

Lightning Data Center
Minutes
February 10, 2006
St. Anthony Hospital, Denver, CO 80204
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Quote of the Month:

“J.J. Thomson was about to make the most significant scientific find of the late nineteenth century. He discovered that cathode rays consisted of very small negatively charged particles whose mass was about eighteen hundred times less than the lightest known substance – the hydrogen atom. He initially named these tiny carriers of electricity “corpuscles.” Later they would become known as “electrons.”

Diana Preston in *Before the Fallout*, 2005 Walker & Company

1. Meeting began at 11:30 am and adjourned at 1:20 pm.
2. Members present: Cherington, Flanders, R Gift, Y Gift, Gahagan, Gillespie, Langford, McDonough, Mullan, Nibbe, Nitka, Poulton, Wachtel, Wells, Wermuth.
3. I brought the following article (abstracted in part here).
 - a. Britt RC, Gannon T, Collins JN. Secondary abdominal compartment syndrome: risk factors and outcomes. *Am Surg* 2005;71:982-985.

“Abdominal compartment syndrome (ACS) is defined as intra-abdominal hypertension with resultant cardiovascular, renal, and pulmonary dysfunction. A retrospective chart re view was performed of 10 patients diagnosed with secondary ACS from 1997 to 2003. Four of the patients sustained burns greater than 40 percent, three of the patients had penetrating extremity trauma, one patient had blunt abdominal trauma, one patient was struck by lightning, and one patient developed a retroperitoneal bleed while on heparin. Currently the only management for secondary ACS is abdominal decompression via opening the abdomen”
4. Mary Ann Cooper sent the Preliminary Call for Papers for the 2007 ICOLSE (International Conference on Lightning & Static Electricity) Conference in Paris, France (August 28-30, 2007).
5. Ryan Blumenthal sent a report and photos of injured birds during a violent thunderstorm on December 25, 2004. He wrote that “a tree in which three

species of migrating kestrels roost was partially destroyed, killing 1,898 kestrels and injuring at least another 55.”

6. M. Shmatov sent a reprint of his work, Expected spectrum of high-energy photons from ball lightning. He states: “It is assumed that ball lightning has a core consisting of oscillating clouds of electrons and totally ionized ions. A search for tooth enamel changes due to the influence of high-energy photons from ball lightning to reveal the influence of such photons on human beings is also proposed.”

Ken Langford and Gil McDonough predicted that, with increasing use of camcorders and other recording devices, ball lightning is more likely to be captured on video than in the past.

7. Noel Mullan announced that he will be speaking in the Hospital Auditorium A on March 15 at 10:30 am. The title of his talk: A Little Bit of Everything Irish. All are invited to attend.
8. Ken Langford brought a copy of the famous John Autry photograph of a lightning streamer and tree. Ken brought a second photograph of the same incident from a distance. The photograph was taken in Alabama in 1984.
9. The main presentation on Clouds was given by Richard Keen. Rich gave an outstanding and elegant presentation. Rich gave a history of U. S. Postal Services decision to make a series of postage stamps of clouds. He then gave a seminar on cloud identification and classification. I cannot do justice to his talk in these pages. I shall provide annotations from my notepad.
 - a. Rich brought fulgarite samples resulting from lightning striking the Kitty Hawk Beach in North Carolina.
 - b. He showed slides of old stamps that featured weather topics. The subjects include: weather balloons, weather stations, hurricanes, El Nino, Aurora, ozone holes, satellite images.
 - c. Recently the United States Postal Service approached Rich and others about Cloud Stamps. The others included: Ron Holle, Mike Mogil, Stan Gedzelman, Mark Saunders, Darby O'Donnell, Victoria Cooper, and Ron Mitchell.
 - d. 1803 Luke Howard introduced a system of naming and classifying clouds.
 - e. 1847 First US postage stamp was issued. The subject: Benjamin Franklin.
 - f. 1954 Stamp of Hurricane Hazel.
 - g. April 2001 final selection of Clouds to be used on USA stamps. Three of the 15 chosen were photos of clouds taken by Rich Keen.

- h. Cloud stamps were released on October 2004.
 - i. Layered clouds = stratus clouds (stable)
 - j. Billowy clouds = cumulus clouds (unstable)
 - k. Nimbus clouds – source of rain and snow
 - l. High ice clouds – cirro
 - m. Fog. Definition = cloud in contact with the ground.
 - n. Convective clouds – low
 - o. Cumulonimbus clouds – lightning
 - p. Noctilucent clouds: 50 miles high. “Night luminaries.” Made of ice crystals. Minus 130 degrees F. Seen at midnight during the months of June and July.
10. These minutes do not represent official positions of LDC or its members. They simply reflect the comments of members present.

Next meeting: 11:30 am on March 10, 2006 in the **Birch Room** of St. Anthony Central Hospital. Please note the new location for this meeting only: **Birch Room on the Ground level of the Hospital.**

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Cherington, MD