

PRAIRIE SKIES

October 2023

*Yes, Virginia,
There Is a Water Problem*

ALEXA PETERS

PRAIRIE SKIES

A Monthly Journal of Weather & Climate in Central Illinois

October 2023, Volume 1, Issue 2

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EIU WeatherCenter & WEIU SkyWatch

“Yes, Virginia, There Is a Water Problem!”

Part I in the “Without Water” Series

Borrowed from Francis Pharcellus Church’s line from the story, “Yes, Virginia, There is a Santa Clause!” published in *The Sun* on September 21, 1897, the creative editorial focuses on Virginia’s concern about the realness of Santa Claus when her friends said “There is no Santa.” This same situation parallels some views about the scarcity of water resources.

While a few believe there is a water crisis in the world, there are still a majority that believe there is no water issue here in the United States. The problem is, “Seeing is Believing.” Rain, floods, and faucets that continue to provide water without restrictions here in the Midwest continue to give people a false sense of security. What is not seen is that the water supply, used daily for human consumption, hidden below the surface of the Earth in aquifers, is dwindling. Across the nation, aquifers are dwindling. In some locations, such as the Great Plains and the western states, the aquifers are diminishing at an unprecedented rate. Some of these aquifers have been completely drained, dry.

Aquifers are underground bodies of water found between the crevasses of rock, sand, and clay. Water collects in these open slivers over thousands of years. Our daily pumping removes more water than nature is able to recharge the aquifers. According to the USGS Water Use Data Report (2015), Coles County, Illinois pumps nearly 4.1 million gallons of ground water daily to supply a population of 49,000. The top populated consumers are Charleston with 17,247 people and Mattoon, in second, at 16,805.

Thornton, Colorado, a single city of over 150,000 people, as recently reported in the *New York Times*, pumps over 13 million gallons a day and over 40 million gallons a day during the summer months. The reason for the increase in summer months is

“largely because of people watering their lawns with water that is suitable for drinking.” Thornton, Colorado is in a traditionally dry region east of the Rocky Mountains and has attempted to obtain water from sources 72 miles to the north due to a diminished supply since 2000. Lawsuits continue to keep the supply from Thornton’s residents.

The situation might seem different in Coles County with lush vegetation but the seriousness of the dwindling supply from our own shared Mahomet Aquifer is raising flags. The Mahomet Aquifer is mostly surrounded in clay.

Aquifers of sand are easier to recharge by water facilities. The water that returns to the treatment plant after being used, is pumped back into the aquifer for later use as Fresno, California does. Clay-based aquifers are more complicated because when the water level drops, the clay dries out. Subsidence of the surface occurs and cannot be repaired. Many locations in the Southwest United States have seen cracks in the surface that damage structure’s foundations.

In parts of Arizona, subsidence of the land has occurred between 1950 and 1992 from the over pumping of water from the aquifer. A great deal of water was for agriculture. Large sinkholes and fissures have opened as the layers of sediment collapse from the absence of water. Recharging of the aquifer is practically impossible. Some communities in Arizona and New Mexico have been cut off from water supplies due to high demand.

While there continues to be a debate concerning the existence of Santa Clause, the water problem, for our region, is real. Action by local to national agencies is necessary to protect this precious resource.

Cameron Douglas Craig

PICTURE OF THE MOMENT The Next Generation



Former “SkyWatch” Forecaster, Cameron Hopman (‘11), takes time to enjoy the weather with his daughters. Hopman is currently chief meteorologist for WEVV-TV, Evansville, Indiana. In January, Hopman will move into the chief position for WKOW-TV in Madison, Wisconsin. Photo used with Permission.

Cases of Vibro Bacteria increase due to Climate Change

During their presidencies, Ulysses Grant (1822-1885) to Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) would occasionally venture down the street from the White House to lunch at “The Old Ebbit.” The restaurant, founded in 1856, is not only known for delicious early American fare, but its raw oyster offerings. These fresh offerings from the sea probably had unfavorable moments throughout history but enjoying raw food has become a recent and frequent concern among the health industry.

Climate change can negatively influence the quality of food from the wild that is traditionally eaten raw. Drought or the lack of frequent rainfall can increase bacteria

numbers in estuaries where oysters, clams, and other shellfish thrive. The culprit, a flesh-eating bacteria called *Vibrio vulnificus*.

Although cases traditionally increase in the late summer through the fall, isolated cases have been reported every month of the year. The alert from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) strongly encourages to “thoroughly cook raw shellfish to kill unwanted bacteria infections.”

While eating raw oysters is something for the strong-stomach connoisseurs, the CDC also corrects a misconception that adding hot sauce or lemon juice does not kill the *Vibrio* bacteria. Additionally, drinking alcohol during or after eating raw seafood does not add further protection. There is an alternative option, Oysters Rockefeller.

Created in 1889 by Antoine Alciatore, owner of Antoine’s in New Orleans, Oysters Rockefeller is made up of Romano cheese, shallots, spinach, butter, breadcrumbs, and Vermouth. The oysters are, then, baked in their shell, killing the dangerous flesh-eating bacteria.

Ingesting the bacteria is not the only manner infections can occur. External exposure to the bacteria through wading in saltwater environments with open cuts or wounds can be extremely hazardous. The CDC warns people to remain out of waters with skin wounds. Exposure to flesh-eating bacteria could result in amputations. They also state that handling shellfish without proper handwashing can be dangerous.

Cameron Douglas Craig

FORECASTER SPOTLIGHT

Local Attorney Pleads “Not Guilty” to Negative Forecasts

If you are not satisfied with the upcoming forecast, you better be ready to go to court! Effingham attorney, Scott Ealy, is willing to defend his forecast even if you are not happy with it.

Loving weather over several decades, Mr. Ealy moonlights as one of WEIU’s SkyWatch forecasters. His participation at WEIU not only benefits our viewers but he provides students in the broadcast meteorology program a multitude of examples to become a professional.

Mr. Ealy first approached me with a question, “I am interested in weather and would like to enroll in your program. Is that possible?” At first, I was confused, then, naturally, I answered, “Yes!” Immediately, Mr. Ealy applied to Eastern Illinois University for which they accepted, and he enrolled in my Weather & Climate class for spring 2019. He was the model student! In fact, many of the students, in the class, asked him to be their tutor. After he took the practicum course that merges the science with communication the following semester, he produced several air-checks (practice broadcasts to determine suitability for on-air experience) that were reviewed by the “News Watch” news director, Kelly Goodwin, and me. Impressed with his delivery and his use of the science, he was put into the “News Watch: Night Cap” segment that airs at 9:57 P.M. Soon after several two-minute segments, he was put into the main “News Watch” broadcast at 5:30 P.M.



Scott Ealy, an attorney and “SkyWatch” Forecaster, presents cooler conditions across the region on WEIU’s “News Watch” news program.

Dressed for court with a silk square and matching tie, and his firm use of grammar to get the story right, student broadcasters look up to him, not only meteorology students but the other students anchoring the news. He is extremely approachable, and students look forward to his constructive criticism after each live broadcast. Mr. Ealy’s on-air personality provides meteorology students with interesting ways of how to connect the forecast to the viewer.

While Mr. Ealy continues to educate himself in geography and meteorology, he is an unexpected asset to WEIU’s “News Watch!” I, for one, am extremely happy, and thankful that he is part of our team! He extends the educational experience all our students need to become professionals in news.

Watch Mr. Ealy on WEIU’s “News Watch” at 5:30 P.M. on Fridays this semester and be prepared to go to court if you find his numbers less appealing!

Cameron Douglas Craig

FROM EARTH TO TABLE

English Fare: Brussel Sprouts & Bacon with Brown Sugar

The British cooking season is in its prime as the meteorological season begins to evolve into the colder months. Here is a simple recipe to enjoy a sweet side-dish of sprouts commonly used in fall and winter menus throughout the English countryside.

- 1 pound of Brussel Sprouts, halved
- 4-5 slices of thick cut bacon
- ¼ cup of brown sugar
- Pinch of pepper
- Pinch of salt
- 3-4 tbsp Butter

Bring to a boil two quarts of water, slightly salted. Add Brussel Sprouts and cook until vibrant green, 10-12 minutes. Do not overcook the sprouts. Strain the sprouts and reserve. Cook the bacon until crispy in a fry pan. Drain. Crumble bacon into medium-sized pieces. Add sprouts to the fry pan. Add brown sugar, salt and pepper, and butter. Cook until the sugar liquifies, stirring occasionally, 10-12 minutes. Brown sugar sauce should thicken like syrup. Plate the ensemble and serve hot. Enjoy!

For a truly British experience, add slivered chestnuts (4-6 ounces) to the ensemble. Boil scored chestnuts for about 10 minutes. Remove from water and cut them into slivers. Add to the sprouts, bacon, butter, and brown sugar. This addition makes for a great side-dish for the holidays!

Serves 4-6.

Cameron Douglas Craig

Schumann's "Waldesgespräch" Paints a Cold & Dark Conversation in the Woods



"Begegnung mit der Lorelei im Wald (1990)," a pencil drawing by Cameron Craig. English translation: "Encountering the Lorely in the Woods." © CDCraig.

On a cold, late evening, a man, riding his horse, becomes lost, and encounters a young maiden who also seems lost. He offers to take her to safety, but she insists that he leave her alone. She tells him of her misfortunes in love. During the encounter, he realizes that she is not an innocent, but the feared tauntress, Lorelei, that seduced men. When one lover failed to return love, she committed suicide, and her spirit remains in the towers above the Rhine River. In the end, the lost man never returns from the dark, deep forest.

Here is the text of Joseph von Eichendorff's poem, "Waldesgespräch (A Forest Dialogue)" from Robert Schumann's *Liederkreis* (1840), *Op. 39*, translated by Shula Keller.

*"The hour is late; this night is cold.
Why ride so lonesome through this wood?"
"The road is long; you go alone.
You lovely maid – I'll take you home!"*

*"Great are the guileful ways of man.
My broken heart within me cries with pain!
Hear, now, the wood horns, near and far!
Oh, fly, oh, fly – You know not who I am!"*

*"Your horse so noble, your beauty so rare; – So
wondrous fair is your charm; your youthful face and
form."
"Yes! Now I know! God save my soul! –
You are the demon, Lorely!"*

*"You know me well, you know me well –
I rule alone in towers high o'er the Rhine.
The hour is late! – this night is cold – You nevermore
shall leave these woods!"*

While studying vocal performance at Indiana State University's School of Music, I was introduced to German *Lieder* (song) in my sophomore voice lessons by Professor Robert Houchell (1930-2019). The focus, that fall semester in 1990, was a few songs from the song cycle, *Liederkreis* (1840), composed by Robert Schumann (1810-1856). I immediately took great interest in the poems and musical description for the dark and cold landscape of the Rhineland.

Schumann's *lieder*, as Susanna Puig explains, "has three themes of nature: the night, woods, and the supernatural." While the piano accompanies, painting the scene with wind, hunting horns, and the mysterious unknown darkness, the singer tells the tale of misfortune in this short, picturesque song.

Climatologically, the songs composed by Schumann and written by von Eichendorff have not been assessed by researchers. However, I, as a musician, climatologist, and geographer, look for any connections between the arts and climate.

The Little Ice Age occurred between 1300 and 1850. During this period the climate of Europe was colder than the previous period, "The Medieval Warming." During this colder climate, crops failed, livestock died, and viruses prevailed, influencing humans to find scapegoats to prosecute those responsible for the harsh conditions. Their determination resulted in several waves of witch-hunts across the landscape. The witch-hunts were, perhaps, the inspiration of the German lore written by von Eichendorff and used in Schumann's series of songs.

Next month, in *Climate & Culture*, Brian Hartman ('17), a weather producer at WeatherNation, will explore how the climate promoted further persecutions of "odd" individuals that were thought to be responsible for the harsh climate in Germany.

Listen to this song with Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (1925-2012) on YouTube. Search for "Fischer-Dieskau Waldesgespräch."

Cameron Douglas Craig

CLIMATE OUTLOOK October 2023

As we enter the month of October, it looks like it will possibly be another above-average month across Central Illinois. According to the Climate Prediction Center, temperatures could be above average for this next month. Our average high temperatures throughout the month will decrease from 75° on the 1st to about 62° on Halloween. Temperatures will likely be near this point throughout the month but may range above these figures at times.

The Climate Prediction Center also predicts that we have a chance of having above-average rainfall for not only Illinois but most of the Midwest. Average rainfall totals for the month of October are right around 4", with Charleston on average receiving 3.94" of precipitation during October. Above average rainfall would be helpful to reduce our drought, as most of Illinois is in "Abnormally Dry" conditions, while some Western areas of the state are in "Moderate Drought" status.

Though these figures could change, it looks like it could be a wetter and warmer month of October than what we normally receive.

Ben Whitney

Full Circle, EIU Graduate Begins and Ends up in Chicago

When we enter university, our path toward the future is unknown. We take general education classes to see what the world has to offer. Sometimes, it is easy. Sometimes, it is not. Other times, we simply take the chance from what our advisers suggest.

Without a preliminary idea of his career path, Kevin Jeanes ('10), from Naperville, Illinois, had experience broadcasting in his Neuqua Valley High School media club. During his time in high school, he would report on athletic games, or other featured happenings in the school halls. He had no idea that this seed would take him on a journey, ultimately ending him back home in Chicago.

In the summer before his first semester at Eastern, his adviser asked Kevin if he would be interested in taking Weather & Climate. "Sure, why not. Let's give it a try," he responded enthusiastically.

Fall 2005 was my first semester at Eastern, too. The department's new Broadcast Meteorology minor was just written into the undergraduate catalog. Having prior experience in training students in broadcast meteorology at Indiana State University, the department allowed me to take the program under my wing. In that first semester, Kevin and two other students, Jeff, and Phil, were in my Weather and Climate class. "The department has a new minor in broadcast meteorology. If any of you are interested in giving it a try, see me after class," I announced. Right after class the three expressed exploring the opportunity.

They all enrolled in a six-hour independent study the following semester. We initially met in my office in the first four weeks to learn forecasting techniques. Then, we began getting in front of a primitive webcam attached to a struggling computer, not built for video production, with a green shower curtain as the backdrop. Kevin and the others determined their forecasts, filled-in pre-designed PowerPoint slides showing current temperatures, the regional conditions, a seven-day forecast, and, using less-than-state-of-the-art weather graphics, a surface map.

In the "dungeon," as we called the map storage room down the little hallway behind the main office on the third floor, we began recording broadcasts. You know how 19-



Kevin Jeanes: a reporter for Neuqua Valley High School (left), and current meteorologist for NBC 5 in Chicago, Illinois (right). Photo used with permission.

year-olds get candid when a camera turns on. His personality blossomed, and the path toward a career in broadcast meteorology commenced.

Following the spring semester course, Kevin was the only one that went on to broadcast at WEIU's "News Watch" that airs live five nights a week to central Illinois. He grew from his experience at WEIU and had additional experiences in film production.

Jeanes and I teamed up to form "Tempestas et Caelum Productions," a documentary film company to provide students of geography, history, and other fields a medium to explore their world. The opportunity was extraordinary, filling his resumé for the future. In the fall of 2006, he, and a team of three, produced their first production, "An Illinois Winter." Not only did WEIU air the film, but Kevin's hometown television station, Naperville Community Television (NCTV17), aired it nightly during the winter months for several years.

Jeanes and I then produced, wrote, directed, and composed the music for our second production, "Expedition Nature's Realm." It was a major work for us. The series was created from a trip we took to Yellowstone National Park and Badlands National Park in May of 2007 to explore our co-existence with nature that is Earth.

Our next film, in fall of 2008, that is still used in classrooms around the world, was "Stinging Dust & Forgotten Lives: The Dust Bowl." This shorter film, co-researched, and narrated by Jeanes, was featured by the American Library Association as an alternative to Ken Burn's film "Dust Bowl" for the traveling exhibit, "Dust, Drought, and Dreams Gone Dry." The film also aired on regional PBS stations in Illinois and Indianapolis, Indiana.

While working toward his declared majors in Geography and Communication Studies, he attended the National Weather Association conferences. These meetings are attended by professional broadcast meteorologists and representatives of NOAA, National Weather Service, and various private weather companies such as the Weather Channel. His first appearance at the conference in fall 2007 in Cleveland, Ohio was a little frustrating for him.

During the annual conference, there is a "Tape Swap" that allows television personalities to show their segments for constructive criticism. The session always begins at 7 P.M. He submitted his tape from a broadcast at WEIU prior to the session. Two hours turned into two more hours, waiting for his tape to be seen for a critique. Finally, at 11:30 P.M., his tape was shown for

a reduced audience of a dozen dedicated professionals.

You could see his nerves working overtime as the tape played. I was nervous. We all watched his three-and-a-half-minute segment. I smiled. He smiled. Then the moderator said, "Wow! Where is Kevin, and where is WEIU?" Kevin stood, announced himself, and received extremely positive comments about his performance. In fact, some asked how old he was. "Nineteen."

In the following year, we went to Reno, Nevada for the same conference and showed his tape of another weather broadcast. This time his tape was shown earlier in the session. Afterwards, several professionals, including chief meteorologists from Miami, Florida and Norfolk, Virginia approached him with offers. He was just a junior at the time. My response to them, "Would you allow him to finish his degree at EIU in two years?" They were surprised that he was not a senior! He was excited about his future at this point.

During his time at EIU and WEIU, we would discuss his future. "Where do you see yourself doing weather?" He always responded with, "Chicago." "It's a bit far but possible," I said optimistically, "We both know it will happen."

While at WEIU, he received the Broadcast Education Association (BEA) award for his weather broadcasts three years in a row from the National Association of Broadcasters. Jeanes continued to work hard at his studies at EIU and in the department, broadcasting the weather as much as he could at WEIU's "News Watch," participating in documentary film productions, and enrolling in the summer internship program at WEIU, twice.

EIU was an extraordinary time for him. After graduation in May 2010, he applied to fourteen stations across the country. In June 2010, he finally got a call for his first professional job interview at WWBT-TV, Richmond, Virginia. He was told by the news director that the station seldom hires new university graduates, but his tape was something out of the ordinary!

Learning that he got the job nearly a thousand miles from his hometown, his mother sent me a card, writing, "I don't know whether to kiss you or strangle you! He is so far from home! But thank you!"



Lisa, Evelyn, Eddie, and Kevin Jeanes. Photo used with permission.

Kevin spent a few years in Richmond, then, the company he was employed with offered to transfer him to a position as chief meteorologist at KOLD-TV in Tucson, Arizona! In the desert, he mastered his skill. He produced a 30-minute special with his producer and future wife, Lisa, concerning the monsoon season in the Southwest, and received an EMMY for their work.

Wanting to get back to the Midwest, Jeanes received a job at WXYZ-TV in Detroit, Michigan. Kevin and Lisa moved, got married in 2018, and had their first child, Eddie. After receiving his EMMY and starting a family, I asked him if his dream job in Chicago was still a consideration. "You know, I don't think Chicago will happen because it is an extremely difficult market. I applied for a position at one of the stations but didn't get the job." Although he was disheartened, he continued to work hard in Detroit knowing that one day, it would happen.



Lisa and Kevin won an EMMY for their 30-minute special on the monsoon season in Tucson, Arizona. Photo used with Permission.

In December 2022, he, again, applied for an opening at NBC Universal (NBC 5) in Chicago, Illinois, a market three in broadcast journalism (New York is number 1; Los Angeles, number 2). This time he got the job!

With Lisa, Eddie, and his daughter, Evelyn, Kevin has returned home; a dream achieved. The path, a full circle unknown to him at the time, began from a single question from his adviser if he wanted to take Weather & Climate at Eastern Illinois University. He exemplifies what is possible when Eastern students take the offered opportunities from their university and department. Kevin's unconscious enthusiasm of taking

chances at something new has been the foundation for many students in broadcast meteorology and the Department of Geology & Geography at EIU. Kevin Jeanes is a model for future Panthers that the "classroom is not just a structure of walls but a window into the world!" We in the department, especially me, are very proud of Kevin's accomplishments!

Cameron Douglas Craig

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CLIMATE BRIEF August 2023

August 2023 was a very dry month and a hot one as well, especially the last week of the month that caused heat index values to soar to 115°. We recorded eight days over 90°. On August 24th, the temperature reached 101° during the five-day heat wave between the 20th and 26th. The heat wave was the result of high humidity trapped by an upper-level ridge and transpiration from crops across the Midwest.

The average temperature for August was 76°, a half degree above the 30-year average temperature, 75.5°. The average high temperature this month was 86.7°. Average minimum temperature was 65.2°.

Total precipitation, 2.74", remained near the 30-year average of 2.94".

William Redden

RETROSPECTIVE

“Goode’s World Atlas” had Its Start at EIU



John Paul Goode, professor of Geography at the University of Chicago. From University of Chicago Photographic Archive, [ajf1-06412], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

During a review of the first newsletter from the Department of Geography-Geology written in August 1972, I came across something exciting!

In 1899, John Paul Goode (1862-1932) was the first geography professor at Eastern Illinois State Normal School where he taught geography and physics. In 1903, he was offered a geography position at the University of Chicago. Noting a significant issue of distortion with the Mercator projection, Goode, in 1908, spoke at the American Association of Geographers conference in Baltimore, Maryland about creating a new projection. He revealed his new work called the “Goode Interrupted Homolosine projection.”

In 1923, along with two of Goode’s former students, Rand McNally published *Goode’s School Atlas* that was later changed to *Goode’s World Atlas*. The atlas is still in use today across the world.

Goode died from a heart attack on August 5, 1932. His legacy remains part of the cartographic world that continues to honor Goode’s contribution, and his start at Eastern placed our institution on the map.

Cameron Douglas Craig

FROM THE CLASSROOM

The Earth is Closest to the Sun in...

Of the many concepts that I introduce to my college students in Weather & Climate, the Earth-Sun Relationship is one that fascinates me the most because of the common misconception regarding when the Earth is closest to the Sun. The question: “In what season is the Earth closest to the Sun?”

Do you have the answer?

There are two extreme points the Earth is closest to and farthest from the Sun. Perihelion is the point that the Earth is closest to the Sun, while Aphelion is when the Earth is farthest from the Sun. The difference between the two distances is only 3.2%.

The answer is coming...you have some more time. Here is a hint...Consider the tilt of the Earth before answering too quickly.

In our winter, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun, while it is tilted toward the Sun during our summer. The Southern Hemisphere is tilted toward the Sun in our winter and away during summer.

The answer: The Earth is closest to the Sun in...winter!

Perhaps you knew the answer, or you were just as shocked as my students! Students sometimes think about their own experience with proximity to a heat source. “If I get closer to the source of heat, I get warmer.” This is true but it is not the same with the Earth’s relationship to the Sun. The tilt of the Earth is the important factor in this situation. Although the Earth approaches perihelion around January 1, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun, resulting in cooler temperatures. The Southern Hemisphere receives more radiation than the Northern Hemisphere because it is tilted toward the Sun.

As we continue to travel around the Sun toward our summer, we approach aphelion, which occurs around July 1. The Northern Hemisphere is tilted toward the Sun but the radiation we receive is slightly less than the Southern Hemisphere’s radiation during perihelion.

The Earth is closest to the Sun during our winter, but we are cooler, not warmer, because of the tilt of the Earth.

Cameron Douglas Craig

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Financial Gifts Benefit Students

Since our initial publication of *Prairie Skies*, many have taken great interest in the stories, and spectrum of topics that span atmospheric science. Not only is Weather & Climate the science of the functions of the atmosphere influenced by the Sun but a cultural experience. Our intent, in this new enterprise, is to provide students experience in learning and writing about science, and, also, giving students an opportunity to express themselves.

In an effort to promote the continuation of student involvement in researching and writing in our department, *Prairie Skies* is an opportunity that gives students a chance to succeed and benefit, financially. Every contribution that a student submits for each issue, Joshua, my husband, and I give them a financial honorarium.

We ask that you consider giving to our students in many ventures in the department, as we do, to show support for what the student is doing to succeed.

Generous gifts also help students in difficult situations such as food security, basic classroom supplies, conference registration, travel, or a train ticket when traveling home to visit family during breaks. Anything helps our students gain the best educational experience Eastern has to offer or stave off unnecessary financial stress required for basic living.

Contributions from donors, alumni, friends of the university, and faculty give students an opportunity to succeed beyond the cost of tuition. Experiences don’t always happen with the cost of attending classes. Your gifts provide additional prospects in developing their skills for a successful career. As a donor, you may specify how your gift is to be used.

Contributions to benefit students can be sent to:

Gift Fund – Geology & Geography
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, IL 61920

As always, thank you for your generosity!

*Cameron Douglas Craig &
The Department of Geology & Geography*

PRAIRIE SKIES

A Monthly Journal of Weather & Climate in Central Illinois

The monthly journal, *Prairie Skies*, was created to give students additional opportunities to fill their résumés. The publication features a climate summary, a climate outlook, and various analysis and stories ranging from culinary recipes to cultural references from the past.

Students are assigned to write summaries and outlooks based on their previous course work in the department. Feature stories, such as research summaries, are assigned to students working on independent research and studies. All this, to give an additional platform for students to be published and potential job opportunities.

ALUMNI FAMILY UPDATES

The Family that Learned Together, Stays Together!

The EIUWC and SkyWatch family continues to grow, and we enjoy hearing from our former students. The following alumni from EIU WeatherCenter and WEIUs "SkyWatch" Weather Center have updated their location, or included new additions to the EIU Family:

Phillip Collins ('20) is a meteorologist at WAND-TV in Decatur, Illinois. He and his wife, Madison, married in September 2022.

Joseph Dames is a meteorologist at WCCO-TV in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He was at KOIN-TV in Portland, Oregon for several years.

Braden Harp ('16) married Heather Good in 2020 and both of them continue their broadcasting at WTHI-TV in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Cameron Hopman ('10) will leave WEVV-TV in Evansville, Indiana as chief, and take up the chief position at WKOW-TV in Madison, Wisconsin on January 2, 2024. Kate, Cameron's wife, and Cameron have two daughters, Roselyn and Mae. Congratulations, you two! EIU is waiting for them!

Everett Lau ('21) is a meteorologist at WTHI-TV in Terre Haute, Indiana. He is

working hard and stays close to help run the family farm at L & A Farms in Paris, Illinois, the famous sunflower maze so many people visit.

Darren Leeds ('11) is a meteorologist at WCCU-TV in Champaign, Illinois. He and his wife, Shauna, brought Madison, their daughter, into the world in 2021. Congratulations, Shauna and Darren! Congratulations to Grandma and Grandpa Leeds, too!

Caitlin Napoleoni (Norgren), a meteorologist at NBC5 in Burlington, Vermont, married Leif Norgren in 2018, the biathlon athlete who competed in the Beijing 2022 Olympics. They had a daughter while Leif was in China, competing. Congratulations, Caitlin and Leif! Currently, she is taking time off from broadcasting to focus on family.

Nick Patrick ('14) is a meteorologist at WICS-TV in Springfield, Illinois. He is married to Alyssa, and happy to announce a new addition to the family, Penelope! Congratulations, from the EIU team!

If you, or someone you know, graduated from EIU, let us know where you, or they, are in the world. We would enjoy hearing from you all! Contact, Cameron Craig at cdcraig@eiu.edu with particulars.

OCTOBER COVER ARTIST

Alexa Peters

We are excited to introduce Alexa Peters who provided her artwork for this month's journal! Alexa is an art major at Eastern Illinois University and currently enrolled in Weather & Climate in the Department of Geology & Geography. Peters accepted the challenge of providing her pen and ink medium for "Yes, Virginia, There Is a Water Problem."

Thank you, Alexa!

OUR STAFF

EIU WeatherCenter WEIUs SkyWatch Team

Cameron Craig, EIUWC Director/WEIU SkyWatch Consultant

Kelly Goodwin, WEIU "News Watch" News Director

Ryan Lay, EIUWC Undergraduate Director
Scott Ealy, SkyWatch Forecaster
Will Redden, SkyWatch Lead Forecaster

Ben Whitney, SkyWatch Forecaster
Emily Davis, SkyWatch Analyst
Gavin Garçon, EIUWC Analyst
Sam Huckstep, EIUWC Analyst
Charlie Stewart, EIUWC Analyst

Alexa N. Peters, Cover Artist

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