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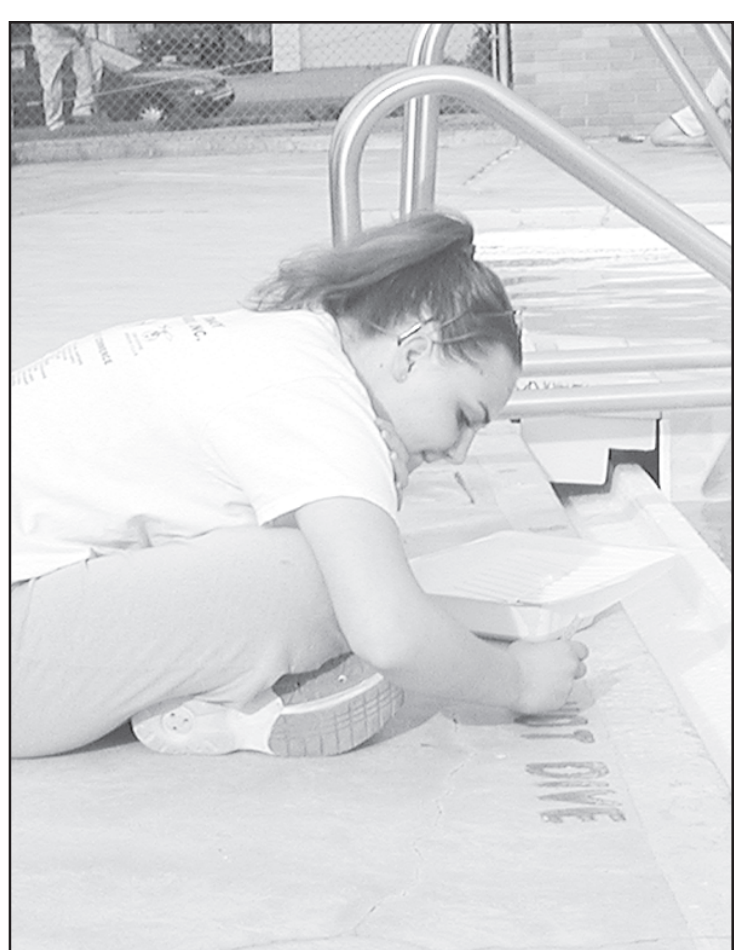
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Pool opens Monday



POOL SEASON COMING - Above, Sheryl Miller, lifeguard, is busy painting warning signs on the side of the pool and board member, Natalie Rogers, right, finishes the door to the office. The pool plans its grand opening Memorial Monday.
Herald staff photo by Karen Krien



Extension Notes

Rabbits in the Garden

*By Dana Belshe
District Extension Agent*

Rabbits have been a problem all winter. They cause some damage every year, this winter they were left with no food source and with the snow they foraged on the only thing out there and that was tree bark and branches.

From the calls I had and the sites I looked at they seemed to prefer thinner barked fruit trees and younger branches. Any place they stripped the bark off, whether a branch or trunk, if they griddled more than 60 percent of the area I would expect the branch or tree to die. On the pines where they just ate the nettles the branch should continue to develop.

In the spring and summer, rabbits

are a perennial problem in the garden. They like the wide variety of plants they can feed on. At this time of year, they gravitate to young vegetables and flowers. However, there are some vegetables that are rarely bothered including potatoes, tomatoes, corn, squash, cucumbers and some peppers.

The question is how do you protect other, more susceptible plants?

Fencing provides a quick and effective control method. The fence does not need to be tall; 2 feet is sufficient. But the mesh must be sufficiently fine (1 inch or less) so young rabbits will not be able to go through it. Support for the fence can be supplied by a number of products, but electric fence posts work well.

Often fencing is not an acceptable choice because it affects attractiveness of the garden. There are other ways to control rabbits including repellents, trapping and shooting.

Repellents are often suggested for control but often do not last long and require frequent reapplication. Also, many are poisonous and cannot be used on plants or plant parts destined for human consumption. Live traps can be used to collect and then move the rabbits to a rural area several miles from where they were trapped.

A number of baits work well to entice the rabbit to enter the trap including a tightly rolled cabbage leaf held together with a toothpick. Shooting is another possibility when it is safe and legal to do so.



Ketzner

Student receives scholarship

Nathan Ketzner, a recent graduate of St. Francis Community High School, has been selected to receive a Presidential Scholarship at Colby Community College.

Candidates for this prestigious award are nominated by their high school counselors. They are selected on a basis of leadership, academic achievement, poise and potential for contribution to Colby Community College.

Presidential Scholars are expected to be leaders and serve as positive examples for the entire student body. They represent the Office of the President and are responsible for a number of campus activities.

The Presidential Scholars program is designed to prepare young men and women for future leadership through active participation and service.

Ketzner plans to major in biology at Colby Community College. He is the son of Ernie and Kim Ketzner of Bird City.

Ag Talk with Jeanne

Loose Smut on Wheat

*By
Jeanne Falk
K-State Multi-
Co. Ag*



Have you been noticing some blackened heads in your wheat? Upon closer examination, there are actually no seeds in the head at all. This has been showing up in fields around the area.

This is a disease called loose smut. The disease becomes evident soon after heading. The floral parts of the wheat head are replaced by loose masses of brownish-black, powdery fungal spores.

When the head is handled or crushed, the black powdery material comes off on your hand. These spores are easily blown off or washed off by rain.

After a few days, only a bare stem remains and the affected plants become less noticeable.

Heads of the infected plants usually emerge from the boot slightly earlier than the non-infected heads. When the infected heads emerge from the boot, the blackened head is already formed.

Plants are only infected during

flowering, by wind blown spores from neighboring infected plants. Rain and insects can also move spores to flowering heads.

Infection is favored by dewy mornings and temperatures from 60 to 70 degrees. The smut spores enter the flowering part of the head and infect the forming seed. Therefore, the smut infects the internal portion or embryo of the seed.

After establishing in the embryo of the seed, the smut becomes dormant. In addition, the infected seed will appear normal and look no different than healthy seed. The loose smut will not become active again until the kernel is planted and germinates.

Since the disease is contained in the internal portion of the plant, when a plant germinates, it is already infected with the disease. In addition, the plants that have the smut fill heads now are going to be the only heads in the field exhibit-

ing the smut.

The infection that is taking place is creating host plants for next year. Finally, there are no rescue treatments for wheat infected with loose smut.

Control needs to be a proactive approach. Since this is a seed-borne disease, plant clean, disease-free seed.

Seed treatment is an effective and fairly inexpensive way to control loose smut. The seed treatment must be systemic, in order to get into the internal portions of the seed.

If you have smut in a field this year, it might just be the best idea to save that field to harvest last and then do not plan to keep that wheat for next year's seed.

If you have any questions about loose smut, please contact me at the extension office.

Summer celebration for youth scheduled for May 27 in Colby

Middle school, high school and college kids looking for a way to celebrate the unofficial beginning of summer can look no further than to New Year's Eve Rewind Sunday, May 27, in Colby, Kan.

Christian rap artist Jon Reuben headlines the event that includes a variety of other bands and events that begins at 4 p.m. at the Thomas County Fairgrounds in Colby. The gates open at 3 p.m.

Mr. Reuben's concert, along with dozens of other events across Colby, were originally scheduled New Year's Eve but were canceled because of a blizzard that shut down Northwest Kansas for days.

After the snow cleared, New Year's Eve party organizers regrouped and rescheduled the festivities to Memorial Day weekend. Those who had purchased a ticket for the New Year's Eve

night can use the same ticket to get in May 27.

In addition to the music, those in attendance can try their skills at a climbing wall, have fun with goofy golf, inflatables, volleyball, video game room, dodge ball and food.

Mr. Reuben takes the stage at 9 p.m. He spent his formative years writing poetry, daydreaming and turning a profit with his older brother on their baseball card collection.

All of this played into his love for hip-hop and an entrepreneurial spirit that prompted him to leave high school early to focus on his musical pursuits. By the age of 18 he had started his own Indie Label, and released several eps recorded by himself and other artists. He also ran a hip-hop night with his brother at a local club on Ohio State campus.

Just before his 19th birthday, Mr. Reuben packed up his recording gear and moved to Hollywood where he survived by doing extra work for movies and television. He can be seen appearing in such classics as "Rocky and Bullwinkle," "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," "Melrose Place," and "Clueless." Mr. Reuben returned to school to acquire his general education degree.

In addition to Mr. Reuben, other bands who will take the stage include RPM, Afterthought, Exclusive to None, Fight the Good Fight, Blood to Avail, Mitch Herman and Mark Phillips.

Burlington teacher and youth leader Jon Reeverts, will speak during the evening.

For ticket information, contact J&R Marketing at 785-443-1994 or online at j-rmarketing.net.

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The first four Angus bulls were transported from Scotland to the middle of the Kansas Prairie in 1873. In 1873 two of the bulls were exhibited in the fall of 1873 at the Kansas City (Missouri) Livestock Exposition where some considered the bulls as "freaks" because of their polled (naturally hornless) heads and solid black color.

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Deadline approaches

Producers are reminded that the deadline to file an acreage report is fast approaching.

Angie Berens, county executive director of Cheyenne County Farm Service Agency, made the announcement.

"Many farms have not reported their wheat, oats, barley and triticale, and May 31 is the final date without incurring a late filed fee," she said.

Producers must report acreages to maintain eligibility for Price Support Programs, Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and Direct and Counter Cyclical Program. Conservation Reserve Program and Noninsured Crop Assistance Program acreages must be certified also to remain eligible for payments.

To apply for Farm Service Agency benefits or certify acreage, contact the office at (785) 332-2183.