



SEVERE WEATHER

A Guide From Kansas City's WEATHER LEADER



Gary Lezak

Brett Anthony

Jeff Penner

Jeremy Nelson

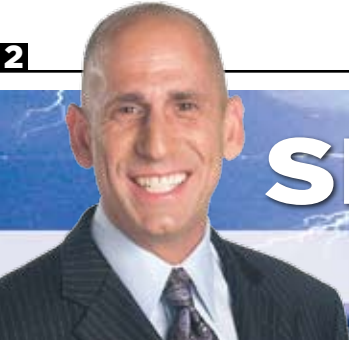
SEVERE WEATHER SPECIAL



Friday

March 20th

7:00 pm



SEVERE WEATHER 2009

GARY LEZAK, Kansas City's Weather Leader

Meet Gary Lezak

Ever since Gary Lezak was 5 years old, he has been interested in weather. It became his passion, and he has been forecasting the weather for 40 years.

Lezak received a Bachelor of Science degree in meteorology from the University of Oklahoma in 1985. After working several years in Oklahoma he brought his forecasting skills to Kansas City, and became the Chief meteorologist for NBC Action News in 1999.

Lezak's other interests include working out, participating in and watching various sports (especially the Royals and the Chiefs) and spending time with his dogs. Stormy, now 8 years old, and Breezy, 3, have learned a variety of tricks and they accompany Gary on his many public appearances each year. You can catch Stormy on the 5 PM newscast every Friday.

In 1999, Lezak was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, Extraskeletal Osteogenic Sarcoma. He went through aggressive chemotherapy treatments, and he is now ten years cancer free. He has a positive outlook on life, and he says that passion for his job makes it exciting to be alive every day. □

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SEVERE WEATHER SEASON 2009

By Gary Lezak

The skies between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi River bring out nature's best, and worst. Kansas City is geographically placed in what we call tornado alley (see below), where severe weather strikes more often than anywhere else in the world. Already this year there was a deadly winter tornado in Oklahoma and it opens our eyes to what could happen during the spring months. As we move through March into April and May, spring tornado season will arrive, but what will it mean for our region? The big question is: Will we have an active severe weather season?

severe weather In Kansas City. We introduced the LRC years ago and according to my theory, a unique weather pattern sets up each year between Oct. 1st and Nov. 10th. The weather pattern then begins cycling and repeats over and over again until it falls apart late in the summer. Our weather team, Brett Anthony, Jeremy Nelson, Jeff Penner and I, have used the LRC to help us in long-term and shorter-range forecasting. It has provided us with a huge forecasting advantage and the NBC Action News Weather Team has now been No. 1 in forecasting accuracy for six years in a row.

ganized in the upper levels of the atmosphere in our part of the nation. This will likely mean that the struggle to produce consistent rainfall will continue in the early spring with the strong possibility of the same weather pattern suddenly producing wetter storm systems as we move into late spring and early summer. Moisture becomes much more available for these same weather set-ups later in the spring and I am expecting a few wet storm systems during the second half of spring this year.

May and June are usually the most active months for severe thunderstorms and most of our tornadoes have occurred during these two months. It's impossible to know how many days might bring tornadoes each spring. However, with the drier weather pattern in early spring we expect the severe weather set-ups may initially be pushed east into the Ohio River Valley down through the deep south. This should gradually shift west into our region later in the spring and we may catch up on rainfall, but we are more likely to experience below average precipitation in May and June. As soon as we get past mid-June the threat of tornadoes goes way down because the jet stream typically weakens and gradually lifts north into Canada as summer begins.

The NBC Action Weather Plus team is partnered with News Radio 980 KMBZ and *The Kansas City Star*. You can also get our forecast by calling our weather line at 913-831-4141. When severe weather is threatening, SkyTracker and our storm chase teams will be out in the field to bring you the best severe weather coverage. When you truly want the most accurate and reliable forecast and the most extensive severe weather coverage turn to NBC ACTION NEWS and we will keep you advised! □



Storm systems have had a hard time producing any widespread rainfall in our region this past winter. This trend will likely continue as we move into the early spring months and it fits within my theory, Lezak's Recurring Cycle (LRC). You can learn a lot more about my theory at www.LRCWeather.com, and in the very popular Action Weather blog at www.NBCActionNews.com. This is one of the best and most popular sources to track developing

The weather pattern this year has had one signature characteristic in our region: huge temperature swings from warmer weather to blasts of cold. These blasts of cold will get a bit weaker as we move deeper into spring, but these cold fronts should eventually start triggering strong to severe thunderstorms. In this year's weather pattern, storm systems have been strong and somewhat organized at the surface, but rather disor-

2009 SEVERE WEATHER

BRETT ANTHONY



TORNADO CLIMATOLOGY

By Brett Anthony

Soon we will know if stormy springs are becoming the norm here in the metro Kansas City area. Last year, in the NBC Action Weather viewing area, the National Weather Service confirmed 26 tornadoes. That is once again, above the ten year average of 15 a year. The biggest tornado to affect the metro last year may have been a tornado that was embedded within a line of thunderstorms that hit the northland in the overnight hours of May 1st into May 2nd. Neighborhoods in Kansas City north and Gladstone suffered EF-3 damage with winds topping out between 136 & 165 mph. To the right is a

radar image of that storm as it passed through the metro.

2008 was another record breaking year for tornadoes in the state of Kansas. A total of 187 tornadoes occurred in the state and resulted in 4 fatalities, 9 injuries and millions of dollars in damage to homes, property and infrastructure. The 2008 total surpasses the previous record of 141 tornadoes set in 2007. In addition to the tornadoes in Missouri and Kansas, numerous thunderstorms produced large hail and flooding rains that produced millions of dollars in crop and property damage.

2008 also proved that tornadoes can and do



COURTESY THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

happen in any month of the year. In September, weak tornadoes did damage near De Soto, Kan. and Sedalia, Mo. and in

December, a strong line of thunderstorms produced wind damage early on the morning of December 26th. □

Meet Brett Anthony

Brett loves the weather most when it is at its worst. But he likes to experience it first hand. "It's one thing to watch a storm on radar but I really get excited when I'm in the middle of heavy snow or a torrential thunderstorm with lots of wind." In fact, Brett has joined Captain Gregg and photographer Tom Babb on-board SkyTracker to chase tornadoes in the KC area. "Don't worry," Brett says, "Captain Gregg is an excellent pilot and we have an on-board Garmin GPS unit that includes radar."

Brett managed to take his fascination with the bad weather and turn it into a career. He earned a broadcasting degree at Southern Illinois University and a meteorology degree at Western Kentucky University. He's worked in some tornado hotbeds, including Joplin, Springfield and Cape Girardeau, Missouri. He even worked on the snowy shores of Lake Erie in Cleveland, Ohio. 200 inches of snow a year, anyone?

Brett shares his enthusiasm for wild weather with his kids. Eight-year-old Seth can spend hours in the snow and recently learned to ski at Snow Creek in Weston. Aaron, who turns 5 this summer, is more likely to analyze the data and come up with the whys and wherefores. Brett's wife Sherri hibernates until the temperature reaches 80 degrees. □

PUBLIC TO HELP CHOOSE 2009 JUNIOR METEOROLOGIST

ELIGIBILITY: Students in grades 3-8
DEADLINE: 5 p.m. Monday, April 20
SPONSORS: KSHB TV & The Kansas City Star
GRAND PRIZE: Northwest Airlines World Vacations Gift Cards and an appearance on NBC Action News with Gary Lezak.
HOW TO VOTE:

Log on to www.nbcactionnews.com and vote for your favorite junior meteorologist. The one student who receives the most votes during April 27, 2009 - May 8, 2009 will be deemed viewers choice and be put into the judge's finals. The grand prize winner will be announced on NBC Action News at 5 p.m. the week of May 11, 2009.

Send form and video by 5 p.m. April 20, 2009, to:

**NBC Action News
 Junior Meteorologist Contest 2009
 ATTN: Gary Lezak
 4720 Oak St.
 Kansas City, MO 64112-2236**

THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

I understand the information contained herein is submitted as an application only for the 2009 Junior Meteorologist Video Contest, and that the decision of the judges is final, whereby I agree to abide by that decision. I understand no video will be aired on KSHB-TV without this form signed and returned with a video. I authorize the contest sponsors - KSHB-TV and The Kansas City Star - and their selection committee to verify all information herein, if necessary. I authorize publication and broadcast of the information herein and further consent to any use of my student's name, portrait or picture for any trade, publicity or advertising purpose.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Age: _____ Birth Date: _____ Male Female
 Home phone: (_____) _____
 Grade: _____ School: _____
 Parent/Guardian Name: _____
 Parent/Guardian Work phone: (_____) _____
 Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5 P.M. MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2009

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