an event for over 1000 students, teachers and chaperones!

**Allergies and climate change:** Is it just me, or does it seem that allergy sufferers are having a rough season? I'm trying just about every over the counter medication along with several prescription ones, but can't get past the congestion and sneezing. Throw in a few actual colds the kids bring home from school, and I've been hauling a Kleenex box around for about 6 weeks now. A recent journal article in the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology showed a link between increased pollen releases when temperatures and CO2 levels rise. The short results of the study: Allergy sufferers are going to be suffering more. For more information, visit: [http://www.jacionline.org/article/S0091-6749\(08\)01181-0/abstract](http://www.jacionline.org/article/S0091-6749(08)01181-0/abstract)

I send this article to a climate and health specialist who works for NWS Headquarters (she's a former CDC employee), and she gave the following suggestion: "Increase your intake of omega 3 & 6--these fatty oils found in fish help to reduce bronchoconstriction associated with allergies and asthma. Increasing your intake of antioxidants such as vitamin A, C, E will also help to strengthen your immune system and the response to these allergens. "

**StormReady renewals:** We visited Winnett, MT this week to update the StormReady application for Winnett and Petroleum County. This county has been StormReady since Oct 1, 2005. They have provided NOAA Weather Radios for all their emergency response personnel, including fire, EMS and search and rescue. They worked with the NWS and MidRivers in putting in a NOAA Weather Radio transmitter and have systems in place for hazardous weather events. They will be renewed for another three years as a StormReady County and Community. Other renewals coming up in the near future include the Fort Peck Tribes (they were the 2<sup>nd</sup> StormReady Reservation in the US!) and Roosevelt County.

Last bit of humor:

