



**NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO – WYOMING CHAPTER
OF THE AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION**

Volume 35, Number 2

October 2004

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<http://www.stat.colostate.edu/ASA/newsletters.html>

**Fall Meeting
Free Meeting / Free Food**

**Tuesday November 9, 2004
6 p.m.**

Casa Alvarez Restaurant
3161 Walnut St.
Boulder, CO
(303) 546-0630

The fall meeting of the Colorado-Wyoming Chapter of the ASA will be held on **Tuesday, November 9, 2004** in the side room at Casa Alvarez from 6 to 8 pm. The scheduled speaker is Claudia Tebaldi, who recently testified in front of John McCain and a US Senate committee. Claudia wrote an abstract for her talk, which immediately follows this announcement.

The chapter will provide hors d'oeuvres and the meeting will be free. Beverages and other menu items are available for purchase. Claudia will begin speaking at 7pm, leaving the first hour of the meeting for socializing and networking.



**Statistics (with upper-case and lower-case "s") and
climate change**

Presented by Claudia Tebaldi

I will talk about a couple of projects that I worked on recently, in the area of climate change research.

The first project consists of a formal Bayesian analysis of climate change. The dataset consists of

different temperature change projections, from different climate models run under the same future scenario, and the statistical model tries to make sense of diverging projections by formalizing two heuristic criteria of model validation. I won't go into great detail, since I want to use this example only in contrast to a second project that analyzed changes in heat wave characteristics under climate change conditions. Where the former study writes down a statistical model, formulating precise probabilistic assumptions, and uses Markov Chain Monte Carlo simulation to produce posterior distributions of climate change, the latter analysis it's really just about computing means and standard deviations and t-tests. However, while the paper describing the former study is going through a painful review process, the paper on heat waves was published in Science within a couple of months from its completion, and had a great impact, reverberating across the media, and reaching the US senate attention, with the consequence that I was invited to testify in front of a committee presided by John McCain. And of course, in that venue, it helped that the most complex statistical term I had to use was "significant".

So I guess the lesson learned is "keep it simple" if it makes sense to...



Future Newsletters to Be Distributed by E-mail

If we can get a more up-to-date email list, we would like to distribute the newsletter in pdf format - viewable using Adobe Acrobat. If you wish to continue to receive the newsletter in paper form, please contact us and we will be happy to continue mailing you a hard copy. Otherwise, you will receive a copy by email. Or - as always, archived editions of the newsletters may be found at:

<http://www.stat.colostate.edu/ASA/> .



Let's not kid ourselves: the most widely used piece of software for statistics is Excel.

-- Brian D. Ripley

New Chapter Mailing List

Prior to receiving this newsletter, you should have received an email notice of the fall meeting. This notice was sent to known email addresses of all members. If you did not receive this email, it means we don't have your address. If you consider this a bad thing, you may add your name to the email list by going to:

<http://mailman.ucar.edu/mailman/listinfo/cowystats>.

You may also return to that site to unsubscribe from the list at anytime. We would like to emphasize that this list is intended only to announce chapter meetings and distribute chapter information. The list is moderated and thus only administrators may post messages.

R "Fortune" Package

Stop forwarding those marginally funny internet jokes. Now there is a whole new way to waste your working hours while tickling your funny bone. The R software package has a library called "fortunes" that contains a function called "fortune". This function returns random sayings, taken mostly from the R lists (help, bugs, development, etc.) For information about this package, see the R web site at:

<http://www.r-project.org>

The bottom-of-the-page funnies for this edition are examples taken from this package. Kudos to the R developers for making us laugh in addition to helping us work. Of course, Excel makes us laugh too, but Microsoft gets no kudos since the humor in their products is unintentional.

Profile of Deb Hall The Chapter's Secretary



Deb Hall currently serves the local chapter as secretary, taking over the position when Jack Powers completed his term. Deb is a native upstate New Yorker who grew up in Clifton Park, a small town not far from Albany, the state capitol. She loved growing-up in a part of the country so rich with history (the first settlement in her hometown occurred in 1672) and probably never would have left New York if she had not received an Air Force ROTC scholarship.

After finishing a B.A. degree in math from Russell Sage College, one of the few remaining women's colleges in the U.S., she received her Air Force commission in 1982 and was sent to Colorado for her first assignment. Except for three years since then, she has lived in Colorado, which she now considers home.

Those three years, however, were very significant in her life as they allowed for further education and meeting her husband Paul, who was an Army officer in a joint job with the Air Force when they met.

Deb has an M.S. degree in systems management from the University of Southern California and an M.S. degree in math from Creighton University. She also has a Ph.D. in biometrics from University of Colorado Health Sciences Center.

She retired from the Air Force Academy faculty in 2002 and subsequently moved to Denver with her husband. She currently works as a statistical consultant and occasionally teaches stats courses. She has really enjoyed consulting as it gives her the opportunity to work in many different areas and to choose her work hours. She has recently worked on projects ranging from proposing new parallel computing methodologies for classifying cancer genes to investigating the relationship between Scoville pepper ratings and microorganism growth. She also enjoys analyzing data from animal field studies.

In her spare time, she is an avid swimmer, golfer and ex-stuffed bear collector. She stopped officially collecting when her collection exceeded 300 bears, but new bears still keep finding their way to her house via friends and family. She also sings for her church and is involved in other church activities to include researching and writing about the relationship between science and theology, an area that has long been a personal interest of hers.

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