



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA HONORS MIDLAND RADIO'S BRUCE THOMAS WITH MARK TRAIL AWARD

NOAA today presented a Mark Trail Award to Bruce Thomas of Midland Radio for support of the agency's NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards program.

Celebrating its tenth year, the awards program honors individuals and organizations that use or provide NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards receivers or transmitters to save lives and protect property. Twenty-four award recipients were recognized nationally this year.

Thomas is being recognized for his outstanding personal efforts to ensure the success of several campaigns to promote NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards around the country. Thomas was nominated by National Weather Service central and southern region personnel for his community programs that have brought the National Weather Service together with local TV broadcasters, merchants, and service providers to promote the use of NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards. Thomas, a Kansas City, Mo. resident, was the catalyst in promotions in Des Moines, Iowa; Austin, Texas; and Evansville, Ind. The Evansville campaign placed more than 50,000 receivers in the hands of area residents.

"With this award, we recognize Bruce Thomas for his important contributions through Midland Radio Corporation to NOAA's mission of protecting lives and property," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher Jr., Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "Whatever the danger, whatever the hour, when minutes count, count on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards."

Thomas accepted the award during a ceremony in the Cannon House Office Building in Washington, D.C.

"In just about a year's time, Bruce Thomas has taken NOAA Weather Radio promotion to unprecedented levels," said Rick Shanklin, warning coordination meteorologist at the Paducah, Ky., forecast office, which covers the Evansville area. "His efforts were so impressive, it prompted the National Weather Service to make an exception to the rule that manufacturers and vendors were not eligible for the Mark Trail Award. He definitely earned the award and I can't think of anyone more deserving."

The Mark Trail Awards are named for the nationally syndicated comic strip character that serves as the campaign symbol for the NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards program. Since 1995, Jack Elrod, writer and illustrator of Mark Trail, and King Features Syndicate have been strong advocates for publicizing severe weather safety through the use of the radios. In recent years, the strip's education message has included the fact that anyone listening to NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards has instant access to the same lifesaving weather reports and all-hazards information provided to meteorologists, emergency personnel and the media.

"Jack Elrod and his alter ego, Mark Trail, have been great partners to NOAA's National Weather Service in helping educate the public to the importance of having this device nearby.

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards is the one tool that gives you and me the instantaneous information we need to protect ourselves,” said Brig. Gen. David L. Johnson, U.S. Air Force (Ret.), director of NOAA’s National Weather Service. “These awards demonstrate the life-saving ability of NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards. Even within the last few months, we’ve seen several instances where lives have been saved through this technology.”

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards is a nationwide network of radio transmitters broadcasting continuous weather information direct from nearby National Weather Service offices. NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards broadcasts official National Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other civil emergency information 24 hours a day. The NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards network includes more than 900 transmitters covering all 50 states, adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the U.S. Pacific Territories.

In 2007 NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, celebrates 200 years of science and service to the nation. Starting with the establishment of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey by Thomas Jefferson in 1807, much of America’s scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA. The agency is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather- and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation’s coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 60 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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Editor’s Note: Information on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards and graphics of Mark Trail are available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr>

On the Web:

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

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

NOAA’s National Weather Service office in Paducah: <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/pah>

NOAA’s National Weather Service office in San Antonio: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ewx>