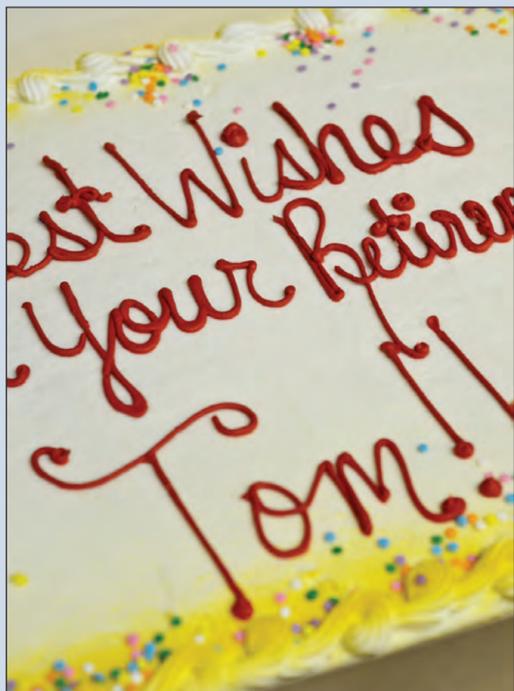




Tom Brown retires



Tom Brown of the Southern Ute Growth Fund Utilities Division retired last week. A reception took place at the Lions Club in Bayfield on Friday, Jan. 20, and was attended by friends, family and longtime colleagues. Brown started working for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe in September of 1985 as the water plant foreman.

photos Jeremy Wade Shockley/SU DRUM

In memory of Michael Andrew "Mike-Fire" Frost

Dec. 12, 1962 – Jan. 18, 1998

The following is reprinted at the request of Southern Ute tribal elder Stanley Frost, who provided the materials.

On Jan. 18, 1998, those of us involved in tribal environmental issues lost a good friend and an enthusiastic and talented educator when Mike Frost, director of Environmental Programs for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, passed away in Ignacio.

Mike joined the Southern Ute Air Quality Program in 1983 as an air quality technician, and ultimately became the director of Environmental Programs.

In an article published days before his untimely passing, Mike described his role: "I see myself as one of the people in the tribe that has to go out and fight for grants and environmental programs for Indian Country."

Mike was instrumental in bringing about and developing the American Indian Air Quality Training Program at the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals. He helped develop and refine the curriculum and was an outstanding instructor.

Mike was also a motivating force in developing tribal air programs throughout Indian Country, and he was unselfish in his contributions to tribal environmental protection.

In the words of a colleague, Mike was "a great person, a devout supporter of our ways, and most of all a friend to Indian people coast to coast."

Another colleague commented: "He inspired me to have patience in developing our tribe's air quality program. I want my staff to understand that it takes perseverance, and it's a lesson we must all learn."

Mike's passing has led to an outpouring of affection and respect for this talented and irreplaceable member of our community. He will be missed.

We at ITEP dedicate our 1998 workshops to Mike's memory in the hope that we can work even harder for the protection of the environment. We believe this is exactly what Mike would expect of us.

Dear editor,

On behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, I convey my deepest sympathies on the loss of Mike Frost, your environmental director.

My regional and headquarters staff inform me that Mike was a member of good standing within your tribe and an indispensable asset to your environmental protection program.

I greatly respect and appreciate Mike's commitment to working with the EPA and the tribes in EPA Region 8, the Southwest, and nationally to improve public health and environmental protection in Indian Country. I also deeply appreciate your selflessness and generosity in letting Mike devote so much of his time to working hard and effectively on regional and national environmental issues.

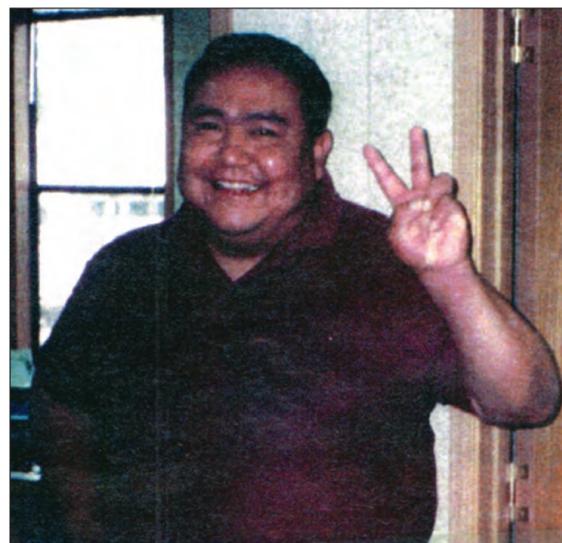
From my own personal experience, I can speak for man here at EPA who realize that the vision, candor and wisdom that Mike brought to the ERPA Tribal Operations Committee was an irreplaceable asset that will truly be missed.

Again, I offer my sincerest condolences on the death of Mike Frost. Please do not hesitate to call me or Kathy Gorospe, director of the American Indian Environmental Office, if we can be of any assistance to you or the tribe.

— Carol M. Browner

Dear editor,

On behalf of the Sac and Fox Nation, I convey my deepest sympathies on the recent loss of



Mike Frost, your tribal member and your environmental director.

The Sac and Fox Nation environmental staff inform me that Mike not only was an invaluable asset to your tribe's environmental protection program, but assisted other tribes in the development of their programs.

I have great respect and appreciation for Mike's unwavering commitment to improve health and environmental protection in Indian Country, which was evident in every task he aspired to achieve.

Mike served as an inspiration and an invaluable source of practical information to our environmental staff in the development of air quality management. Mike was quite adept in a field that requires technical, political and cultural astuteness.

I appreciate your generosity in allowing Mike to devote so much of his time to national and tribal environmental issues, which in actuality benefited all tribes. I offer my sincerest condolences on the death of Mike Frost.

— Don W. Abney, principal chief

Dear editor,

I can't remember the very first time that I met Mike, but it was at least 12 years ago when we were both starting out in the tribal environment field. We took different paths, but our goal was always the same: to protect the environment in Indian Country.

Mike was a constant in my life, whether it was working with me for a year while he was an EPA intern at Region 8, or more recently seeing him at the many meetings and conferences that we both attended.

We had great respect for each other, and we always treated each other with kindness, but also with directness and honesty. We didn't always agree, but we listened to each other.

I couldn't have asked for a better colleague, friend, and fellow protector of the environment.

I can't believe that Mike is gone from this world. It seems like only yesterday that he was here at Region 8, giving us "heck" for something he thought we were not doing, or weren't doing fast enough. If we ever get the Tribal Air Rule approved, I will tell Mike: "We finally did it."

I know he will be pleased, but he will also think in his mind, "It's about damn time."

Mike passed from this world on Jan. 18, 1998, and we traveled to the Southern Ute Reservation on Jan. 23 to say our goodbyes to him and pay our respects to his lived ones who remain behind: his wife, Wahleah; his two young daughters, Kelsey and Marysa; and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Frost. Mike also had two brothers, two sisters, and many, many relatives.

At Mike's service, the priest gave a very appropriate message about how environmental work — protecting the air, water and land — is very close to God's work, and that we who remain

here must carry on this work and are very privileged to do so, because it is a sacred duty.

I can't sat it as well as he did, but I took much strength and encouragement from those words because they were so eloquently stated and true, and we don't often stop to acknowledge that.

At the service, there were also some beautiful traditional songs sung for Mike to send him to the spirit world. The blending of the two traditions is what characterized Mike for me: a true professional and trailblazer in the EPA world, a leader in his tribe as the director of Environmental Programs, and a tribal member who did great things for his tribe that will be remembers by many.

Mike accomplished much in his very short life here with us. We will miss our friend and colleague, Mike Frost.

— Sadie Hoskie, EPA Region 8 (Denver)

The Environmental Programs Division had a plaque made to honor the late Mike Frost, past director of the division.

The Public Works & Operations Department contributed a piece of marble the plaque could be mounted on. The Grounds Maintenance Division framed and poured, in concrete, the pedestal upon which the marble and plaque were mounted.

This was placed at the base of the flowering crabapple tree that was dedicated during Earth Day in April. This monument is located on the northeast corner of the Annex Building, and can be viewed by anyone at any time.

Mike meant a lot, not just to the Southern Ute Tribe and his family, but also to the many people who worked with him and came to call him friend. We are all constantly aware of his absence and miss his good nature and smiling face.

When a person loses a close friend, a fear of forgetting that person and what their life meant to you lives with you constantly. By establishing this monument, it becomes a constant, day-to-day reminder of a good person whom God chose to bring home early.

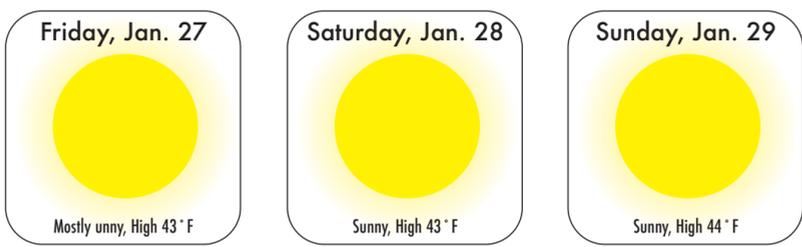
We never know why these things happen; they just do. For those of us who are here, we just have to move on and try not to spend too much time wondering why this has happened.

It doesn't mean we are to forget. For myself, I have chosen to remember Mike for all the good times we had as friends. I'll remember a man who opened up his life to me and made me feel like I was someone important to him.

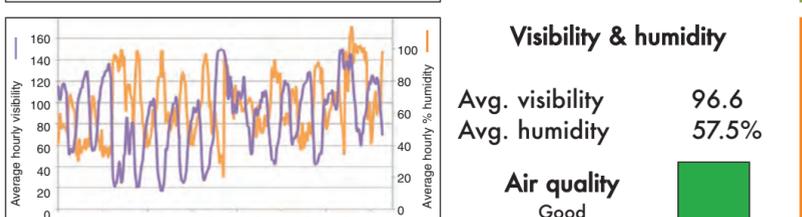
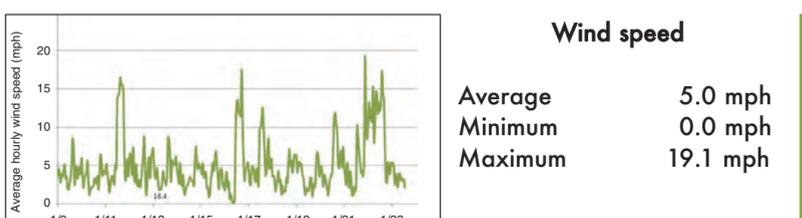
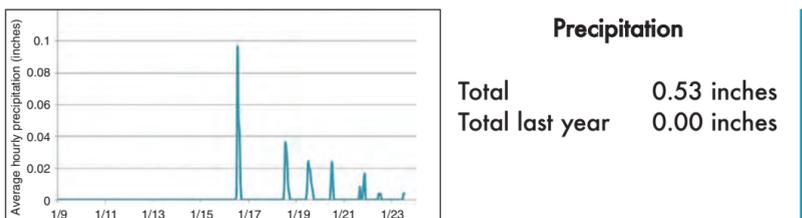
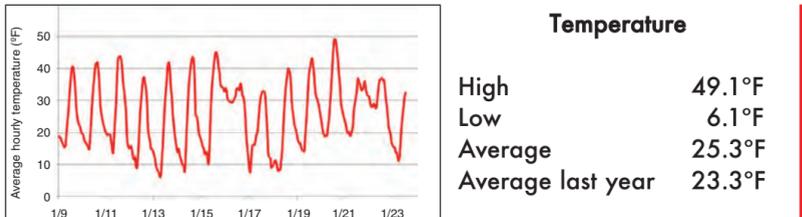
I am a better person for having known Mike and will owe him a debt of gratitude that I cannot repay. I can only ask God to let him know that I won't forget him.

— Bob Piccoli, director of Public Works & Operations

Local Ignacio Weather



Weather data for January 9 - January 23



Data compiled by Southern Ute Environmental Programs

Weather forecasts collected from www.NOAA.gov