

Sirens sound in Bird City

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkans.com

The wheat is nearing the cutting stage in Northwest Kansas. With the hot temperatures predicted this week, farmers were talking like the first loads of wheat could be harvested by the weekend.

However, Monday night, residents in Bird City and St. Francis were sent scurrying to their basements when the tornado sirens sounded about 8:50 p.m. The tornado never materialized, but there was thunder, lightning, wind, hail and rain.

As of Tuesday, there had been reports of little damage to the crops but there were reports of hail ranging anywhere from marble-size to baseball-size. At the Bradley Waters farm, between Wheeler and Bird City, Barbara Waters reported hail the size of baseballs knocked out windows in their house and outbuildings.

Mrs. Waters said the first storm which came from the north had little damage but the second, which came from the south, was the one which did all the damage. The clouds, she said, were like mounds of whipped cream that were circling. "I had never seen anything like it," she said.

After that, she and Bradley were in the basement waiting out the storm.

Dave Flemming, who lives only a mile from the Waters, had no damage and little hail but reported .80 inch of rain.

Brian Holzwarth, who lives about 3 miles south of St. Francis, had both of his pickups, a four-wheeler and other equipment parked in the carport just feet away from his house. He was standing at the door watching the storm and saw the carport ripped from its base and scattered down the ditch south of the house. Nothing in the carport was disturbed and a plastic cup which was probably 30 feet from the carport never moved.

He said there was a strip northwest of the house where it was evident that a storm, tornado or something had moved through.

There is a line of trees several miles north in that path where the storm had uprooted some of the trees.

South of the Holzwarth place, there was a tree uprooted. Brian said he had spent the morning trying to pick up metal and replace some fence posts which had been broken off.

Russ Christensen, 519 W. Webster, St. Francis, had a huge part of a tree fall. He said he was standing on the porch watching the storm when he heard a loud crack and the tree landed just missing the porch roof.

Mark Mahlberg, Beecher Island, reported that the Beecher Island auditorium that was scheduled to be restored had extensive damage. About one-third of the roof over the stage was taken off, walls are cracked and bricks are missing.

"We still plan to restore it but it is going to take more time and more money," he said.

There were huge cottonwood trees that were broken off and uprooted in the campground along the river bottom. At his home, about one-half mile from Beecher, he had several trees broken off.

There was a barn leveled near Vernon, Colo., and, near the Rawlins-Cheyenne county line, irrigation pivots were destroyed.

Gary Rogers, emergency manager, said he had reports of windshields and windows broken. He said the backup batteries at the emergency control tower did not work when needed. Dave Flemming, county road and bridge supervisor, took a generator out until the electricity came back on.

Richard Grace, Grace Flying Service, reported a wind gust of around 60 miles per hour.

The National Weather Service in Goodland reported a repeat of the same storm for Tuesday night.

Mr. Rogers asks that anyone having damage from this storm or any other storm to please contact him at 785-332-2560. These reports may help in getting state and federal aid in disasters.



BIRD CITY was in for severe weather Monday night as giant thunderheads surrounded the town. The top picture was taken looking at Bird City from the west, and the bottom picture was a look to the south from the same location between U.S. 36 and the airport. According to news reports, the storm system pictured in the bottom image was able to be seen as far away as Denver, Colo.

Times staff photos by Sydney Busse

County wheat plot tour discusses different varieties

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkans.com

About 60 farmers gathered at the K-State wheat plot tour on the Sunny Crest Farm south of Wheeler Wednesday afternoon. It was hot and the wind was blowing but that didn't deter the people from coming.

This has been an unusual year with cool, wet weather. Consequently there are different conditions for the test wheat plot.

It appeared that the general consensus was the test plot looked good. Jim Shroyer, K-State agronomist, said he guessed the low yield in the field to be at 60 bushels per acre. There should be some very good yields this year, he said.

Jeanne Falk, K-State multi-county agronomist, had planted 22 varieties, then strips of wheat with seed treatments and treated other plots with foliar fungicide treatments.

Brian Olson, K-State northwest area agronomist, and Erick DeWolf, K-State wheat pathologist, along with Mr. Shroyer, talked about the varieties planted, giving a short history of each type of seed, along with its strengths and weaknesses to environmental conditions and diseases. Varieties planted included: Turkey Red, Jagalene, Jagger, Overley, Fuller, PostRock, Santa Fe, Hitch, Tam 111, Tam 112, T-81, T-140, Hatcher, Ripper, Millenium, Smokey Hill, Winterhawk, Armour, Everest, Hawken, AP503CL2 and Infinity CL. Turkey Red had been added to the plot last year and when asked for a show of hands as to had planted, there were none. This variety came to the United States



JEANNE FALK AND JIM SHROYER check out the test plot wheat at Wednesday's wheat field day by Wheeler.

with Russian immigrants and revolutionized wheat production in Kansas. Ms. Falk included this older variety to show the advances in wheat breeding with semi-dwarf varieties that can stand better.

Much of the discussion was about stripe and leaf rust which has invaded most of the fields. Both diseases had blown in from the Texas wheat fields. The aerial application of fungicides has been evident in the area. The specialists noted that Jagger and those with Jagger parentage are now susceptible to stripe rust. This is due to a change in the stripe rust this year.

When asked for recommendation

on the wheat varieties to look at next year, the speakers told producers to think about their management systems. One way is to choose varieties that are more resistant to many diseases, including stripe rust. Those varieties include TAM 111, Winterhawk, and Armour. However, producers need to keep in mind that stripe rust may not be a disease that is present every year.

Another way is to choose a variety that has a good yield history in variable environmental conditions (ie drought), but has some level of susceptibility to stripe rust. By doing this, producers know they may need to spray for this disease in some years. These tend to be varieties that have a good yield history and producers feel comfortable planting. These varieties include PostRock, Fuller, and TAM 112.

Last year, the wheat yielding the highest in the test plot was Armour with 86.6 bushels per acre. Coming in second was Winterhawk with 83.1 bushels.

A new addition to the Cheyenne County Wheat Plot tour was a bread demonstration. Linda Elfers, Sunflower District agent assistant, demonstrated a recipe for artisan bread. Artisan bread is a basic dough that can be made ahead of time and personalized with cheese or other items. It is planned this program will continue at future wheat plot tours.

Following the meeting at the test plots, everyone went to Goodland Greenline in Wheeler where they enjoyed supper provided by the county grain dealers.

When the wheat test plot is harvested, the results of yields will be printed in The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times.



THE CHEYLIN BOARD OF EDUCATION formally commended David Burns for his 12th place finish at the 1A State golf meet during their meeting this past Monday night.

Times staff photo by Sydney Busse

School board hires teacher

By Sydney Busse

sydney_busse@baylor.edu

This month's meeting of the Cheylin Board of Education was held on June 21 at 7 p.m. Board members Dale Hazuka, Lori Janicke, Anita Pochop, and Jan Busse were present, as well as superintendent, Bruce Bolen, and clerk of the board, Jane Young. As both the president and vice president were gone, Dale Hazuka presided over the meeting. Board member, David Frisbie later joined the group.

Summer school teacher Janice Churchwell reported that this summer's three-week term had gone very well. She, Mary Moore, Blanca Ponce and Anita Burton taught the 21 students, who ranged from first through eighth grade. As English is a second language for

many of the students, the teachers worked with them primarily on vocabulary and reading and also on math skills.

In the action items section of the meeting, the Board formally commended David Burns for his 12th place finish at the Kansas State High School Activities Association State Golf Meet.

They also voted to have unnecessary records older than 5 years destroyed.

Employees

The Board members approved the hiring of summer employee, Justin Miller, and temporary summer help Rose Miller, and Ana Ponce to do some painting. They also voted to accept the resignation of physical education teacher, Jeremy Stefan, and hired Anthony

Blair as the new kindergarten-12 P.E. teacher, and head high school boys basketball coach.

Financial

In financial business, the board voted to close out the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Members also approved the purchase of 20 new laptop computers, 15 for student use, and five for staff members. They allotted \$4,386.45 for the refinishing of the gym floor in McDonald, as well as the high school gym floor in Bird City. The board accepted a bid from Scott Schultz to replace the carpet in the hallway on the second floor of the high school, and in two offices and the copy room in the elementary.

Most of the other business on the agenda was tabled due to the impending severe storm.