

AMS/NWA MEMPHIS CHAPTER 26 MAR 2014 MEETING MINUTES

1. The President welcomed and thanked everyone for attending our March meeting and please don't forget to sign in.
2. The treasurer's report was given with a call for any unpaid dues for the 2013-14 year.
3. A request to boost up our current scholarship fund otherwise funds will not be available for next year.
4. An email will be sent for both the scholarship applications and to volunteer for participation on the scholarship committee.
5. A question was asked if there was any new business, with one response asking if we had a speaker lined up for the upcoming May meeting. The answer was there was currently nothing firm.
6. Introduction to tonight's speakers, the first Andy Chiuppi, a Meteorologist Intern from the National Weather Service office in Memphis. Andy's presentation discussed the decision support and post mortem of the mini low-topped supercell storm that produced a tornado that hit Caraway Arkansas on Halloween of 2013. He described the event being well forecasted 5 days in advance from both the Storm Prediction center and the Memphis Weather Forecast Office (WFO). The event also gave the Memphis office their first opportunity to conduct a High Impact Social Briefing in which over 11,000 customers viewed. The weather department at Mississippi State University provided a mobile sounding for the event that aided forecasters in determining that the instability was low but the shear in the atmosphere was still high enough to indicate an isolated storm and tornado potential. The tornado occurred outside of a tornado watch box that was issued earlier across SE Missouri, so initially the staffing in the office was not increased, but as the storm quickly developed, to include a weak tornado, forecasters did a great job changing gears in issuing warnings and calling in additional personnel. The town of Caraway received about four minutes of leadtime and fortunately with the rain from the storm most folks were already inside as the town's sirens were going off. A survey team the next day found EF1 damage in town but luckily no fatalities or injuries. From the huge public interest through social media, a new position was created in the Memphis office strictly to communicate with the public through Facebook and Twitter.
7. The night's second speaker was Thomas Salem, the Science and Operations Officer from the National Weather Service Office in Memphis. Tom also discussed the uniqueness and challenges that came with surveying the Caraway tornado path and damage. Tom showed how the WSR-88D Dual-Pol products indicated a strong signal of debris being picked up and lofted to a height of 13kft within the storm as is tracked through Caraway and points south and west of town. He also introduced a Tornado Debris Signature study that The WFO in Jackson MS has been conducting for a few years now. This study correlates the height of the debris to tornado intensity/rating. Tom stated that the study of the debris lofted to 13kft would indicate an EF-2 tornado, though this tornado was rated at the high end EF-1 scale off the survey damage in town. One reason for the TDS to have reached this altitude may have been from an abundance of leaves

- or some other non-weather anomaly i.e. waterfowl, insects, that could have been congregating in large masses during this seasonal time of year and in the path.
8. After Andy and Tom's presentation several questions were asked concerning the possibilities and the Jackson, MS study.
 9. Thanks were given to both speakers.
 10. The meeting concluded with the President reminding everyone that the upcoming Mississippi State Severe Weather Symposium is next weekend on April 4th and 5th and that all were welcome. In addition he reminded everyone that next month would be our spring luncheon and that the location and announcement will be distributed through email in next couple of weeks.

Jim Branda, Secretary

Approved,

Tom Salem, President