

What to do with pasture hurt by years of drought

By Joan Gienger, District Conservationist

Nine years of drought have taken their toll on the grasslands of Cheyenne County and the surrounding area. In many pastures, up to 50 percent of the grass plants have died out, leaving bare ground that provides a spot for weedy species to sprout and grow whenever rain showers grace the plains. Cattle numbers are down and, in some cases, whole herds have been sold.

These are stressful times for ranchers. Difficult questions surface: Is the drought over? Will my grass recover to pre-drought conditions? How long will it take? When do I start rebuilding my herd? Should I rebuild my herd to pre-drought conditions? Can I afford to keep my cow herd numbers down? How will these decisions affect my grass? My pocketbook?

For ranchers struggling with these questions, there is help through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program under the Grazing Land Health resource concern. The program is designed to help ranchers make long term management changes that will result in improved grasslands. Incentive payments are made for three years to help soften the blow of these changes; cost-share is available if structural practices (i.e. well, pipeline, cross-fence, etc.) are needed. Contracts last one year longer than the last paid practice, but usually are from four to five years.

In exchange for the incentive or cost-share funds, the land owner agrees to three main things: (1) half of whatever grows in any one year is to remain on the grass plant (key specie) at the end of the growing season; (2) exclusion cages will be installed to help monitor this use; and (3) a level of rest (determined by the landowner) will be provided during the growing season.

Ranchers who are interested in this program should visit the conservation office located in the United States Department of Agriculture Service Center on West Highway 36 in Saint Francis. Deadline for consideration for the 2005 program year is January 21. An ap-

plication and a self-assessment form are to be completed by this date, so early inquiries are recommended.

— Bowling News —

Ladies Nite Out 1/6

Team standing: Bankwest Alley Cats 11-1, Dundy Ag 7-5, Cheyenne Bowl 7-5, Wright Carpet 4-4, Jersey Maids 6-6, Mels Gal's 6-6, Stockmen Strikers 3-9, M&M's 0-8

High game (scratch): Linda Mahon 185, Sara Schield 183, Kathy Blecha 177

High series (scratch): Schield 499, Blecha 490, Mahon 445

Grant speaker forum to be held in Colby

On Feb. 10, Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development will be hosting their sixth Grant Funding Speakers Forum featuring The Kresge Foundation. A special luncheon will be held for Kansas Foundation (free of charge) from noon to 1:30 p.m. to network with The Kresge Foundation.

The Kresge Foundation has two challenge grant programs. The first is for capital projects, most often for construction or renovation of buildings, and also for the purchase of major equipment or real estate. The

second is to upgrade and endow scientific instrumentation and laboratories in colleges and universities, teaching hospitals, medical schools, and research institutions. They award funds on a national basis and are interested in networking with Kansas Foundations, looking for partnership opportunities.

Please contact Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development at (785) 462-2602 to register with the deadline being Feb. 1.



NEWLY ELECTED JUDGE, Robert VanAllen visits with Randy Sangster, county appraiser, after being sworn into office at the courthouse. Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Beecher Island News

There were 51 at Sunday school with Jeff Hurlburt giving the special number and Trevor and Kristy Hurlburt, Jo Dickson and Logan Willard giving their birthday offerings. Daniel Prentice was the morning speaker.

Trevor had four friends over Thursday to help him celebrate his birthday.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Allen, Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Hurlburt and Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Hurlburt and family met at the Route to help Kristy and Trevor celebrate their birthdays on Saturday.

Tuesday Jacque Ekberg, Mr. and Mrs. Kris Jones and family and Mr. and Mrs. John Willard and family met at the Sandhillier to help Laurie Jones celebrate her birthday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ken Willard had ice cream and cake Friday evening in honor of Logan's birthday. Guests were Matt Shade, Jacque Ekberg, Esther Hanson, Mr. and Mrs. John Willard and family besides the guest of honor, Logan Willard.

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Allen were Saturday overnight guests of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Shively in Brighton. They went out for diner to celebrate the wedding anniversary of Larry and Mary.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Allen went to Fort Morgan Friday to attend the funeral of Maxine Rockwell.

Mr. and Mrs. John Osmus and Jacob returned home Tuesday. They had spent the Christmas holiday in Michigan with Caryn's family. Harold and Charlene Curtis, parents of Caryn from Africa, were also present.

Violet Brown and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Brown spent the Christmas weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Larkin and family in Lakewood.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ekberg, Jacque Ekberg and Marilyn Bruffett were New Year's dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Renzelman.

Mr. and Mrs. Pete Osmus and Perk Salvador were New Year's dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Salvador.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Langendoerfer and family, Mr. and Mrs. Dallas and Kinsey were New Year's Eve supper guests and to watch the New Year come in with Mr. and Mrs. Kenny Rose and girls.

Mr. and Mrs. Greg Allen and boys were Thursday supper guests of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Allen.

Tiffany Post and Cory Zuege

were Thursday overnight guests of Mallory Rose. Chynna Rose spent the night with Brook Zuege.

Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Hurlburt were weekend guests of Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Hurlburt and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Matt Parmelee and family were weekend guests of Mr. and Mrs. John Osmus and Jacob.

Mary E. Allen took Cheryl Allen to Colorado Springs Tuesday where they were overnight guests of Mr. and Mrs. Travis Allen and family. Wednesday they went on to Denver where Cheryl visited friends before going on to her home in Richmond, Va., on Thursday. Mary returned home Wednesday. Ryan Allen returned to Fort Worth after spending the Christmas holiday with Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Allen.

Ron and Jo Dickson visited Bill and Darlene Strangways Friday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Allen visited Mr. and Mrs. Pete Allen Thursday.

Laurie Jones, Megan and Ben visited Nelson Ekberg in Greeley Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Eric Johnson and family left for their home in Fort Worth and Andy Osmus left for his home in Minneapolis, Minn., Tuesday after spending the Christmas holiday with parents, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Osmus.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Strangways, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Wieser and Katie and Bernie Oberg went out for pizza in Yuma on Thursday.

June Yost and Violet Brown were callers at Nettie May Welton's this past week.

Monte Mansfield visited Mr. and Mrs. Bill Mansfield this past week.

Perry Allen went to Colorado Springs Thursday to spend the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Travis Allen and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Rowe Shively hosted Christmas dinner Monday for Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Shively, Miranda and Todd, Mr. and Mrs. Jess Bond, Doris and Carole Whomble. Zachery and Austin Bowman joined them in the evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Rowe Shively were among the family members enjoying a family dinner with Charlie Shively in his new home in Burlington Sunday.

Wednesday Judy Shively and Doris Whomble had dinner with Nettie Riley in Greeley.

Lenea Fonte visited Mr. and Mrs. Rex Shaver Wednesday afternoon.

By Bessie Dent



MerryLu Simmons and Laura Pearl Wall met Amber Simmons in Fort Morgan Thursday for her to visit until Sunday. Mr. and Mrs. Randy Perila and girls joined them Friday for the weekend.

Mr. and Mrs. Chad Cranmer and family hosted New Year's Day dinner at their home in Parker for Mr. and Mrs. Rex Shaver, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Cranmer, Mr. and Mrs. Pat Harr and family, Nancy Cranmer, Mr. and Mrs. Brent Cranmer and family and Mr. and Mrs. Nacho Gutierrez and family.

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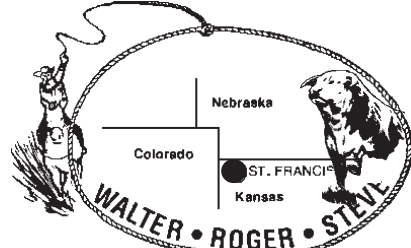
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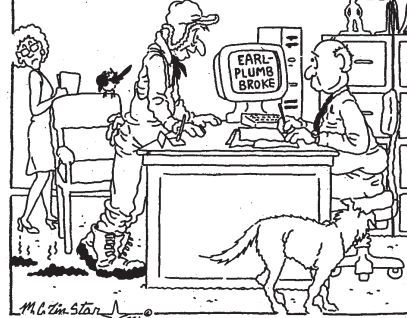
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