

February Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Finally, some much-needed moisture arrived during February, along with temperatures that were well below average for the month. We ended up accumulating a little more than twice the normal amount, with over 30 inches for some of us.

However, the first four days of the month were dry and mild as we slowly melted off the fresh snow that fell during the last couple days of January. High temperatures reached the low 40s on the 1st, then quickly warmed to the upper 40s and low 50s over the next couple of days. Skies started off sunny, then lots of high and mid-level clouds moved into the region from the west on the 3rd and 4th. No precipitation fell during this time, continuing the trend of dry weather.

Our first snowfall of the month arrived during the evening of the 6th as a quick-moving storm brought 3 to 5 inches of new snow to the region. Temperatures weren't exceedingly cold with this storm as highs still managed to reach the upper 30s the next afternoon. Quiet conditions stuck around for the 8th, as sunny skies led to high temperatures in the mid-40s. However, another cold front was on its way. This time it was from the north and brought with it below normal temperatures and light snow. Over the weekend of the 9th, 1 to 3 inches of new snow accumulated and temperatures stayed below freezing, in the 30s on the 9th and 20s on the 10th.

Unsettled conditions continued to affect the region during the second full week of February, a trend that continued through most of the remainder of the month. The week started off cold with a little snow. High temperatures only managed to reach the upper teens on the 11th, with around a half-inch of snow falling. Clearing skies that evening allowed low temperatures to tumble below zero in several locations around the region. Clear skies the next afternoon allowed highs to reach the freezing mark briefly, still about 10 degrees cooler than normal.

Temperatures continued to moderate under plenty of sunshine the next afternoon, reaching the low 40s, but another quick-moving storm system was headed toward Colorado. This system brought a strong cold front through the region right around noon on the 14th (a good reason to snuggle up with your valentine). Light snow and blowing snow developed that afternoon and turned to flurries overnight. Most of us picked up 1 to 2 inches of fluffy snowfall from this event.

High temperatures were again held below normal

on both the 14th and 15th, with low to mid-30s common. Just in time for the weekend, high pressure built into the region, this time from the west/southwest. This brought mild and dry air with it, and temperatures quickly moved into the low 50s both Saturday and Sunday with plenty of sunshine.

It was a cold and snowy week round the region from the 18th through the 24th as several storm systems rolled through. The first storm was a quick mover that deposited less than a half-inch for most of us during the overnight hours of the 18th. Temperatures were held to below normal values that afternoon and the next, reaching into the mid-30s.

However, quickly on its heels was a more powerful storm that combined with a good surge of cold air from Canada. Clouds began to increase with this storm during the late morning of the 20th, with snow beginning to fall by early afternoon. Snow fell most intensely during the evening and overnight hours, and winds kicked up a little as well. Over the 24-hour period anywhere from 4 to 8 inches of new snow accumulated. Temperatures were also chilly, with highs only reaching the upper teens on the 21st.

A brief break of quiet weather moved in behind this departing storm, bringing sunshine across the area on the 22nd. High temperatures responded nicely under the ever-stronger sunshine of late February, reaching the upper 30s even with the fresh snow on the ground. However, this break between storms didn't last long as the next, even more powerful system was quickly dropping out of the Pacific Northwest and heading straight for the Four Corners region. This storm packed quite a punch, bringing heavy snow at times and very strong winds.

Snow began to fall just before sunrise on the 24th, with the heaviest snow coming during the mid-morning through mid-afternoon hours. This heavy snow combined with very strong winds to produce blizzard condition from late Sunday morning through the early evening hours. This storm dropped 8 to 12 inches of new snow in the region, with higher amounts just to our north and west. Thankfully it was on a Sunday, so the impact on the region was minimal and made for a beautiful end to the weekend.

However, we only had a brief break before the next storm moved in and brought more snow and wind. Sunshine returned for the 25th as we began to melt some of the snow from the previous day. Clear skies stuck around

through about sunrise on the 26th, then clouds quickly thickened and light snow began to fall by mid-morning. At first, this snowfall was light with no major issues, but by mid-afternoon snow began to fall at a quicker pace and winds began to kick up substantially. By the evening of the 26th, blizzard conditions again visited the region, with treacherous travel that evening into early the next morning. Another 4 to 7 inches of new snow fell with this system, bringing more much needed moisture to the region.

Quiet weather returned over the last two days of the month, but with the fresh snowpack, temperatures remained cooler than normal, with highs in the upper 20's on the 27th and low to mid 30's on the 28th, about 10° below normal.

A look ahead

March is known for a wide range of weather conditions in the region. We can see 70-degree temperatures one afternoon and blizzard conditions the next. Many of us remember the blizzard of March 2003 when we received 30 to 50 inches of snowfall that shut down the region. However, snow begins to melt quickly this time of the year, providing beneficial moisture for our plants and limited inconvenience for us.

February 2013 Weather Statistics

Average High	35.2° (-4.1°)
100-year return frequency value	max 51.9° min 32.8°
Average Low	10.4° (-3.0°)
100-year return frequency value	max 21.9° min 3.7°
Highest Temperature	53° on the 17th
Lowest Temperature	-4° on the 28th
Monthly Precipitation	1.52"
	(+0.79" 51% above normal)
100-year return frequency value	max 2.10" min 0.02"
Monthly Snowfall	29.7"
	(+16.4", 65% above normal)
Season to Date Snow	57.6"
	(-13.9", 20% below normal)
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	9.94"
	(-3.01", 25% below normal)
	(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days	1152 (+66)
Cooling Degree Days	0

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Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 35.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community should not be interpreted as the view of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

Shooters, please clean up after yourselves

I went about 6.5 miles up Mount Herman Road last week on a weekday just to get away from the hustle and bustle for awhile. It was beautiful and I did not hear a shot go off in the two hours I was up there. It was pleasantly weird, as I had forgotten what it's like not on a weekend.

I was fairly shocked to see what "we all" leave behind in our wake. I am not a "Debby Downer" or a "Tree Hugging Chicken Little Global Warming Advocate." What I

am saying is that if "we" don't start policing ourselves better at the end of our shooting day, then some anti-gun, anti-Second Amendment, pro-big government "person" will get into the "pocket" of the U.S. Forest Service and/or a local politician and have our area closed off. I can guarantee that we will not like it one bit if that happens. We don't need to give "them" anymore "ammo"—pun intended—for their agenda, and our demise.

I do see many people picking up and packing out the bits and pieces, picking up their shells for reloading, or to sell, or just being "good stewards." There were also a couple of "professional pickers" up there making a living.

I command you all! I myself don't and won't pick up my .22s (until they are somehow made magnetic), and my

clays I leave to nature. I am talking about the TVs, and the tape recorders, and the computers and the beer cans, and the empty ammo boxes as well as other curious shot-up items.

As of this writing, we still live in America and free speech has only been about 50 percent squashed by the current "regime," so I fully expect and hope that the reaction(s) and feedback I get will be from "both camps," which in my opinion is healthy.

I just know that we can do an even better job than we already are.

Peace and happy chootin!

Dwayne Seibert

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Between The Covers at the Covered Treasures Bookstore

Women in the writing world

By the staff at Covered Treasures

The winds of March are blowing a fresh breeze across the local women's writing world, with several authors and one local publisher offering a variety of interesting books. We'll take a look at a sampling of them.

Radical Survivor: One Woman's Path Through Life, Love, and Uncharted Tragedy

By Nancy Saltzman (WoWo Press) \$14.95

Many people remember the small plane crash in 1995 that resulted in the tragic loss of a Colorado Springs man and his two sons; they were author Nancy Saltzman's family. This heartfelt memoir chronicles Saltzman's extraordinary saga: how her early life prepared her for adversity,

how true love and family deepened her inner strength, and how making a difference in the lives of others helped her heal. We share her struggle as she overcomes despair through a deep sense of purpose, and we learn that through time, friendship, and love, the heart can make room for both loved ones lost and happiness found. Radical Survivor



traverses the full spectrum of human emotions, offering a gift of hope for anyone dealing with tragedy or loss.

Toolbox from Heaven: Living by Faith in the Midst of Crisis

By Holly Sly (Tate Publishing) \$17.99

When Monument resident Holly Sly's daughter, Alexandra, suddenly falls ill at school, what they think is probably just a mild stomach bug turns out to be a combination of encephalitis and meningitis, which results in a profound hearing loss in both ears. As Holly and her husband, Larry, struggle to determine what this new revelation will mean for their family—including treatment options, schooling alternatives, and day-to-day interactions with