



RETURN TO BELOW NORMAL PRECIPITATION

After a month of above normal precipitation across most of the two state area December returned to the 1997 norm of below normal precipitation which. Precipitation totals across the two state region was mainly in the two inch range with a few stations below and a few above. The driest ACON station this month was Germantown 1.5 W where Jeff Taylor recorded 1.89". The wettest was Eagle Rock where Rebecca Harvey recorded 3.81".

The first 21 days were mainly dry. There were two general periods of precipitation: the 3rd-4th and 9th-10th. The precipitation on the 9th began as snow at many, but not all stations in the Baltimore-Washington areas and westwards and then changed to rain. This was the first measurable snowfall of the season east of the mountains. Snowfall totals were all under an inch at ACON stations. A dry period set in on the 13th and lasted till 21st. After the 21st, several storms moved through the area right after each other bringing some kind of precipitation. The only days which which were not stormy were the 26th, 28th, and the 31st. The 31st brought with it some snow flurries and snow showers with it along with falling temperatures to some areas mainly from the Baltimore-Washington areas north and west. The storm on the 27th brought with it wet snow and rain with above freezing temperatures. Temperatures were colder on the 29th-30th when a storm moved through dropping upwards of 9.1" of snow at Smithsburg.

The barometer fell to its lowest levels since 3/13/93 on the 30th with the passage of a coastal storm.

WEATHER PARTY HELD DECEMBER 13TH

Herb Close of Manchester IS held his annual December ACON party this year on Saturday, the 13th. Over two dozen weather enthusiasts from Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania and even Illinois attended this year. We spent the afternoon and evening viewing weather videos, surfing the NET, making new friendships. Stan Rossen brought with him a couple of official weather books from BWI that he obtained when the BWI was converted to an ASOS site.

NEW MEMBER RALPH HARTSOCK

I would like to welcome a new member to our ACON group. Ralph Hartsock has joined our group. Ralph has been interested in weather since childhood. He has been keeping records for the past two years in the Sandy-mount area and now the Deer Park areas south of Westminster Carroll County Maryland. Welcome Ralph!

ABOVE NORMAL TEMPERATURES

After a cold November temperatures this month rose to a degree or two above normal. Temperatures were fairly constant with no extreme warm or cold spells. The warmest period was around the 20th where most ACON stations rose into the mid 50's to lower 60's.

Christmas Day this year brought with it warm temperatures. Temperatures ranged from a minimum of 32 at Eagle Rock in the mountains of Western Maryland to 60 at Whaleysville on the Eastern Shore. No snow cover was observed this year.

Temperatures cooled down enough to permit snow, snow mixed with rain, or rain to fall. Enough snow fell in areas west of the Baltimore-Washington to cover the ground during the last week of the year. Northern Delaware received the least amount of snow. Temperatures fell during the 31st ushering in the first, but brief cold snap of the young winter season.

* DON'T FORGET DATA IS DUE *
* BY THE 15TH OF THE FOLLOW- *
* ING MONTH. PLEASE SEND TO *
* GARY GALLAHER WHO WILL *
* FORWARD TO KEVIN SHAW *

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ACON CONTACT:

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OBSERVERS COMMENTS FOR DECEMBER 1997

Dan Hanson of Baltimore 4 SW and Millersville 1 SE

December saw a reversal of November's cool and wet conditions. No significant extremes of temperature occurred during the month. The warmest temperatures occurred on the 16th when the mercury topped out in the low 60's. Other warm spells were interleaved with cool periods resulting slightly above average temperatures for the month. The coolest temperatures occurred just before midnight on New Year's Eve. Even though 12 days had measurable precipitation, the monthly total was below average. Snowfall was more prominent at Baltimore 4 SW than Millersville 1 SE with 3.8" and 0.9" respectively. A coastal storm on the 29th-30th produced the lowest barometric pressure and highest winds gusts of the month.

Al Kreinik of Parkton 5 SW

9th - AM rain began as light snow.
22nd - Light sleet and rain
30th - Blowing snow cuts visibility to almost zero in some areas.

Marty Sharrow of Owings Mills

An uneventful start to the month was followed by a wintry ending.

Bobby Miller of Millers 4 ENE

22nd - First maximum temperature of 32 of season
30th - Barometric pressure of 29.13 set a Dec record

Marty Brumback of Indian Head

December brought almost perfectly average temperatures, with precipitation almost 1 inch below average. Snow was observed on 3 days. Unfortunately, no measurable accumulations occurred. Heavy fog on the 26th was due to local effects.

Rebecca Harvey of Eagle Rock

27th - 31st Temperature fails to reach freezing.
31st - 16 inches of snow on the ground.

Paul Schlosser of Kingsville 1S

16th - 26th - Very mild
25th - Spring-like Christmas Day.

Kevin Shaw of Gaithersburg 2 WNW

December was a mild and dry ending to a record setting dry 1997 year. Rather than continue with the wet, cold pattern of November in this strong El Nino winter, patterns changed to fit more in line with the past several Decembers. It really wasn't that much of an extreme month; the high temperature did not reach 60, nor did the low temperature reach lower than 18.

Gary Gallaher of Bear 6 WSW DE

December was the first month since March with above normal temperatures and the 10th month this year with below normal precipitation. Temperatures were fairly constant with no strong warm or cold periods. A fast moving coastal storm on the 29th - 30th brought the lowest barometric pressure since the March 13 1993 "Storm of the Century".

Bill Hudelson of South Bowie

9th - Light snow 0700-0730 then mixed with rain till 0900. Light rain ending 1100, dusting of snow sticking to grass and bushes.

27th - Rain mixed with snow 0830-1100, then snow till 2100. snow sticking to cars, grass, melted on streets, sidewalks.

Floyd Abell of Hollywood

14th & 15th - Very heavy morning frost
27th - Mixed rain & snow. Early evening moderate snow

Marlene Walchli of California

31st - Broken CU midday, unlimited visibility, crystal clear 2100.

John Zyla of Ridge

13th - Major frost
29th - Lowest barometric pressure of 29.24" ever at station. Lower than Bertha & Josephine.

Greg Keefer of Hagerstown 1 E

16th - Record high temperature of 60 Old record 59 in 1971

29th - 30th - Snow storm total 8.7". Snow squall on the evening of the 30th dusted the ground again. Also very windy this evening (30th) with west winds gusting to 36 mph.

31st - Some light snow and snow showers this morning 0830 -1000 produced 0.2" of new snow. Rapidly falling temps this evening into the teens.

Jim Vaughn of Smithsburg

30th - 9.1" of snow is the heaviest 24 hour snowfall surpassing 6.1" set on 12/5/96.

Kenny Boggs of Whalesville

29th - The barometer was 29.20 at 10PM the lowest I have seen other than in a hurricane.

Gary Gallaher
MD/DE ACON Data Collector and Report Writer