

It's that time of year again



Julie Roane of Goodland raked leaves late Tuesday afternoon in Vera Daise's yard on Caldwell Street in Goodland.
Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

Kansas oil producers struggling to come back

GREAT BEND (AP)—Despite high energy prices, Kansas oil producers say they are having a tough time hiring enough workers, getting repair parts and pulling their businesses together to revive the oil industry in the state.

“People tend to raise an outcry over rising fuel costs, whether it is gasoline,

natural gas for heating, or surcharges on their electric bills,” said Danny Biggs, of Pickrell Drilling in Great Bend.

Unstable prices since the late 1980s have not supported development of the industry in the United States, he said. The number of producing wells dropped, and the industry’s infrastructure suffered also.

“The dramatic drop in prices during 1997-99 came pretty close to dismantling the industry,” Biggs said.

As companies attempt to revive production, they often encounter major problems with day-to-day realities, from hiring experienced laborers to finding the proper equipment or repair parts.

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Last week was a strange one for several reasons, none of which were serious. First off, I went to West School to help my two girls with their reading. While there, they had a fire drill. Believe me when I tell you, it has been many moons since I “had a fire drill.”

The little girl I was working with took my hand and helped me do the right thing. We went out as they’ve been instructed to do. Once outside, one of the teachers told the kids not to be afraid as it was only a drill. This practice was to help them to remember what to do in the event it would ever be the real thing. When the all clear signal was given, we went back into the classroom and finished our lesson. I’ve got a couple of cute kids to work with this year.

I have a sweatshirt with a moon, scarecrow and a black cat on it. When I bought it, I had no idea it glowed in the dark. I found out by accident one night when I woke up and saw this large glowing object in my bedroom. The moon just glows, outlining the scarecrow. I had lunch with two of my favorite people, Leila Sturrock and Eva Briney, plus daughter-in-law, Kay Briney, and granddaughter, Pat Briney. They both remarked about my shirt where upon I told them about how it glowed. So, late Saturday evening I went to their apartments to show them my shirt. Both of them just giggled after we turned the lights off and there was the glow. I stayed for a short visit with Mrs. Briney and she showed me the most gorgeous Christmas cactus that is in full bloom. It is just draped with the most beautiful blooms of a very lovely shade of fuchsia. A lovely plant for a lovely woman. I’ve got three cactus plants, but they’ve never bloomed like hers. But I never have been known to have a green thumb. Mine looks more like one on the black side.

I spent part of the weekend covering the exposed parts of the house where some of the paint had been scraped off over a month ago. I’ve put the painting project off until spring, so I needed to cover the exposed wood. I found some primer that could be tinted to match the basic color of the house. I’ve got the window frames to do and then I can live with the repair until next spring, God willing.

The next thing that was brought to my attention, was the damage done to a door at the church that someone did to break into the kitchen. Upon entering the kitchen, they proceeded to empty the fridge of milk, cheese, etc., then the pantry of packaged foods,



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some paper products, kitchen soap and a can opener. Makes one think someone was setting up “housekeeping” and stole the food used to feed the kids attending the daycare at the church.

If someone was that desperate, a knock on the door would have gotten them the help they obviously needed without any damage to the property. Guess even a church is not off limits for some people. I hope God forgives them, as it is hard to do so when you figure up the cost to repair the damage to the door and to replace the stolen food. The stealing from kids, makes me very angry. Hope they enjoyed the ill-gotten food.

The only birthday I know of is that of Alyssa Brady on Oct. 27. Happy birthday wishes to her and any others who might be having one.

There are three deaths I know of that have close ties to our community. Vaughn Brown passed away in a hospital in Hutchinson. He and his late wife, Opal, lived here until just a year or so ago when their declining health dictated a move to be nearer their family. Sincere sympathy to his survivors.

Another former resident to lose the battle of life, was Ron Thomas. I remember a few years back when he was waiting for a kidney transplant. He finally got one and seemed to be on the road to better health. Now, we hear the news that he’s gone. To his father, Otho, his sister, Judy, and his wife, Connie, I extend the sincere sympathy of the community.

A grand lady, Lottie Dillinger, who I’ve known for a good many years lost her battle to overcome the effects of cancer. She passed away on Oct. 18. She and her husband, Troy, had celebrated their 65th anniversary awhile back. Mr. Dillinger told me just a few weeks ago that she was having some very serious problems. Those left to mourn include her husband, son, Ed, and his family; daughters and their husbands, Doris and Allen Quenzer of Brewster, Wilma and Bill Forbes of Phoenix, and Arleta and Mike McConnell of Kansas City, Mo.; several grandchildren and a few great-grandchildren. Others left to mourn are

her brothers, Les Watkins of Goodland and Glen Watkins of Englewood, Colo.; and sisters, Lucille Fenner of Goodland and Ida Mae Murray of Holyoke, Colo. She also has several nieces and nephews that many will remember. Among them are Della Watkins Helzer, Debbie Fenner Wasse Miller, Dorothy Watkins Beckner and Dale and Dennis Fenner. Mr. Dillinger also has several brothers and sisters at Goodland, Brewster and Colby. To the entire family, I express the sincere sympathy of the community. May God’s hand be with them as they face the loss of a great lady. She’ll be sorely missed by all.

I would like to take this time to thank all of you who have expressed their thanks that I’m continuing with my weekly ramblings. I got a letter from former resident and news editor, Tom Dreiling. He lives in Colby and works as publisher for the *Colby Free Press*. It’s hard to believe we’ve come full circle in our lives and now are a part of the group that owns the Colby paper and *The Goodland Daily News*. He said Denise lives and works in Denver, Lance is starting his 11th year in the Air Force in Texas with his wife and daughter, and Todd is admissions officer at Fort Hays State University. I’ll go into more about them in a future column. His late wife, Jean, was my dearest friend and the letter and phone call brought back a lot of memories that Tom and I talked about. Thanks Tom, for your most kind words.

I’ve rambled on long enough and need to get this printed. Morning seems to come around faster and faster and I need to have it done for delivery.

I do want to wish the best get-well wishes to Mac Been. He’s been in the hospital in Burlington, Colo., for over a week. There have been some rather thready days, but a phone call this evening was that he is showing some improvement. Let’s hope he’ll be coming home in the next few days. He’s the father and grandfather of the Gary McClung family, who are my next door neighbors.

’Till next time, just a reminder to remember those departed and especially the navy personnel who lost their lives in that ship explosion. May God keep His hands upon His people in these violent, turbulent times. On that note, take care. Remember to make up your mind on how to vote and then do so on Nov. 7.

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