

LIGHTNING DATA CENTER
MINUTES
JUNE 8, 2007
ST. ANTHONY CENTRAL HOSPITAL, DENVER, CO
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Quote of the Month:

“The Inkas worshipped *Viracocha*, their creator god, *Inti*, the Sun, *Quilla*, the Moon goddess, and in the cosmological temple of *Koricancha* – in Cusco – a whole section dedicated to Venus, the Pleiades and all of the stars. Here, Garcilaso de la Vega informs us, there was a room “dedicated to lightning, and to thunder, which they both expressed by the single name, *illapa*.....”

From El Mundo Magico. Shamanic Journeys In Peru: The Andes. Q’eros: Expeditions to the End of Time. On the web at: <http://www.ayahuasca-shamanism.co.uk/Qeros-Altomesayq.htm>

1. Meeting began at 11:30 am and adjourned at 1:20 pm.
2. Members present: Gift, Clark, Cherington, Nibbe, Burrows, Larson, Beverley, Brown, Mullen, Toth, Gartling, Langford, Wachtel, and Mendez. Michael Cherington moderated the meeting in Michael Foley’s absence, and Steve Clark recorded the minutes.
3. Dick presented a rough draft of a lightning safety poster aimed at hikers to the group and asked for comments. He said U.S. Forest Services personnel were positive to the idea. Ken Langford stated he felt the poster should include an actual photograph of lightning and suggested a “roster” of those struck and killed by lightning while hiking be placed on the poster in the form of their ages, genders, and date of death. His point was to drive home the very real danger people get into while hiking. Comments regarding the draft can be sent to Dick via e-mail at: wreckdistno@prolynx.com. Thank you to Dick for sharing that with us.
4. Our featured speaker was Dr. Bill Mendez, a Family Practice physician. Mr. Mendez was born in Mancos, Peru and graduated from the University of San Marco in Lima, Peru in 1958. Starting in 1966, he has practiced for 35 years at both St. Anthony and Lutheran Hospitals. His talk was a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Lightning in the Mountains: A Personal Account”. Four case studies of people struck by lightning were highlighted. Next, lightning safety guidelines were presented that are aimed at people residing in mountainous and remote areas. These guidelines were approved in two different conferences in 2003: one in Scotland and the other in Copenhagen. Following that, a quick overview of the Peruvian climate was given along with some beautiful photos of the Peruvian Andes. Additionally, mention was made of the Peruvian School of High Altitude

Medicine, founded by Dr. Carlos Monge. Finally, we learned the Institute Geofisico Peru houses the World Wide Lightning Detection Network (WWLLN). The WWLLN is on the web at: <http://webflash.ess.washington.edu/index.fast.html>

Several handouts were made available to those attending. Here they are:

- A. WWLLN: World Wide Lightning Location Network
 - B. Cherington, Michael, M.D, and others, "Mountain Medical Mystery: Unwitnessed Death of a Healthy Young Man, Caused by Lightning, The American Journal of Forensic Medicine and Pathology
 - C. Rupert and Hochachka, "Genetic Approaches to Understanding Human Adaptation to Altitude in the Andes", The Journal of Experimental Biology.
 - D. Rodriguez de Romo, "Daniel Vergara Lope and Carlos Monge Medrano: Two Pioneers of High Altitude Medicine", High Altitude Medicine and Biology.
 - E. Jacobson, Abram R., and others, "Performance Assessment of the World Wide Lightning Location Network (WWLLN), Using the Los Alamos Sferic Array (LASA) as Ground Truth", Journal of Atmospheric and Oceanic Technology.
 - F. "Global Real-Time Lightning Detection", Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society.
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- 5. Al Nibbe asked if there were more lightning fatalities above timberline then below timberline. Discussion among the group made it appear that the answer would be "no" as there are far more people below timberline that get hit by lightning.
 - 6. The Mountaineering Center in Golden, Colorado and the county coroner's offices were cited by the group as potential sources of information for Ken Langford's "roster" as noted above under #3.
 - 7. These minutes do not represent official positions of LDC or its members. They simply reflect the comments made at the meeting.
 - 8. Next meeting: Friday, July 13, 2007 at 11:30 am in the Main Auditorium of St. Anthony Central Hospital.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven E. Clark, Consulting Meteorologist