

January Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

Temperatures were slightly cooler than normal and precipitation was right at normal for January. Overnight lows were generally not that cold, with only a couple of nights falling below zero. However, we never really had a "January thaw" with only two days during the month managing to reach the low 50s and winds generally well behaved.

January started off cool and quiet, which is normal for this time of the year. Temperatures were below freezing on New Year's Day, with lows just below zero and highs reaching the upper 20s. Plenty of sunshine from that afternoon through the 6th allowed temperatures to slowly moderate through the period. Highs reached the mid-30s on the 2nd, then low 40s from the 3rd through the 6th. Not much snow melted over the period, as cold nights and a weak sun angle combined with generally light winds to keep the snow around.

A series of weak storm systems moving from the Pacific Northwest and Southern California traversed the region from late on the 6th through the 9th. These mainly affected the mountains but enough energy and moisture did make it into the Front Range to produce low clouds, fog, and snow at times. Most areas picked up 3-6 inches of snow on the 7th and 8th, causing some travel problems at times. The heaviest snow occurred along and west of I-25. Highs were cooler during the period as well, with highs only hitting the low 30s on the 7th and mid to upper 20s on the 8th and 9th.

Quiet and seasonably cool weather continued during the second week of January. Highs were in the low 30s on the 11th, a little below average, then "warmed" up to the low to mid-40s on the 12th and 13th. Plenty of sunshine occurred each day, but it had a hard time melting much of the snowpack as winds remained light. Temperatures cooled slightly on the 14th and 15th as a series of quick-moving systems moved over the region from the west. These storms left most of their moisture in the mountains, but slightly cooler air and a few flurries did work into the

region. Highs were slightly below normal, only reaching the 30s each afternoon. The weekend saw more of the same, cooler temperatures and scattered clouds. The coldest day was Saturday the 16th, as highs only reached the upper 20s with a few flurries early. Temperatures warmed to the upper 30s on Sunday, as we ended the weekend with sunshine.

It was a mixed bag of weather conditions during the week of Jan. 18, with a few quick shots of light snow interspersed with clear and mild conditions. Highs hit the mid- to upper 40s on the 18th, with some mountain wave clouds around. This was ahead of a quick-moving storm that dropped around an inch of windblown snow the next morning. This storm was moisture starved and never really produced upslope winds, therefore there wasn't much to it. A couple weak surges of cool air did continue to affect the region over the next couple of days, putting us back and forth between cool air and mild air. Highs reached 40°F on the 20th, then only managed to touch freezing on the 21st. High pressure built in from the west over the next couple of days, bringing mild and dry air with it. Highs jumped into the upper 40s and low 50s on the 22nd and 23rd, making for a quiet and mild weekend. Another cold front made an appearance during the early afternoon on Sunday, with some light snow developing during the evening, but holding off until after the Broncos' big win.

The last week of January started cold, then got mild and windy before the first parts of a major storm began to affect the region. Highs were slightly below freezing on Monday the 25th as a quick-moving storm left behind a little fresh snow and cold temperatures. About an inch accumulated that afternoon through early evening, making for some slippery roads. Temperatures remained below normal for the next afternoon, only reaching the low to mid-30s. However, high pressure began to build in from the west over the next couple of days. This brought in a mild and dry air mass, and allowed winds to kick up from the west/southwest.

Temperatures rebounded into the mid- and upper 40s from the 27th through the 29th, with mountain wave clouds at times. Temperatures peaked in the low 50s on Saturday the 30th just before the first effects of the big storm began to hit the region. After highs in the 50s, cooler air began to work into the area by late that afternoon. Light snow developed late that evening, with a dusting accumulating before midnight. Snow continued overnight and the next day, with 3-5 inches of snow accumulating through Sunday.

A look ahead

February is often a dry and cold month for the region as we move toward the snowy and unsettled conditions of March and April. Precipitation averages less than an inch, with average high temperatures in the 30s. It can get very cold in February with Arctic air making strong pushes into the region. However, days begin to get a little longer, which leads to some nice, sunny days and snow melts faster.

January 2016 Weather Statistics

Average High	38.4° (-1.9°)
100-year return frequency value max	48.4° min 30.8°
Average Low	13.8° (+1.3°)
100-year return frequency value max	26.6° min 6.6°
Highest Temperature	53° on the 23rd and 30th
Lowest Temperature	-3° on the 1st
Monthly Precipitation	0.71" (0.0" normal)
100-year return frequency value max	1.56" min 0.01"
Monthly Snowfall	11.0" (-2.5", 19% below normal)
Season to Date Snow	64.1" (+9.9", 19% above normal)
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	11.91" (-0.16", 2% below normal)
	(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days	1206 (+16)
Cooling Degree Days	0

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Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters to the editor are on page 27.

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

Monument Hill Foundation thanks Tri-Lakes community

On behalf of the Monument Hill Foundation, I would like to thank the Tri-Lakes community for their generous support of the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club and Foundation. Because of our mission to support the youth and community of the local area, donations have been distributed to local organizations and charities.

As the granting arm of the Kiwanis Club, MHF is pleased to announce that approximately \$50,000 will be distributed this year. Currently, some of the organizations receiving grant support are: The Resource Exchange, Emily Griffith Centers for Children, Palmer Divide Blanket Brigade, Big Brothers and Sisters, Children's Literacy Center, Soap Box Derby, Rocky Mountain Youth Leadership Conference, Tri-Lakes Health Advocacy Partnership, Children's Advocacy Center, and Aspen Camp for the Hearing impaired. Also receiving grant support are School District 38 activities, such as D-38 Robotics Team, Options 38 Career Starter Scholarships, Preschool Programs, Library Media Centers, Adaptive Equestrian Program, and Special Needs Hearing Program. This year, the Ronald McDonald House mobile clinic and Special Kids, Special Families will also receive support. Monument Hill Kiwanis Club also raised over \$45,000 through the Salvation Army bell ringing activities at the local King Soopers, Safeway, and Walmart stores. In addition, the Monument Hill Kiwanis-sponsored Empty Bowl Soup Supper raised over \$21,000 for Tri-Lakes Cares.

A complete list of recipients, information, and applications for the granting process, and how to donate can be found on the MHF website at www.monumenthillfoundation.org. Thank you for your generous support of the Monument Hill Kiwanis Club and Monument Hill Foundation as you continue to participate in our fundraising efforts each year.

Ted Bauman

Executive director, Monument Hill Foundation

Introducing Dollar Paid Forward

Thank you for granting us this opportunity to introduce Dollar Paid Forward. We are excited to share with you our mission, our services, and how you can make a difference. Together, we can make a positive impact on society and our communities.

Dollar Paid Forward was recently established as a federally recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit, charitable organization in December 2015. However, we have been performing acts of kindness and providing humanitarian services for many years.

Our mission: To pay it forward, through acts of kindness and service, in order to improve the lives of: those in need, the elderly, deployed military, and the physically unable.

Our objective is to provide home maintenance and light automotive repair, including mowing lawns, replacing leaky faucets, replacing light fixtures, performing oil changes, or just about anything we have the knowledge and ability to do in a safe manner. Our acts of kindness and service are always free.

Dollar Paid Forward can provide services for free because of your kindness and generosity. We humbly rely on resources obtained through grants and donations. By partnering with us in this humanitarian cause, your donations are 100 percent tax deductible.

There are other ways to partner with us. First, pay it forward! Do something for someone else. A simple smile, handshake, hug, or compliment costs nothing but you'd be surprised by how invaluable these gestures truly are.

Second, you can help us spread the word by letting others know Dollar Paid Forward is here to help. It could be by word of mouth, sharing the link to our website dollarpaidforward.org, or even through social media, by liking and sharing our page (Dollar Paid Forward) on Facebook. Please join us in making a difference.

Bo Doan

Chairman, Board of Directors

Monument Academy deserves kudos

At the recent D-38 school board meeting, I was pleasantly surprised to see Lis Richard, principal, and Don Griffin, executive director of Monument Academy Charter School present about the school's status and achievements. This

year, Monument Academy celebrates 20 years in existence as the only charter school in D-38, yet according to Richard this is the first time they have been invited to present their report in person at a regular school board meeting. Too often in the past, Monument Academy was treated like the proverbial red-haired stepchild by D-38 administration, board members, and staff alike. I sincerely hope those days are behind us.

This school has been awarded the John Irwin School of Excellence award for 12 consecutive years and in spite of receiving less funding than other public schools, has \$2 million in reserve and does an excellent job educating children in grades pre-K-8. No school is without its challenges, but the stability of leadership, high teacher retention rates, high parental involvement (including many serving three-year terms on the school's board), and the fact the school has grown by over 400 students in the last few years indicate that this excellent school is a school of choice of which we should all be proud.

Unfortunately, incorrect information about the school persists in the community. Recently, I heard of someone who still believes Monument Academy charges tuition and is a private school that only takes the best students. None of that is accurate. Monument Academy educates all children who want to learn there, including those needing special education programs and English language learners. As a community, let's celebrate 20 years of school choice in our district, and give Monument Academy the kudos they deserve.

Diana Helffenstein

Trust and transparency

Since last year's school board election, I have attended several D-38 school board meetings to learn and to communicate my concerns and requests. On Jan. 21, the D-38 meeting kicked off with citizens' comments. Parents respectfully expressed their concerns about Common Core, students' data privacy, parents' rights, and trust and transparency.

I could not stay for the whole meeting, so I watched the rest via the recorded video later in the week. The meeting went on until midnight. At about 10:30 p.m., the board discussed the superintendent's contract renewal. It caught my attention because the board president announced there