Fifth Season: severe weather preparation station

Preparation for stormy weather: KSWO-TV meteorologists take a look at the weather forecasts in preparation for the newscast. The team provides viewers with up-to-the-minute reports in the event of severe conditions prevalent in spring.

Vicky Smith
Staff Writer

Assistant Professor of Political Science Dr. Wendy Whitman Cobb has written a new book on the way government addresses cancer policy.

Publisher Praeger released “The Politics of Cancer: Malignant Indifference” in March of 2017, which addresses such issues as President Richard Nixon 1971 signing of the National Cancer Act and other similar policies enacted throughout the years.

Whitman Cobb said inspiration for her book partially stems from her father’s battle with cancer.

“He was first diagnosed with cancer in 2005,” she said. “It addressed cancer-free. About three years ago, we found out he had cancer. That’s what led me to that area.”

Today, her father is living “a very normal and full life,” after oncologists found a clinical “spread.” They had returned – that it had free. About three years ago, Whitman Cobb said, “He works two full time jobs, just got a new puppy (and hangs out with his grandchildren, my niece, all the time,” she said.

“In The Politics of Cancer,” Whitman Cobb analyzed various aspects of the relationship between politics and science, including social, scientific and economic elements, as well as the actions that the president, Congress, bureaucrats and interest groups take.

“For me, the political scientist, that’s the crux of it,” Whitman Cobb said. “The argument I put forward is that because it takes so much from different such different perspectives to fight cancer, it’s very hard for the government to actually make coherent, comprehensive cancer policy.”

One example she gave of policy-related challenge pertained to the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) responsibility to ensure the environment remains free of cancer-causing substances like pesticides and harmful chemicals.

“The EPA is in the process of making regulations,” she said, “and yet a lot of Republicans, as well as the Trump Administration, are very anti-regulation. In contrast, the Trump Administration wants to do actually increase the number of environmentally linked cancers.”

Whitman Cobb also gave examples regarding the government’s proposed fund allotment to cancer research.

“Science, including the National Institute of Health (NIH), has not fared very well under the current Trump Administration,” she said. “The Trump Administration has proposed cutting the NIH and the National Cancer Institute budget by a few billion dollars, which will have a severe impact on research for cancer and cancer treatments in this country.”

However, she added that Congress members from numerous parties have expressed concern toward the proposed budget because the hospitals and universities that the funds support are located in their home districts.

“The projected cuts would be blocked either in the home districts, she said, “or possibly blocked jobs in their home constituencies.”

Whitman Cobb believed Americans should educate themselves about the vital relationship between politics and science, since this relationship affects resources available to combat cancer nationwide.

“I don’t usually get involved in politics,” Whitman Cobb said. “But everyone needs to do their part to make sure they are prepared for what might be the worst scenarios brought on by severe weather.”

Although spring-like weather can have its benefits, it often brings with it the fear of severe storms.

Bowling said he and his weather team work around the clock to track unexpected conditions throughout the state.

“When there is potential of experiencing severe weather, such as quarter-sized hail, damaging winds or tornadoic activity, Bowling said his team does all they can to notify the public as soon as possible.”

“We’re going to make sure that we’re either pushing that out through Facebook, we’re pushing that out through our First Alert 7 Weather app or we’re going to be on the television here,” Bowling said.

Bowling said he recommends having at least two ways of receiving weather alerts, such as television, radio, cell phone apps or social media.

When severe weather arises, it’s important to be prepared to take necessary precautions.

“This means having an emergency kit and knowing where to go when the storms sound.”

Bowling added some tips for finding a good place to take cover in the event of severe weather.

“Know what your safe spot is going to be,” Bowling said. “That’s usually going to be in the lower level in your house, it’s going to be an interior room, a closet, a bathroom, or pantry, and make sure that room doesn’t have windows in it.”

To ensure viewers understand this concept, Bowling and his weather team often use the acronym D.U.C.K.: Downstairs, Underneath something, in the Center part of the house and Keep away from windows.

Bowling also advised not to stop under an overpass if travelling when severe weather strikes.

“Typically the popular word is when bad weather is taking place,” Bowling said. “Studies have shown that taking shelter under and overpass does a lot more harm than good. Winds tend to be stronger and pose a risk not only physically, but also emotionally, though that’s really the last thing any observer, but I’ll be attending the March for Science. I’ll be marching for my dad.”

For anyone who would like to make a difference at home, she said to start with an education about the politics makes on science in the United States.

Beyond that, one of the best things anybody can do is simply call your congress people [and say] that they support funding for scientific biomedical research,” she said.

“The Politics of Cancer: Malignant Indifference” is currently available on Amazon.com in hardcover and digital formats. **Issue 8 Corrections**

In the story “Tar Heel Take Title,” the first author of the story is Markel Turrent, not Mark Turrent. We regret the error and are happy to see the record straight.