
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
NEWS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

NATIONAL
OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATION

CONTACT: Tanja Fransen
406-228-2850
Marilu Trainor
801-524-5692 Ext. 226

NOAA03-R247
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 14, 2003

**NOAA HAILS MONTANA BROADCASTER AND WEATHER SERVICE VOLUNTEER
OBSERVER JOHN PULASKY AS NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL HERO**

A veteran radio broadcaster, John Pulasky of Billings, Mont., was hailed as one of the nation's 2003 NOAA Environmental Heroes when representatives of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) surprised him today with the pronouncement during his morning radio show. NOAA is part of the Department of Commerce.

Keith Meier, Meteorologist in Charge and Jim Scarlett, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the NWS Forecast Office in Billings, made the presentation on behalf of the staff from all four Montana forecast offices. The NWS Forecast Offices in Great Falls, Billings, Missoula and Glasgow teamed to nominate Pulasky for the prestigious award.

Established in 1995 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, the NOAA Environmental Hero Award is presented to individuals and organizations who volunteer their time to help NOAA accomplish its mission of describing, predicting and protecting the nation's environment. Previous recipients include oceanographers' Jean-Michel Cousteau and Sylvia Earle, and actor Ted Danson, head of the American Oceans Campaign.

"NOAA and the nation are fortunate to have such dedicated people volunteer so much of their time," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "They set a perfect example for others to follow in their communities. America needs more environmental heroes like them."

“It is fitting to recognize John this week while he was on the air. We are conducting Montana Severe Weather Awareness Week, held this year between April 14-18, and John has been an avid supporter of the National Weather Service and especially our severe weather awareness education programs,” said Scarlett. “John has been producing radio and television weather casts since 1976 and his radio show can be heard across the states of Montana and Wyoming three times daily on affiliated stations. We appreciate his efforts and know that people who live, work or participate in recreational activities throughout the state rely on John’s accurate weather information. He does an excellent job of bringing the Weather Service’s messages to the people of Montana.”

Pulasky was one of the 36 winners nationwide – 35 individuals and one organization. According to Meier, the Montana forecasters elected to surprise him during the statewide segment on the radio show, ‘Berg in the Morning.’

Meier said, “John’s support of the National Weather Service is unconditional. Throughout the years, he has enthusiastically helped spread the agency’s message about weather safety during the Weather Service’s annual winter weather, severe weather and lightning awareness weeks. He routinely interviews staff from the four Montana offices for his live call-in radio show. He publicizes each office’s annual spotter training schedules and works with the appropriate offices during periods of significant weather.”

A past State Officer of the Montana Future Farmers of America, Pulasky farms near Huntley, Mont. He was born in Great Falls, went to college in Bozeman, and has lived and worked in Missoula. He is a private pilot and currently teaches Aviation Meteorology at Rocky Mountain College in Billings. Pulasky has been a dedicated volunteer weather observer for more than six years. His duties include taking daily readings of maximum and minimum temperatures, heavy rain and 24-hour precipitation totals, winds or other significant weather events. His observations provide information to the climate record of the United States, as well as the forecasts and warnings issued from the Billings National Weather Service Forecast Office.

Rick Dittmann, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the Great Falls Forecast Office, added, “Farmers, ranchers, tourists and residents of Montana have all benefitted from Mr. Pulasky’s tireless efforts. His reports have indirectly helped several million people in their weather-related decisions.”

NOAA’s National Weather Service is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States and its territories. National Weather Service operates the most advanced weather and flood warning and forecast system in the world, helping to protect lives and property and enhance the national economy.

The Commerce Department’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the

prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

On the Internet:

NOAA - <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA National Weather Service - <http://www.nws.noaa.gov>.