

LIGHTNING DATA CENTER MINUTES

June 14, 2024

ST. ANTHONY HOSPITAL, LAKEWOOD, COLORADO

Monthly Quote: “A western streetcar operator is reported none the worse for being hit by lightning. A non-conductor.” *The Day Book*, September 8, 1915

Members present: Clark, Langford, Swanson and Price. Meeting began at 11:45 AM and ended at 12:35 PM.

1. 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. LDC currently has \$347.00 in cash.
2. Carl Swanson and Robert Gift both mentioned a news story about lightning killing a rancher and 34 head of cattle in Jackson County, Colorado. Shortly thereafter, Steve Clark was contacted by KCNC-TV here in Denver for a brief Zoom interview, which was broadcast on the local news.
3. Part of the LDC website under the medical tab is under construction. LDC is in the process of adding recommended treatment guidelines for ER physicians, a direct result of the meeting Ken Langford chaired last February. The rest of the website is still accessible and fully functional.
4. We met with Randy Price, a lightning survivor. Mr. Price has given us permission to use his name, location and other personal information to discuss his strike, per HIPAA. Mr. Price read about the work that Dr. Phil Yarnell and Mary Ann Cooper had done for lightning survivors in the April/May 2024 edition of a magazine entitled *Brain & Life*. From that article, he reached out to the LDC requesting a meeting.

He was hit approximately one year ago in June. He handles port operations for cargo ships, somewhat akin to air traffic controllers for airplanes. He was at his workstation, which is located in the uppermost floor of a tower equipped with electronic equipment such as radar, VHS, satellite communications, radio, and computer monitors. At the time he was hit, he was holding a wired microphone in one hand and a wireless computer mouse in the other. It was storming on that day and the sky was hazy. Lightning hit the antenna on the tower and came in through the coaxial cable. He saw an electric arc on the monitors and the radio. He was filled with a sensation of burning fire. The lightning went through some lightning arrestors and out of the building, making a very loud sound. The arrestors were located below the tower floor.

After the strike, he tried working for two days, but he could not sleep for two days. On Day 3 he went to the hospital which is a 3-hour drive. He does not remember the hospital visit or the next several days. He was told his blood panels showed some parameters were out of range, but his EKG was fine. He was filled with fluids and discharged. During his drive home, there were at least two stops at other ER facilities. Carl asked if the healthcare providers believed he had been hit by lightning. He said no. Randy also saw a cardiologist, who noted his heart will sometimes fire and not contract, resulting in a double beat. Randy was told he may need a pacemaker in the future.

Some of his other health issues are listed below, in no particular order.

- Alternating bodily temperatures cold, hot, cold, hot, etc.
- Vomiting, convulsion and tremors.
- Unequal pupil size in his eyes.
- Has to take 26 different medications each day.
- Has a bulge in his cervical spine (thinks it is the C3).
- Very tired and weak. Does tasks in 5-15 minute intervals then rests.
- Tremendous difficulty sleeping. Sees light flashes when he shuts his eyes.
- When trying to sleep, mind races and he can't slow it down. Takes nerve blocker to calm down.
- Memory issues.
- Pressure in the left scalp with pains.
- Low-frequency sounds upset his mental state.
- Uncontrollable anxiety.
- Wanders off and does not know why.
- Sometimes has difficulty grasping objects.
- Eating habits fluctuate, sometimes wildly. Drinks Gatorade each day for electrolytes.
- Hearing difficult initially with a lot of ringing.

Randy said his symptoms have improved over the last year but his condition fluctuates from day to day. He feels the electricity in the air and he can sense when storms are coming from a few hours to two days in advance. He said he could sense the flow of current while taking electrical measurements during a repair job.

Ken recommended he try ear buds for soothing sounds which might help him relax. Ken also asked how his employer was treating him. Randy said his employer has been great, but having to navigate Worker's Comp has been extremely difficult, for which he has recently retained an attorney.

Ken also asked if anybody else was hit. Randy said there were two people downstairs. They did not feel anything but they saw TV monitors and other equipment had been blown. A boat pilot nearby saw it hit the station. Ken advised Randy to gather as much documentation as possible to document the fact lightning had hit his location. Ken also asked if he was aware of LS&ESSI. Randy said he was and is planning to attend their meeting in Charlotte.

5. LDC welcomes your 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 any answers given 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 EMS.
6. Questions, comments, error notifications, and critiques of these minutes are welcome. Please send them to Steve Clark. Please keep the communications professional and respectful. They will be forwarded to the appropriate author(s) of the minutes and addressed accordingly.
7. 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.
8. Next meeting: Friday, July 12, 2024, from 11:45 AM to 1:00 PM MST.

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.

Fitzgerald, S., 2024: How Being Struck by Lightning Affects the Brain. *Brain & Life*, April/May 2024. Link: <https://www.brainandlife.org/articles/how-being-struck-by-lightning-affects-the-brain>

Williams, B., 2024: Rancher, 34 Head of Cattle Killed by Lightning in Jackson County. *KDVR-TV*. May 26-27, 2024. Link: <https://kdvr.com/news/local/rancher-34-head-of-cattle-killed-by-lightning-in-jackson-county/>

Erblat, A., 2024: Colorado Man and 34 Cows Killed by Lightning in Jackson County. *KCNC-TV*. May 27, 2024. Link: <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/colorado-man-struck-killed-lightning-jackson-county/?intcid=CNM-00-10abd1h>

Young, O., 2024: Community Mourns Colorado Rancher Killed in Lightning Strike. *KCNC-TV*. May 27, 2024. Link: <https://www.cbsnews.com/colorado/news/community-mourns-colorado-rancher-killed-lightning-strike/>
