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NERF FANATICS READY FOR WAR

ACCENT, 6B

Phelps sets medal record

SPORTS, 1B



DROUGHT

Temperature

Year	May	June	July	Aug
Statewide average				
1988	65.9	74.5	76.1	76.5
2012	65.1	71.6	79.9*	NA
Norm	60.1	69.7	73.6	71.5

Eastern Iowa Airport (Cedar Rapids) average

1988	64.6	72.8	77.3	75.9
2012	65.2	71.7	79.3*	NA

90+ days

1988	1	12	18	14
2012	1	6	19*	NA

100+ days

1988	0	2	3	4
2012	0	0	2*	NA

Highest temperature

1988	104 on July 31
2012	103 on July 25

Iowa City average

1988	66.5	75.9	80.2	79.3
2012	66.4	73.1	82.1*	NA

90+ days

1988	2	19	24	16
2012	3	9	19*	NA

100+ days

1988	0	4	4	9
2012	0	0	4*	NA

Highest temperature

1988	104 on July 31
2012	105 on July 7 and 25

* Preliminary through Sunday.

Source: State Climatologist Harry Hillaker | Gazette graphic

Precipitation

(In inches)

Year	May	June	July	Aug
Statewide				
1988	1.75	1.72	2.23	4.22
2012	3.51	2.99	1.15*	NA
Norm	4.56	5.02	4.50	4.20

Eastern Iowa Airport (Cedar Rapids)

1988	0.97	1.42	0.52	5.47
2012	1.96	1.28	1.10*	NA

Iowa City

1988	1.49	1.31	0.90	6.60
2012	3.60	1.73	0.26*	NA

* Preliminary through Sunday.

Source: State Climatologist Harry Hillaker | Gazette graphic



Jim Slosiarek/The Gazette

Dustin Koopman of Koopman Hay & Forage Service cuts corn plants for silage on land farmed by Doug Erger on Tuesday near Newhall. Erger usually only cuts about 10 to 15 acres of corn into silage for feed for his livestock. This year, he converted 50 acres into silage to feed his livestock through next year.

Yep, this year drier than '88

By Orlian Love
The Gazette

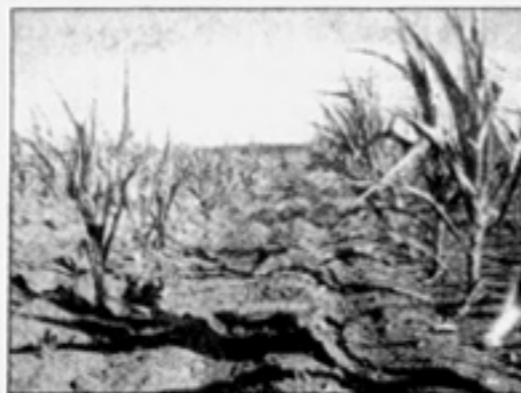
The drought of 2012 has exceeded its 1988 predecessor in terms of both extent and severity.

"This one is worse than '88," State Climatologist Harry Hillaker said Monday.

"You would have to go back to 1936 to find a drought worse than this one," he said.

Hillaker said the month of July, which is shaping up to be the third warmest and fifth driest in 140 years, pushed this year's drought ahead of the '88 drought, which has been the misery standard for most Iowans alive today.

Iowa's worst recorded drought in 1936 was also fueled by a torrid July, the hottest and second-driest in 140 years, Hillaker said.



The Gazette

Stunted corn plants roll their leaves in an Iowa cornfield in a futile attempt to protect themselves from the hot summer sun during the 1988 drought.

"Heat makes droughts drier, and droughts make heat hotter," said Brian Fuchs, a climatologist at the National Drought Mitigation Center in Lincoln, Neb.

"I do agree that damage from

► DROUGHT, PAGE 9A

I.C. firm using NASCAR racing to recruit veterans

By Dave DeWitte
The Gazette

IOWA CITY — An Iowa company, finding it's not that easy to hire unemployed veterans, is using NASCAR to try to grab their attention.

TMone (pronounced te-em-wun) based in Iowa City, is hoping its NASCAR affiliation will help it achieve a lofty goal of hiring veterans.

The business process outsourcing firm has a contract on the horizon that could double its business within 12 months, President Anthony Marlowe said. It hopes to fill 150 positions with veterans by the end of the year at its contact centers in Iowa City and Spear Fish, S.D.



Anthony Marlowe
TMone

"One thing we're finding — it's a great cause," Marlowe said. "There's supply and demand, but it's very difficult to connect the supply and the demand."

TMone (pronounced te-em-wun) tapped into a United States Chamber of Commerce program called Hiring Our Heroes in an effort to reach veteran hiring prospects. Then the company began advertising its veterans hiring initiative on race cars.

The company was primary sponsor of the @TMone CRM Hiring Veterans Chevrolet at the Curtiss Shaver 400 race in Indianapolis Motor Speedway last weekend, continuing a relationship with Tommy Baldwin Racing that also included associate sponsorship

► VETERANS, PAGE 9A



Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid announces to reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., on Tuesday that he and GOP House Speaker John Boehner have reached an agreement to keep the government running on autopilot for six months when the current budget year ends on Sept. 30.

Reid, Boehner announce stopgap spending pact

Reuters

WASHINGTON — Washington took some tentative steps toward confronting its looming fiscal threats on Tuesday with a deal in Congress to neutralize the risk of a government shutdown that could upset voters ahead of the Nov. 6 elections.

A White House official said it would shield U.S. military pay from automatic budget cuts due to take effect in January — a

move that could shift more of the reductions onto defense contractors. It also instructed agencies to begin preparing for some across-the-board cuts.

The top Republican and Democrat in Congress struck a deal to extend funding for federal government agencies and discretionary programs through March 2013, calling a truce in at least

► SPENDING, PAGE 9A

Is your problem gluten? Or faddish eating?

ATLANTA (AP) — It sounds like an unfolding epidemic: A decade ago, virtually no one in the United States seemed to have a problem eating gluten in bread and other foods. Now, millions do.

Gluten-free products are flying off grocery shelves, and restaurants are boasting of meals with

no gluten. Celebrities on TV talk shows chat about the digestive discomfort they blame on the wheat protein they now shun. Some churches even offer gluten-free Communion wafers.

"I don't know whether there's more people getting this or that more people are noticing" they

have a problem, said the Rev. Richard Allen, pastor at Mamaroneck United Methodist Church, north of New York City.

Or is it just another food fad?

Faddishness is a big part of it. Americans will spend an estimated \$7 billion this year on foods labeled gluten-free, ac-

cording to the market research firm Mintel. But the best estimates are that more than half the consumers buying these products — perhaps way more than half — don't have any clear-cut reaction to gluten.

They buy gluten-free

► GLUTEN, PAGE 9A

THE GAZETTE: READ BY MORE
THAN 166,500 PEOPLE TODAY

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INDEX

• ACCENT..... 6B	• DEATHS..... 8A	• MOVIES..... 7B
• BRIDGE..... 2C	• EDITORIAL..... 4A	• PUZZLES..... 6C
• BUSINESS 380..... 10A	• HOROSCOPE..... 2C	• SPORTS..... 1-5B
• CLASSIFIEDS..... 1-5C	• LEGALS..... 5C	• STOCKS..... 11A
• COMICS..... 8B	• LOTTERY..... 2A	• TV..... 7B



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Drought/High pressure dome repelling storms

► FROM PAGE 1A

this year's drought will surpass that of 1988," said Fuchs, one of the authors of the increasingly popular U.S. Drought Monitor, which last week showed 53.44 percent of the nation in moderate or worse drought and all of Iowa in severe or extreme drought.



Brian Fuchs
Drought Mitigation Center

The high pressure dome that has repelled storms from the grain belt has actually strengthened and could hold sway for another two months, he said.

Iowa's statewide averages for rain and heat in the May-July period were actually slightly worse in 1988 than this year, but the confluence of extreme heat and dryness in July amplified this year's dam-

ages, Fuchs said. "I think this year is worse than 1988. My sense is that it's a lot more widespread, with smaller sections of the state getting enough rain to keep crops in the good or excellent category," said Bill Northey, secretary of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.



Ed Ulrich
Solon

The weekly USDA crop report, issued Monday, showed 46 percent of Iowa's corn rated poor or very poor, up from 40 percent the preceding week, while the portion of the crop rated good to excellent dropped from 23 percent to 20 percent.

"This drought is definitely going to be worse than 1988," said Solon farmer Ed Ulrich, 68, who started farming with his dad in the 1960s.



The hot sun during the drought of 1988 sears the leaves of a suffering corn stalk.

While some of Ulrich's best corn "looks close to normal," some of it has no ears, and in a 60-acre river bottom field, "the combine will just be pushing over barren stalks," said Ulrich, a district director of the Iowa Soybean Association.

Similar magnitude

Dave Miller, research

director for the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, said the magnitude of this year's drought is comparable to the droughts of '88 and '36.

Because farming technology and practices have evolved, "the only way you can compare across time from one corn-growing era to another is by looking at yield deviation

from the trend line," he said.

Iowa's average corn yield in 1988 was about 84 bushels per acre — about one-third less than the 122 bushel per acre trend line, he said.

This year, with a trend line of 176 bushels per acre, Miller said he expects Iowa's statewide average corn yield to be between 118 and 125 bushels per acre, which would compute to about one-third less than the trend line.

The worst-case scenario, with no more rain during the growing season, would be a deviation from normal of between 38 percent and 40 percent, he said.

Remembering 1983

Wayne Humphreys,

62, who farms near Columbus Junction, said he thinks his corn will make 100 bushels per acre this year, which is better than it did in 1988. "All I had then was hail insurance so I prayed for hail," he said.

For Humphreys, however, a localized drought in 1983 was worse than either '88 or this year.

"My soybeans, at 35 bushels per acre, out yielded my corn, at 29 bushels per acre," he said.

After a 20-year succession of mostly good crops, the drought of 2012 will remind farmers that "Mother Nature still calls the shots," he said.

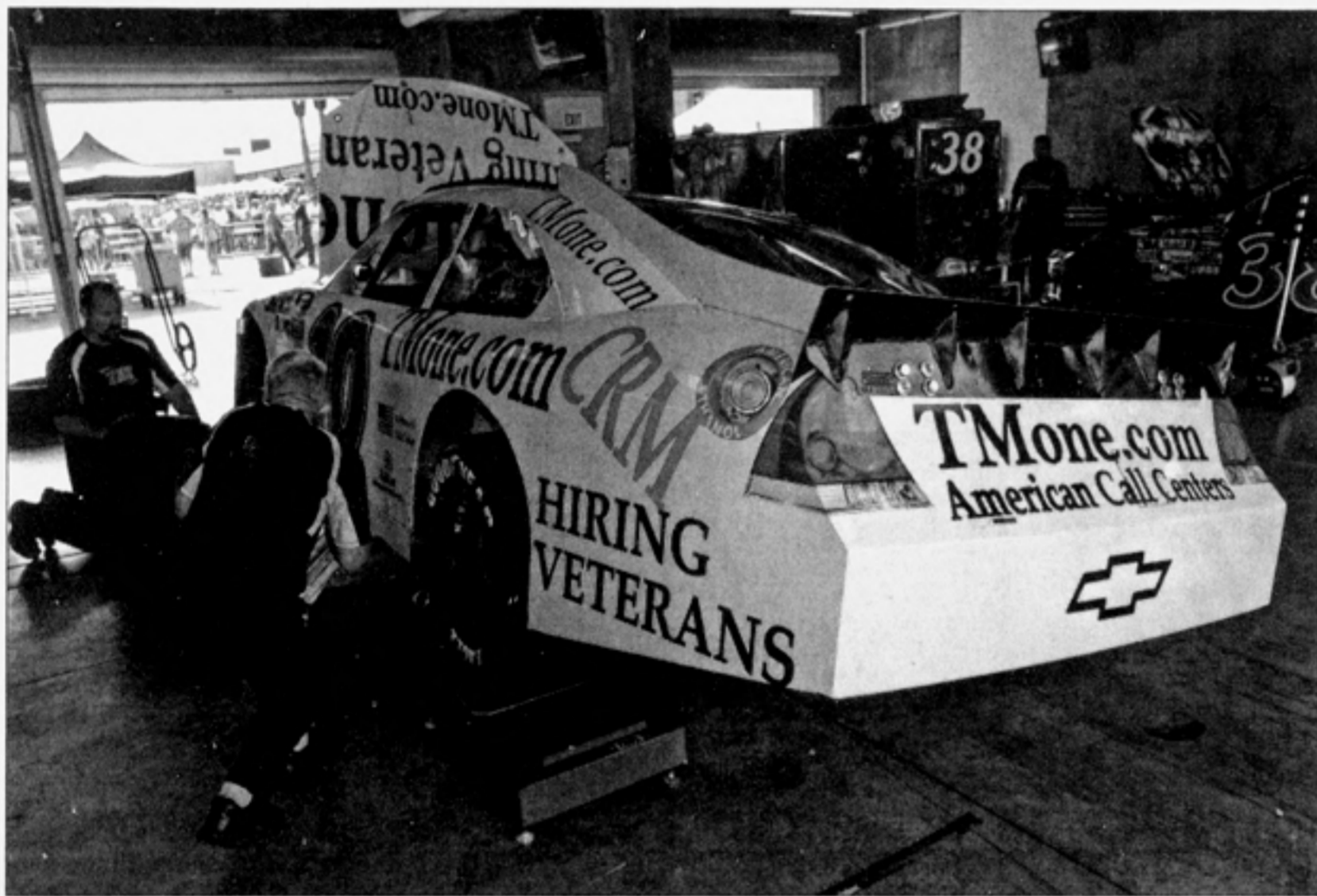


Dave Miller
Iowa Farm Bureau Federation



Wayne Humphreys
Columbus Junction

Comments: (319) 934-3172; orlan.love@sourcemedia.net



The Tommy Baldwin Racing team crew performs a tire change on the No. 10 @TMOne CRM R Hiring Veterans Chevrolet during last weekend's Curtiss Shaver 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race. The car didn't finish in the money, but did generate thousands of impressions for the fast-growing company's drive to hire 150 veterans.

Veterans/Tax benefits part of effort

► FROM PAGE 1A

of the No. 36 SealWrap Chevrolet.

Neither car had a top 10 finish, but Marlowe said the company is sure that thousands of veterans saw the company's message.

Using a NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race to deliver the veterans hiring message wasn't such a huge step for TMone because it has sponsored at least one car in all 20 races in the series this season. Eight of them were with Tommy Baldwin Racing.

TMone handles customer contacts for such well-known companies as Office Depot, Advance Auto Parts and Time Warner Cable with 450

employees in Iowa City and Des Moines in Iowa, and Spear Fish and Dakota Dunes in South Dakota.

As a business process outsourcing firm, TMone can do such customary call center functions as marketing a product by phone, but also does more, including services such as inbound customer inquiries and web chats.

Marlowe said TMone is passionate about hiring vets because they tend to have strong leadership skills, a good work ethic, and speak respectfully to customers.

Tax benefits from hiring veterans are also part of TMone's rationale. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit to employers that

hire eligible unemployed veterans can be as high as \$9,600 per veteran for for-profit companies or up to \$6,240 for tax-exempt organizations, according to the IRS. Marlowe said TMone also sees the veterans hiring credit as a way to help cope with rising tax rates.

Such extreme efforts to reach veterans are less unusual than you might think, according to Shawn Hippen, business adviser for the Job Connection Education Program, the Iowa National Guard's employment outreach program.

Hippen said many veterans returning from active service want to pursue education to achieve career goals, but

they are still counted among the unemployed. Others aren't anxious to jump into the work force because they have other personal needs or goals to fulfill that they've put on hold.

Among 2,800 members of the Iowa Army National Guard members who returned from active duty a year ago, Hippen said about 10 percent were unemployed upon their return to civilian life.

"Iowa's employers have been very patriotic," Hippen said. "I get calls every week from employers say, 'I'd would like a guy to do this,' or 'I need a guy and a gal to do this and that.'"

Comments: (319) 398-8317; david.dewitte@sourcemedia.net

Spending/Tactical retreat for GOP

► FROM PAGE 1A

multi-front battle over taxes and spending.

The six-month spending extension, announced by Republican House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner and Democratic Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, will fund programs from defense education to medical research at an annual rate of \$1.047 trillion, the level specified in a debt-limit deal last year.

The full House and Senate would still need to approve the measure by Sept. 30, the end of the current fiscal year, when funding runs out. Congress will be in recess most of August and the first week of September.

If passed by Congress, the deal for a six-month spending extension eliminates one layer of difficult year-end wrangling for Congress just after the election as it deals with the "fiscal cliff" of expiring tax cuts, automatic spending cuts, a debt-limit increase and other fiscal deadlines.

Economists say inaction by lawmakers would unleash tax increases and budget cuts that would crush recovery and throw the economy back into recession next year.

Congress has made virtually no headway in averting the \$109 billion in across-the-board spending cuts that loom in January. On Tuesday, Jeffrey Zients, acting White House budget director, took the anticipated step of exempting military personnel accounts from the cuts.

"The administration believes it is in the national interest to

safeguard the resources necessary to safeguard the men and women serving to defend our nation," an administration official said.

The military, however, is still expected to bear half of the anticipated cuts — nearly \$55 billion.

Tactical retreat

The six-month spending deal marks a major tactical shift for House Republicans, who have spent much of the past two years using government funding deadlines as leverage to demand deeper spending cuts. Bitter deficit reduction standoffs last year, driven largely by fiscal conservatives, threatened several government shutdowns and brought the United States to the brink of a historic debt default.

But this year, with presidential and congressional elections looming in just over three months, Republicans want to avoid a repeat that could stir up voter backlash against Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney and the party's drive to regain control of the Senate.

By immunizing Congress against a shutdown threat, Republicans feel they can keep the campaign focus on the weak economy.

"That's where Republicans win and Democrats lose," said a Republican House leadership aide.

But Democrats will get to tout that they have protected programs important to their core supporters, including food stamps and healthcare programs, from deeper spending cuts.



Bertha Domimiguez prepares gluten-free dough at Pure Knead bakery sandwich bread in Decatur, Ga. Scientists suggest that there may be more Celiac disease today because people eat more processed wheat products than in decades past, which use types of wheat that have a higher gluten content. Or it could be due to changes made to wheat, said the Mayo Clinic's Dr. Joseph Murray. In the 1950s, scientists began cross-breeding wheat to make hardier, shorter and better-growing plants. It was the basis of a so-called "Green Revolution" that boosted wheat harvests worldwide.

Gluten/1 percent have Celiac disease in U.S.

► FROM PAGE 1A

because they think it will help them lose weight, or because they seem to feel better, or because they mistakenly believe they are sensitive to gluten.

"We have a lot of self-diagnosing going on out there," said Melissa Abbott, who tracks the gluten-free market for the Hartman Group, a Seattle-area market research organization.

Fads aside, research suggests more people are truly getting sick from the gluten found in wheat, rye and barley, but the reasons aren't clear.

In the most serious cases, gluten triggers celiac disease. The condition causes abdominal pain, bloating and intermittent diarrhea. Those with the

ailment don't absorb nutrients well and can suffer weight loss, fatigue, rashes and other problems.

It was once considered extremely rare in the U.S. But about 20 years ago, a few scientists began exploring why celiac disease was less common here than in Europe and other countries. They concluded that it wasn't less common here; it was just under-diagnosed.

More recently, a research team led by the Mayo Clinic's Dr. Joseph Murray looked at blood samples taken from Americans in the 1950s and compared them with samples taken from people today, and determined it wasn't just better diagnosis driving up the numbers. Celiac disease actually was increas-

ing. Indeed, the research confirms estimates that about 1 percent of U.S. adults have it today, making it four times more common than 50 years ago, Murray and his colleagues reported Tuesday in the American Journal of Gastroenterology.

That translates to nearly 2 million Americans with celiac disease.

Celiac disease is different from an allergy to wheat, which affects a much smaller number of people, mostly children who outgrow it.

Scientists suggest that there may be more celiac disease today because people eat more processed wheat products like pastas and baked goods than in decades past, and those items use types of wheat that have a higher gluten

content. Gluten helps dough rise and gives baked goods structure and texture.

Or it could be due to changes made to wheat, Murray said.

In the 1950s, scientists began cross-breeding wheat to make hardier, shorter and better-growing plants. It was the basis of the Green Revolution that boosted wheat harvests worldwide. Norman Borlaug, the U.S. plant scientist behind many of the innovations, won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work.

But the gluten in wheat may have somehow become even more troublesome for many people, Murray said.

That also may have contributed to "gluten sensitivity."