

LIGHTNING DATA CENTER MINUTES

March 8, 2019
ST. ANTHONY HOSPITAL WEST, LAKEWOOD, CO
www.lightningdatacenter.org

Quote of the Month: “Pop!” “Yes, my son.” “Do you know why they call those things lightning bugs?” “Because they never seem to strike twice in the same place is my guess, my boy.” *Routt County Republican*, September 19, 1919.

1. Members Present: Clark, Langford, three lightning survivors and two friends of survivors. Meeting began at 11:50 AM and ended at 1:15 PM. Clark moderated.
2. The LDC is accepting donations, either as cash or check. If you donate via check, please make your check payable to Steve Clark at 755 S. Clinton Street, #2A; Denver, CO 80247. He will cash the check and keep the cash holdings specifically for the LDC. When the LDC incurs expenses, Steve will pay for services rendered through his bank account using the cash from LDC’s cash holdings. A log will be maintained detailing the inflow and outflow of monies. At the present, the LDC has \$90.00, enough to pay for website hosting for the first half of 2019.
3. The LDC will participate in the EMS Safety Summit on March 28, 2019 from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM In the Crystal Ballroom at the Embassy Suites, located at 1420 Stout Street in downtown Denver, Colorado. Featured speakers will be Steve Clark, Sheryl Olson, Carl Swanson and Barb Stemple. The event is free to attend and is open to the public.
4. The International Conference on Lightning Protection will be held in Paris, France on March 28-29, 2019.
5. Here are a few “Lightning In The News” items:

In Louisiana, a man was driving his truck to work when lightning hit the truck and set it on fire. He was able to stop the truck and get out safely and he was unhurt. The truck was a total loss.

Lightning struck an airplane going from Milwaukee to Atlanta. The plane was diverted to Chattanooga, Tennessee, where it landed safely. None of the 164 passengers were harmed. The plane will be inspected to see where the lightning hit and what damage may have occurred.

Nearly 1000 lightning strikes were reported in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and western Nevada over a 12-hour period, due to an unusually unstable storm system. Most winter storms in the area produce less than 100 flashes according to the National Weather Service office in Reno.

6. Colorado lightning survivor and LDC member Barb Stemple was interviewed by broadcast meteorologist and LDC member Marty Coniglio for a segment titled “I Survived”. The segment aired on KUSA-TV on February 15 during the 6 AM newscast. Marty posted the interview on YouTube. Here’s the link: <https://youtu.be/RWBOcUuTUYA> Thank you, Marty!

7. For those who have not seen it, back in 2006, National Geographic produced a lightning documentary called “Lightning Strike Investigated”. Here’s the link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LF1WhJJTDDY&feature=youtu.be>
8. The LDC is compiling an anonymous list of lightning survivors and their medical issues, which will be sent to Dr. Chris Andrews for analysis, as noted in the January 2019 minutes. At present, there are 182 raw entries. The number of entries that will be sent to Dr. Andrews will be fewer, once the table of entries is cleaned up. The list should be completed sometime this month.
9. The survivor with whom the LDC met with last month by phone sent us a summary letter. She reports having chronic pain, chronic fatigue and low stamina. She has headaches, a few of which flare up into migraines. The pain moves around her body with varying intensities and sensations. Where there may be awful pain on one day may not be so bad the next day. The pain sensations include, but are not limited to: dull, nagging, deep, burning, sharp, exhausting electric-like spasms, twitching and throbbing. Bad days tend to outnumber the good. She is seeing a psychologist for PTSD. Medical marijuana helps numb the pain, but does not eliminate it. She is looking into Cranial Osteopathy.
10. We met with a female survivor who was struck over 25 years ago. A storm was approaching and she went into an open pasture to harness a prized horse and take the horse into a barn. Just as she was attaching the harness, she saw a bright blue-white flash of light and she was thrown onto her back. She somehow made it into the barn and her sister took her to the hospital. Her vitals were monitored for a few hours and then she was released. She had to be wheeled to the car as she was too weak to stand, let alone walk. She was told to get some rest and drink lots of water.

Her eyes would drift in and out of focus. Her hearing felt as she was in a tunnel. Her legs felt heavy. She would laugh and cry hysterically at various times. She was confused and at times would lash out at someone. She could not remember the names of familiar things, like a cup. Her hands would freeze on the gates and she could not unbind them. About 2-3 months after the strike, she lost all of her teeth. There was a constant feeling of wanting to get back to herself. When storms were in the area, she would run to the bathroom, pray, and vomit. A large bump was on the back of her neck for about 20 years after the strike, which then disappeared. Before the strike, she composed and played her own music from memory on a guitar. Post-strike, she cannot write music or remember the songs. Before the strike, she worked in construction and loved working with, keeping up with, and surpassing most of the guys on the job site. Following the strike, walking and talking have been a challenge. After the strike, she tried to return to being a waitress, but she had trouble holding a glass of water in her hand – it would slip right through and fall to the floor. She had to write everyone’s order and she had difficulty dealing with customers – especially communication.

At one point in time, she suffered from panic attacks and sought treatment from a psychiatrist, who diagnosed her as bi-polar. She was put on an antipsychotic drug, which led to diabetes, an enlarged heart, and high blood pressure for which she had to take insulin.

Her present ailments include: leg pain and weakness, cramping of her arms during cold weather or from overuse, memory loss and inability to recognize faces. She cannot find her car in a parking lot unless her dogs are in it or unless she parks near a cart round up. Everything has to be done in order without any distraction. Everything has its place. She uses slogans to help her along. She was diagnosed with brain injury 21 years after the strike. Once she realized she had brain damage, she was able to show some compassion towards herself. Finally, she has an emotional support dog which she brought to the meeting. She says the dog has played and continues to play a significant role in her life.

Finally, she spoke a little bit about what could have helped her. First and foremost was doctor education and the healthcare community, as they are the voices of authority. Education of those who have been affected empowers them with knowledge. She also said people need to know about websites such as LDC's and Mary Ann Cooper's site.

This was the first time she has ever spoken before a group about what happened to her and she was very grateful for the opportunity to do so. Ma'am, we at the Lightning Data Center greatly appreciate you presenting your story to us!

11. A second survivor said the medical treatment she received at a clinic in Grand County, Colorado was much better than the treatment Barb Stemple had received following her strike, based upon conversations between the two. As most of you know, Barb was instrumental in having the LDC give lightning talks in Grand County to the EMS community and also to the general public during the summer of 2017. The second survivor was struck after our presentations.
12. LDC welcomes your medical questions. Please send them via e-mail to Steve Clark at sclarktoto@gmail.com. Your medical questions will be forwarded to Dr. Phil Yarnell for his review and will usually be taken up for discussion in the next month's meeting. Please be advised any questions posed are for the general consideration by the group and do not constitute a formal medical opinion. If a formal evaluation is requested, arrangements can be made directly with Dr. Yarnell. If you have a medical emergency, please call 911 or your local emergency services provider.
13. Questions, comments, notification of errors, and critiques of these minutes are welcome. Please forward those to Steve Clark at: sclarktoto@gmail.com. Please keep your communications professional and respectful. Communications will be forwarded to the appropriate author(s) of the minutes and addressed accordingly.
14. LDC Disclaimer: These minutes do not represent official positions of the LDC or its members. They simply reflect the comments made at the meeting. Furthermore, the LDC does not implicitly or explicitly recommend or endorse any product or service. Any product or service presented in these minutes is done so for purposes of discussion and analysis. The merit (or lack thereof) is open for the consideration and review by the entire membership.

15. Next meeting: Friday, April 12, 2019, from 11:45 AM to 1:00 PM at St. Anthony Hospital West.
Room: Conference Rooms E & F. Meeting Format: TBA.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steven E. Clark, Consulting Meteorologist

Lightning Links

This is a monthly listing of periodicals, websites, and videos about lightning and allied areas from a variety of sources. A headline or description is listed, followed by the link. Please note that some of the links are perishable, which means you'll need to go to the source for the information.

Pederson, A. 2018: NEW VIDEO: Pickup on Fire After It Is Hit by Lightning While on 165 in Sterlington. *myarklamiss.com*. February 19, 2019.

Link: <https://www.myarklamiss.com/news/local-news/pickup-hit-by-lightning-while-driving-on-165-in-sterlington/1793805033>

Hansen, Z., 2018: Delta Flight Headed to Atlanta Struck by Lightning, Forced to Land in Chattanooga. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. February 19, 2019.

Link: <https://www.ajc.com/news/crime--law/delta-flight-headed-atlanta-struck-lightning-forced-land-chattanooga/dpYUulTuOTq5Yc2z1mVa2L/>

Robertson, M., 2018: Nearly 1,000 Lightning Strikes Recorded in Rare Winter Weather Event for Sierra Nevada. *Sfgate.com*. February 14, 2019.

Link: https://www.sfgate.com/weather/article/1000-lightning-strikes-sierra-nevada-tahoe-winter-13617981.php?utm_medium=facebook&utm_source=sfgate&fbclid=IwAR1jzozWnwycWbKzZIjmwciwENmNVzTRKote0SBuxWaQgFh5Uh-x6-frlmk

Georgia Institute of Technology, 2018: Signals from Distant Lightning Could Help Secure Electric Substations. *Science News*, February 26, 2019.

Link: <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/02/190226141136.htm>
