

REAL-WORLD METEOROLOGY

A series of profiles celebrating a half-century of Certified Consulting Meteorologists



Who: Jan Null

What: Forensic meteorologist

When: CCM since 1996

Where: Saratoga, CA

Why: The CCM program is the best real-world validation for a forensic meteorologist



How: Jan Null became a CCM in 1996 while still a lead forecaster with the National Weather Service in the San Francisco Bay Area. Two years later he took an early retirement from the NWS and founded Golden Gate Weather Services, where he specializes in forensic meteorology. In the past 11 years he has been retained in nearly 300 cases, including civil actions involving vehicular accidents, construction damages, flooding, hurricanes, maritime accidents, and personal injury, as well as criminal cases of murder and manslaughter. Null has also worked extensively with engineering firms, insurance firms, utilities, the media, and nonprofit organizations in need of meteorological and climatological data and analysis. He has also been an adjunct professor of meteorology at San Francisco State University since 1987, regularly teaching in their Geoscience Department.

As a CCM, Null became a member of the National Council of Industrial Meteorologists (NCIM), which is made up entirely of CCMs. He ultimately became a member of the NCIM Board of Directors, and in 2007–08 served as the organization's president.

Null finds his work related to hyperthermia deaths of children in hot vehicles to be the most rewarding. His research, which has been published in the journal *Pediatrics*, is used daily by child-safety advocates from around the world to call attention to the hazards associated with the extreme temperatures inside vehicles.

In His Own Words: “My personal highlight reel since becoming a CCM is focused on being able to use the skills I have obtained over the course of my career to make a significant difference. This includes my forensic work, where I get to work with other professionals and actively contribute by ‘teaching’ attorneys, judges, and juries about meteorology and how it plays a part in the search for the truth. As a CCM, I have instant credibility, which is extremely important throughout the course of the legal process.

“Working with child safety groups and the media to educate them about how extreme the heat inside a vehicle can become—and how rapidly the temperature can rise—has also been a highlight for me. The personal satisfaction of knowing that this research will ultimately help save lives is really the icing on the cake of an already extremely satisfying career as a CCM.

“Overall, making the effort to become a CCM was one of the most personally and professionally rewarding aspects of my career. Consequently, I have encouraged numerous colleagues to make the effort to become CCMs in order to reap the associated rewards and benefits from this professional recognition of their knowledge, experience, and character.”

For more information on the Certified Consulting Meteorologist (CCM) Program, please visit the AMS Web site at www.ametsoc.org/amscert/index.html.