

LIGHTNING DATA CENTER MINUTES

Denver, CO

March 13, 2026

Monthly Quote: "The odds of being struck by lightning in a given year are 1 in 1.2 million. How does the experience reorient a person's sense of chance, of fate?"
- Jacob Stern, The Atlantic, March 16, 2026.

Members present: Clark, Yarnell, Gredig, Crow and Langford. Meeting began at 11:45 AM and ended at 12:25 PM.

1. The LDC is accepting donations, either as cash or check. If you donate via check, please make your check payable to Steve Clark at 755 S. Clinton Street, #2A; Denver, CO 80247. He will cash the check and keep the cash holdings specifically for the LDC. When the LDC incurs expenses, Steve will pay for services rendered through his bank account using the cash from LDC's cash holdings. A log is maintained detailing the inflow and outflow of monies. The LDC currently has \$1047.00 in cash.
2. Steve Clark presented a press release and a formal article on corona discharge from trees documented for the first time in the peer-reviewed literature. Corona discharge was documented by storm chasers along the eastern United States. A minivan equipped with meteorological instruments, an electric field sensor and a camera specifically modified to detect photon emissions in the ultraviolet (UV) and the near-UV portions of the light spectrum was positioned underneath thunderstorms. Emissions were first detected in a storm in North Carolina and in three other storms from Pennsylvania to Florida. According to the researchers, corona discharge causes subtle leaf damage, alters air quality in forests and may lead to weak discharges near cloud bases, similar to the blue corona discharges discovered near the tops of thunderstorms.
3. The discussion of the articles led to discussion of corona discharge and static electricity. Ken Langford recalled being with a friend on the summit of Cloud's Rest in Yosemite National Park when the clouds came in and skies were overcast. His hair stood on end. Ken and his friend started heading downhill immediately. There had been no lightning or thunder, but about 15 minutes later, he heard the first sound of thunder.

Barb Stemple asked if the glow around the needles would be visible. Ken said under ambient lighting, it would not be since the glow is weak and because most of the emissions from the glow is in the UV part of the spectrum which is invisible to humans.

4. Phil Yarnell told us of a lightning strike survivor that had been referred to him by Mary Ann Cooper. A man said his wife had been struck several years ago and is still in pain. Phil said this was chronic pain syndrome. He also said survivors of chronic pain syndrome are often diagnosed using MRI which should not be used because it shows many arthritic changes found in normal people which could lead to unneeded surgeries unrelated to their lightning injuries.

5. Barb Stemple told us of a wind turbine that had been struck by lightning near Breckenridge, Texas on February 26, 2026. A newspaper article contained video footage showing one of the turbine blades, the nacelle and part of the column which supports the turbine were burning.
6. LDC welcomes your questions. Please send them via e-mail to Steve Clark at sclarktoto@gmail.com. Your medical questions will be forwarded to Dr. Phil Yarnell for his review and will usually be taken up for discussion in the next month's meeting. Please be advised any questions posed are for the general consideration by the group and any answers given do not constitute a formal medical opinion. If a formal evaluation is requested, arrangements can be made directly with Dr. Yarnell. If you have a medical emergency, please call 911 or your local EMS.
7. Questions, comments, error notifications, and critiques of these minutes are welcome. Please send them to Steve Clark. Please keep the communications professional and respectful. They will be forwarded to the appropriate author(s) of the minutes and addressed accordingly.
8. LDC Disclaimer: These minutes do not represent official positions of the LDC or its members. They simply reflect the comments made at the meeting. Furthermore, the LDC does not implicitly or explicitly recommend or endorse any product or service. Any product or service presented in these minutes is done so for purposes of discussion and analysis. The merit (or lack thereof) is open for the consideration and review by the entire membership.
9. Next meeting: Friday, April 10, 2026, from 11:45 AM to TBA. We will be meeting with a lightning strike survivor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steven E. Clark
President, Lightning Data Center, Denver, CO

Lightning Links

This is a monthly listing of periodicals, websites, and videos about lightning and allied areas from a variety of sources. A headline or description is listed, followed by the link. Please note that some of the links are perishable, which means you'll need to go to the source for the information.

Cummings, S., 2026: *Thunderstorms Conjure Ghostly Coronae in Treetops, Observed Outdoors for the First Time*. Press Release, American Geophysical Union. February 23, 2026.

Link: <https://news.agu.org/press-release/thunderstorms-conjure-ghostly-coronae-in-treetops-observed-outdoors-for-the-first-time/>

McFarland, P., W. Brune, D. Miller and J. Jenkins, 2026: Corona Discharges Glow on Trees Under Thunderstorms. *Geophysical Research Letters*. February 12, 2026.

Link: <https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2025GL119591?prg140729=02ae802a-0a28-4b3f-9349-10aa0fdf818e>

Husbjerg, L., T. Neubert, O. Chanrion, K. Dimitriadou, D. Li, M. Stendel, E. Kass, N. Øosgaard and V. Regeiro, 2022: Observations of Blue Corona Discharges in Thunderstorms. *Geophysical research Letters*. June 10, 2022.

Link: <https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2022GL099064>

McKeown, C. and T. Pilkington, 2026: Lighting Strike Suspected in Stephens County Wind Turbine Fire This Morning. *Breckenridge Texan*. February 14, 2026.

Link: <https://breckenridgetexan.com/2026/02/14/lightning-strike-suspected-in-stephens-county-wind-turbine-fire-this-morning/>

Stern, J., 2026: What 100 Million Volts Do to the Body and Mind. *The Atlantic*. March 16, 2026.

Link: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/2026/04/lightning-strike-survivors-body-mind/686057/>
