



Association of Certified Meteorologists

Newsletter  
November 2020

## President's Message

---

*Tim Hall, CCM*

These are exciting times for ACM. The energy, interest and increasing trend of member-focused activity have attained levels unmatched in this organization for at least a decade. In parallel, the number of CCM candidates going through the certification process with the AMS is at an all-time high over the past two years. The bottom line is that ACM's prospects are bright. The Board has been hard at work on multiple initiatives to enhance the value proposition of ACM to its members. I'd like to recognize and thank Steve Roberts for volunteering to take on the leadership role of editor for our quarterly newsletter. As we strive to enhance member communication via multiple avenues, the newsletter remains our most important vehicle to keep members updated.



In September nearly 30 members participated in our first-ever, virtual mid-year meeting. The meeting featured multiple elements including networking sessions with themes ranging from air quality to emergency management and an all-members business meeting. These sessions were appreciated based on feedback we have received and have sparked a new ACM group called the ACM Small Business Forum. The Forum met for the first time on Nov 4 and plans approximately quarterly meetings going forward. Alicia Wasula provides additional details in her newsletter column.

Another key activity is our exploration of our potential service initiatives. During the summer, the Board chartered an ad hoc committee led by TC Moore with assistance from Dan Schreiber to explore concepts related to Red Cross emergency management support. In addition, the committee is looking at how ACM might fulfill its organizational role as a National Weather Service Weather Ready Nation (WRN) Ambassador. The work of the committee continues to progress with the Red Cross opportunity advancing to an active engagement with regional leadership (as a pathfinder) in North Carolina. In the upcoming quarter, we plan to engage the NWS to discuss ideas for the WRN Ambassador role.

As you will glean from other articles in this newsletter, we have a growing set of opportunities to get involved. Two ACM Board positions are opening up in January 2021 with several more anticipated in early 2022. We have several committees actively seeking volunteers. As always if you desire to get more

involved, we have a spot for you. Please reach out to me or one of the other Board members or Committee Chairs to find out more.

One last item of news I'd like to share is to announce the availability of some new ACM bling. In the NCIM days, the organization furnished a lapel pin to members that they could proudly don at conferences and other professional venues. I am happy to announce that we now have an ACM pin to offer all members (see picture immediately below). It is approximately 1-inch wide and sports the ACM logo. In the near future, we will be receiving our order and plan to distribute pins to all current members. New members will receive a pin as an ACM welcome gift.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the Annual (Virtual) Meeting on January 31. We will publish additional details about the agenda including networking sessions via email as we approach the event.



## Member Profile

---



### Meet ACM Member Michael Mogil – Founder and Owner of How the Weatherworks

Hi, everyone. My name is H. Michael Mogil, I'm a long-time member of ACM (and it's predecessor organization NCIM), and I'm a CCM.

I didn't start out in my meteorological career wanting to become a CCM. However, a recommendation from my boss (at National Weather Service Headquarters back in the 1970's) stuck with me. He told me that "someday," when I left NWS, I'd want to be a CCM. No further explanation was offered at the time.

Some two decades later, I just decided to do it.

I had already earned my Broadcast Seal (now CBM - #334) in 1979 after a stint on the National Public Broadcasting show, "AM Weather." So, I knew the drill, which involved both written and oral testing. In 1993, I earned my CCM (#391). Then, as social media expanded, I obtained a National Weather Association's Digital Media Seal (#1410102D) in 2014.

Serendipity struck, when in 1995, the satellite part of NOAA (where I was working at the time) was in draw-down mode. Not having forward-looking plans in place, I raised my hand and managed to receive an early retirement.

After a year of teaching fifth-grade math and science at a private school (an enlightening experience, I might add), I was queried by a public defender in Washington, DC about serving as an expert witness in a "Fourth Amendment" case.

"Why would you need a meteorologist for a case involving unwarranted search and seizure?" I queried.



The attorney told me that the police had arrested a young man for drug possession and sale. I believe the amount involved was \$20. However, the police had marked the weather as being "clear," on the arrest sheet and the attorney had recalled, from her personal experience, that the night was "shrouded in pea-soup fog."

She followed up with, "I need someone that has personality and can explain things easily to a jury. I can't afford to have an O.J. Simpson type of expert witness that puts everyone to sleep. You come highly recommended."

Hence, began my CCM career.

Since that time, with some 150 cases and several court appearances and numerous depositions behind me, I can say that being a CCM is beyond what I had thought it would be. As many of you reading this know, a CCM is actually a meteorological detective, looking for clues in a landscape where an attorney may have started out using airport observations 40 miles away from an incident site. It involves putting these clues together in a cohesive and comprehensive way and then being able to defend them before sometimes tough grilling by opposing counsel. It requires fending off the, thankfully uncommon, attorney who wants you to prove a certain scenario and asks you to find the evidence that he/she specifically wants you to find.

In my journey, I have had attorneys advise me how to dress for certain jury settings, prep for deposition and/or trial (being very cognizant of ensuring that my answers never change), and be sure to talk in terms that typical jurors can understand.

I recall one case in Miami-Dade County in which the District Attorney was questioning me during a six-hour deposition. He had asked me a certain question several times; then, he asked me yet again. I replied, "...you've asked me the same question six times already (yes, I had counted them), and I have answered them the same way each time. I am going to answer the same way for the seventh time..."

The District Attorney rose from the table and walked out of the room. He never returned. Five minutes later, all the remaining parties looked at each other and agreed that the deposition was over.

Perhaps the most unusual case I was involved in focused on strong winds that allegedly caused a boat to be blown off of a dry dock near the Chesapeake Bay. In going to trial, the judge allowed me to perform a tabletop demonstration of a microburst. Following my testimony, opposing counsel came forth and requested that his NEW meteorological expert needed to testify. The judge, being of a creative mind, decided that the new expert could testify, but that I could attend his testimony and then rebut it. That has been the only time I have seen another meteorologist testify at trial.

I know that most, if not all, ACM members have similar types of experiences and that they'll be sharing those in future ACM newsletters. Since we are a unique cadre of scientists, all of our stories should make for fascinating reading. I can't wait for the next installment.

H Michael Mogil  
CCM, CBM, NWA Digital Media Seal

### ➤ **ACM Small Business Forum**

The ACM held its inaugural Small Business Forum on November 4. The event was attended by about 12 ACM members with small business interests, and a range of topics were discussed. The focus of the evening's discussion was on the impacts COVID and the events of 2020 have had on business operations, how members have found new ways to work around problems and continue to move forward, and plans for 2021 given the continued uncertainty we all face. There was great enthusiasm for continuing the group discussions, and numerous topics for future discussions have been discussed. The plan going forward is to hold meetings on a quarterly basis, with the next meeting tentatively scheduled for February 2021. Any ACM members who are connected to small businesses (owners, employees, etc.) are welcome to join in the discussion- stay tuned for future email communications! If you are affiliated with a small business and have an idea for a topic which you would like to see addressed at an upcoming meeting, please contact Alicia Wasula ( acw at shadetreemeteorology.com ).

### ➤ **January 2021 ACM Board Member Election**

The ACM Board announces candidates for the two open ACM Board positions for January 2021-January 2023 terms. One position is an officer (ACM Secretary) and the second is for a Director position. We have three candidates running for the Director position including Randy Bass, Jim Bria, and Adam Pasch. We have one candidate running for Secretary, Morgan Yarker. The election will be conducted electronically in January in advance of the ACM Annual Meeting. Please review the candidate's statements of interest and BIOs below. I'd like to thank each of the candidates for their interest in bringing their ideas and energy to bear in service to the ACM members as part of the Board. There will also be open positions including President-elect to fill at the 2022 Annual Meeting. Please contact Nomination Committee Chair, Elizabeth Austin if you are interested in running for a future position.

## ➤ Association of Certified Consulting Meteorologists - NCEI Online Data Access Webinar

**When:** Thursday December 3, 2020 | 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm EST

**Where:** Virtual via GoToMeeting (Webinar Link will be emailed out on November 30<sup>th</sup>)

**ACM Contact:** Mark McGinnis

**Overview:**

NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is committed to producing use-inspired environmental information products to serve every sector of the U.S. economy to enable robust decision making.

To further NOAA and NCEI’s use-inspired mission goals, NCEI routinely hosts engagement events to foster dialog with targeted sectors to better understand customer needs. Customer feedback guides NCEI’s science and research and supports innovation and advancement of NCEI’s product and services.

The Association of Certified Meteorologists (ACM) represents the oldest, continuously active professional association of private sector consulting and industrial meteorologists in the U.S., a sector that represents a significant segment of NCEI’s customer base. The ACM supports the weather consulting and information industry’s wide-ranging needs and common interests.

NCEI has organized a virtual Online Data Access Review on December 3, 2020 that serves to provide the ACM with an overview of online data access methods, latest updates and changes including the new Common Access system, as well as a live demonstration and an interactive question and answer period.

**Agenda:**

<b>2:00 pm</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>	<b>Michael Brewer</b> Chief Climatic Information Services Branch NOAA NCEI
<b>2:10 pm</b>	<b>Overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overview of NCEI Data Access efforts</li><li>• Latest Updates</li></ul>	<b>Rich Baldwin</b> Chief, Data Access Branch NOAA NCEI
<b>2:30 pm</b>	<b>Data Access Demonstration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data access methods, including Common Access</li><li>• Using NCEI Map tools</li><li>• Accessing Satellite &amp; Radar</li><li>• Introduction to NOAA OneStop</li></ul>	<b>Scott Stephens</b> Customer Service Representative NOAA NCEI CSSD
<b>3:00 pm</b>	<b>Audience Interaction</b>	

## ➤ ACM Annual Meeting

**When:** Sunday January 31, 2021 | 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm

**Where:** Virtual (Agenda and invite details will be published as we approach the event)

## Committee Updates

---



### Marketing Committee

*Mark McGinnis, CCM*

The ACM Marketing Committee has an intern to assist in creating content for our website and social media platforms. Maddi Johnson is a Sophomore Meteorology Major at Ball State in Indiana. Since starting in late September, Maddi has already written three articles for our website. I want to thank Bill Conway for his work in advertising and interviewing the candidates. We are always looking for member content for the ACM website. It helps with our Google search rankings. So, if you have any recent interesting work experience or recognition, please feel free to reach out to me, Bill Conway, Morgan Yarker or Mike Mogil.



Keep December 3<sup>rd</sup> open on your calendar. NCEI is hosting a webinar on their products and website. This is exclusive to ACM Consulting members. Over 15 members have already RSVP'd. If you haven't and want to attend email me at mmcginnis at fairskiesconsulting.com. The webinar link and password are scheduled to be emailed out Monday November 30<sup>th</sup>.

We are always looking for help. So, if you have any suggestions, comments or interest in the Marketing Committee, email or call Bill, Morgan, Mike or myself.

### Volunteer Support to Emergency Managers/Disaster Responders Ad Hoc Committee

*TC Moore, CCM*

At the request of ACM President Tim Hall, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed over the summer to investigate potential courses of actions (COAs) related to providing ACM members with avenues to engage in volunteer support. Members of this committee, which included Tim Hall, Mark McGinnis, Alicia Wasula, Randy Bass, Dan Schreiber, and TC Moore, met virtually over the summer to discuss individual experiences and areas of interest to assist in building COAs to present to the ACM Board. During the meetings, the committee considered three main areas: support to Disaster Relief Operations/Agencies (e.g., American Red Cross); support to NWS via the Weather Ready Nation Ambassador Program; support local/regional Emergency Managers/EOC during disaster response.



Ultimately the committee decided on carrying forward with discussion related to the first two areas. With this in mind, the committee led discussion in these areas during one of the ACM Fall Meeting breakout sessions. The goals for this breakout session discussion included gauging interest within the ACM community for 'volunteer support' (defined as making use of CCM skills and training to volunteer to provide support for events or activities), and getting feedback on the best means to build processes (i.e., SOPs, etc.) as well as on obstacles/roadblocks. In addition, committee members Dan Schreiber and TC Moore provided summaries of their experiences providing regional Red Cross organizations with weather support during hurricane disaster relief operations.

The takeaways from the virtual ACM meeting were to emphasize that this exploration is “not for pay”, which led to discussion on the ethics related to business leads that might arise from volunteer support - any such actions should be clear of any conflicts of interest. In addition, discussion on support to agencies such as the Red Cross clearly focused on emphasizing less about forecasting/more about decision support, and avoiding “freelancing”, so as to always maintain horizontal consistency with NWS and NHC forecasts. Potential roadblocks/landmines were also discussed, and included liability issues, and whether any type of insurance would be needed in the course of volunteering, the potential for any formal agreements between ACM and supposed agencies, and whether these would be at local levels, or possibly higher levels.

From here, the committee presented to the ACM Board Meeting in November with a focus on the value propositions related to this initiative - these range from the “greater good”, to professional networking for ACM members, to ACM brand positioning. The ACM board agreed that the committee should continue to explore opportunities related to formalizing volunteer support to the Red Cross, and working with the NWS on the Ambassador Program, in order to provide ACM members with avenues to volunteer.

Specific follow-up action items from the ACM board meeting included meeting with agency POCs with the NWS and with the Red Cross to discuss options for support, and the possibility of formalizing agreements with these agencies. Subsequently, the committee will reach out to ACM members to build a list of potential volunteers and follow up with building training programs and SOPs as needed. If you have any questions, or would like to learn more about this initiative, please contact me at “ tcmoore at asweather.com ”.

## **Awards and Recognition Committee**

*Dr. Alicia Wasula, PhD, CCM*

The ACM Awards Committee is currently soliciting nominations for AMS Fellow and the Harrison Award for 2021. If you know of a deserving ACM member, please contact Alicia Wasula ( acw at shadetreemeteorology.com ). Additionally, the Awards Committee is requesting that members submit current CVs so that we may identify potential nominees for 2021 and beyond. We are also looking for volunteers to serve on this committee. If you are willing to submit your CV or have interest inserving on the Awards Committee, contact Morgan Yarker at acm.wxexperts at gmail.com. Thank you!



## **ACM Newsletter Editor**

*Steve Roberts, CCM*

I am honored to serve as the current ACM Newsletter Editor. I am a long time New Yorker, currently living in Poughkeepsie, NY with my wife and 3 children. I am the President of CompuWeather, a forensic weather and weather forecast consulting company. In addition to running the business operations, my primary role at CompuWeather is as a forensic meteorologist. I look forward to collaborating and getting to know everyone in the organization. ACM is a special group with great ideas for making a difference in not only the members lives, but those outside of the organization. If anyone has any thoughts about the newsletter or ideas for future content/columns please send your thoughts and ideas to me at sroberts at compuweather.com. I wish all of you and your loved ones a joyous and healthy holiday season!



## ACM 2021 Board Member Election

---



### Meet the Candidates

There are currently two open board positions that will be filled during the 2021 annual election. The open board positions are Director and Secretary. The election will be conducted electronically in January in advance of the ACM Annual Meeting. Each candidate has provided a statement of interest and bio for all members to review. A special thank you to all our candidates for their interest in serving the ACM organization as board members.

### Randall Bass, CCM – Candidate for Director

Dear ACM Board,

I was recently approached about my interest in being considered as an Association of Certified Meteorologists board member for the next term. I do indeed have interest and would be honored to be considered. I have been excited by what the board has done over the last year and their plans going forward, and would like to be a part of the board as ACM grows and leads these next few years. I am especially excited about the publicity opportunities that ACM is exploring for our members, as well as volunteer and giving back prospects with NGOs, Emergency Managers and other public service groups.



I became a CCM in 2014 and have been on the CCM board since 2018. 2021 will be my last year on the BCCM so this opportunity would be a perfect transition as I move off. Thank you again for consideration and please let me know if you require anything else from me such as a CV, etc.

Sincerely,

*Randall Bass*

Randy Bass CCM  
#703

### Randall Bass, CCM - BIO

Randy Bass manages the Weather Research Branch in the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Aviation Weather Division. He also owns and operates Bass Weather Services, a consulting company specializing in expert witness testimony and forecasting support.

Randy retired from the Air Force in 2008 after 20 years as a weather officer. He provided weather support to bases and military aircraft throughout the US, and spent almost half his career supporting the Intelligence Community and satellite operations.

Mr. Bass earned his BS in Meteorology from NC State University and his MS in Meteorology from Texas A&M University. He obtained his CCM in 2014.



## **Dr. Adam Pasch, PhD, CCM – Candidate for Director**

Dear ACM Members:

My name is Adam Pasch. I earned my CCM in 2016 while working for The Climate Corporation (a fully-owned subsidiary of Monsanto, at the time). I attended St. Louis University for my Bachelor's (2003), Master's (2005), and Doctoral (2008) degrees in Meteorology. After finishing my doctorate, I worked for six years in meteorology and air quality consulting with Sonoma Technology, Inc. In 2014, I joined The Climate Corporation as a Weather Data Manager, or the weather expert, helping to find and evaluate weather data used for research internally and in customer-facing applications. I eventually transitioned to a leadership role on the Weather Science Team as the Manager of the Weather Data Strategy and Operations Team. In this role, I worked to establish the strategic plan for weather use at The Climate Corporation, performed data analysis, and mentored junior staff. I left The Climate Corporation in 2018 to join a small ag-tech startup called CIBO Technologies, Inc. as an Environmental Scientist - Meteorologist. I have since been promoted to a Principal Data Scientist - Meteorology, and now have taken on a Product Management role at CIBO Technologies, Inc. for CIBO's carbon credit offset application and technologies.



I have made it a point throughout my career, so far, to always be learning and mentoring co-workers and colleagues, whether that relates to meteorology or to the latest advances in Python programming. During the added time at home this Spring, I started my consulting side business, which I hope to continue to build over the next several years as I continue to grow in my career. I joined ACM in January for networking and to continue building professional relationships with other CCMs.

I want to be involved in ACM for several reasons:

1. Assist with and help to develop strategies to bring the “next generation” into the CCM program and into ACM. I recently had the pleasure to mentor one of the newest CCMs, Brian Smoliak, who was a former colleague at The Climate Corporation through the process, and hope to encourage him to join ACM as a new CCM.
2. Bring a unique perspective and experience to the ACM with extensive experience in consulting, ag-tech and large corporations, and also from a start-up perspective.
3. Continue to develop professional relationships with other CCMs.

Please let me know if there are any questions or clarifications needed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Adam Pasch, PhD, CCM #727

### **Dr. Adam Pasch, PhD, CCM – BIO**

Adam Pasch earned his CCM in 2016 while working for The Climate Corporation. Dr. Pasch currently works for CIBO Technologies, a breakthrough technology platform that accelerates regenerative agriculture and the first, direct-from-the-farmer carbon marketplace as the Director of Product Development. Dr. Pasch was the Principal Data Scientist in Meteorology. Prior to CIBO, Dr. Pasch was the Weather Data Strategy and Operations Manager at The Climate Corporation and a Meteorologist Project Manager at Sonoma Technology, Inc. He holds a Doctorate, Masters, and Bachelor of Science in Meteorology from Saint Louis University.

## **James V. Bria, CCM – Candidate for Director**

Dear ACM Board:

I would like to express my interest in the opportunity to serve as a board member for the Association of Certified Meteorologists. I have been employed by CompuWeather since 2003 and I am currently the Forecast Operations Manager, a Senior Forecast Meteorologist and Senior Forensic Meteorologist. As a Senior Forensic Meteorologist, I prepare historical weather reports, provides consultations with attorneys, insurance adjusters and engineers as well as testify as an expert witness. I have provided deposition and trial testimony as a Forensic Weather Expert in over 100 cases since 2009. Through my knowledge and experience, I have gained a deeper understanding of the role that forensic meteorologists have as consultants. I am confident that I can assist the Association of Certified Meteorologists to exceed our collective goals as consulting meteorologists.



I look forward to the opportunity to serve as a Board Member of the ACM. Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Bria". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Bria

### **James V. Bria, CCM – BIO**

James Bria is a Senior Forensic and Forecast Meteorologist at CompuWeather, located in the Hudson Valley of New York. James graduated from the State University of New York at Albany in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Atmospheric Science and has worked at CompuWeather since March of 2003. He was the lead forecast meteorologist at the U.S. Open Tennis Tournament in Flushing, New York from 2006-2014. Jim earned the Certified Consulting Meteorologist designation in 2014 and has consulted as Weather Expert in over 1,000 cases.

## **Dr. Morgan Yarker, PhD, CCM – Candidate for Secretary**

To the ACM Membership and the Board of Directors:

I am writing this letter for your consideration to elect me for a second term as Secretary of the Board of Directors.

My first term as Secretary began in 2018, when I filled a vacancy for the organization. Since then, I have collaborated with the Board through the evolution ACM's brand and value proposition, which included the development of new strategies for virtual record-keeping, communication, and networking. This transformation continues to be a work in progress so I would like to continue as Secretary to ensure the vision comes to fruition.



I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the Board of Directors. It has been a pleasure to connect with each of you, which I have the fortune to do as part of this position. I am proud of the momentum this organization and its membership has developed and would be honored to continue to serve in a leadership position again.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Morgan B. Yarker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Morgan B. Yarker, PhD, CCM

## **Dr. Morgan Yarker, PhD, CCM – BIO**

Morgan B. Yarker, PhD, CCM is an Atmospheric Scientist and a Science Educator. She is Founder and Owner of Yarker Consulting, which offers services in forensic meteorology, data analytics, research and development, virtual training and online professional development for a variety of industries worldwide. She has served as ACM Board Secretary since 2018 and has been a member of the Marketing Committee since 2017. She has been active within AMS as well, serving on several boards and committees including The Board for Early Career Professionals, The Board of Pre-College Education, and as of 2021, the Board of Certified Consulting Meteorologists. She was also part of the working group who developed the new Certified AMS Teacher certification, co-founded AMS's K-12 Teacher Travel Grant program and was selected to join the inaugural class of the Early Career Leadership Academy. Additionally, she Co-Founded Entrepreneurial Meteorology, an outreach initiative aimed at encouraging and educating young meteorology professionals about business ownership.