

# WIND

By Fred Hobbs

Snow. Rain. Cold. Hot. No matter the weather conditions, the wind can be and often is a mitigating factor. Snow plus strong winds equals a blizzard. Rain plus winds of 74 miles an hour or more produce a hurricane. Wind is simply the movement of the air. Applied to human activity, wind can be either a blessing or a curse depending on where you are, what you are doing and how you may react to its power.

Wind has inspired mythology. The ancient Greek Gods of the Winds were personified as men with wings who controlled their territories in distinctly different ways. The God of the West Wind was a kind and gentle sort, pleased to protect the plants and flowers. His colleague to the South was blustery, stormy and dangerous. The God from the East specialized in bringing forth especially bad storms. Considered the smartest was the God of the Northwest who sent the winds blowing over the cliffs and harmlessly out to sea, while the Northeast wind representative was believed be responsible for generating exceptional amounts of cold, snow and blizzard conditions; hence “a nor’easter.”

In more recent times the winds have influenced historical events, expanded the range and location of transport, and are now considered as major factors in military operations and even outdoor sports events including golf and football.

The harnessing of wind power is a somewhat controversial energy-producing approach, especially touted by environmentalists as one way to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Some scientific studies on the affect of wind on human behavior have drawn interest, though not accepted as particularly valid. One theory holds that wind, especially strong wind, disturbs negative ions present in the air. On an exceptionally windy day, this phenomenon is said to promote unrest, even hostility, in a person’s reaction to others. Supposedly, one is prone to exhibit churlish actions such as snapping at a colleague in the office, throwing a tantrum in the schoolyard or engaging in an unwarranted argument with a spouse or significant other.

In wrapping up this examination on the generic topic of “wind”, with the reader’s indulgence, the writer wishes to switch to a first-person account: For a period of my life, I was afraid of the wind. Working in broadcasting, I was given the opportunity to branch out from radio to television. The TV program director had only one stipulation. I was expected to extend my rapidly eroding hairline with a hairpiece to be in sync with the cosmetic aspects of TV news. I dutifully, if reluctantly, complied. No problem inside the studio, but my duties also took me outside which called for many on-scene “stand-ups.” Sometimes the breeze was pretty stiff and I was never sure that the special two-sided tape would hold fast. What if the unthinkable happened on a “live shot”? It never did, though it was always in the back of mind and I sometimes had nightmares about the prospect.

To show it was not vanity but practicality, I “aged” with the years, first with brown hair, then grey at the temples and finally before retirement from active broadcasting, “pure Santa Claus” white. As a result, I made many more hundreds of dollars in my profession over the years than I would have if I had just “a face for radio”. Now, today with social security and a few investments, I can go “topless” and truly throw caution to the wind!