

# Gray skies bring cold answer to prayers

**By Patty Decker**  
*Colby Free Press*

God works in mysterious ways, they say, and Saturday's overcast skies might have been his way of answering a lot of people's prayers.

At least that was the hope for the Brewster couple responsible for organizing the "Northwest Kansas Pray for Rain Rally" this weekend.

In spite of the cold, gloomy weather outside, more than 75 people attended the

three-hour rally at the 4-H Building on the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Organizers Leonard and Zelma Kinkade live south of Brewster.

Some might even say it worked, with Sunday's snowfall accumulations of 3 to 6 inches in northwest Kansas, and the forecast calling for more snow this week.

A cardboard map of the 18 northwest Kansas counties was used to pinpoint everyone attending the rally. Mrs. Kinkade said she also had a map of Kansas available

for people from outside the area.

Standing before the group, Mr. Kinkade used a cellular telephone to "call" God, saying "God's telephone number is Jeremiah 33:3."

Other scriptures related to rain were read. For example, Mr. Kinkade read from Zechariah 10:1 asking God for rain in the springtime.

"It is the Lord who makes the storm clouds," he read, "and he gives showers of rain to men and plants of the field to every-

one."

Scripture readings included Elijah's drought from 1 Kings 17 and 18, Love Your Neighbor from Matthew 5:43-48, God's Invitation to the Living Water, John 7:37-38, along with many others.

Some participants stayed the entire three-hour rally, while others came and went.

"We made this a 'come and go' rally because we understood that some might have prior commitments," Mrs. Kinkade said.

As many continued to pray throughout

the rally, Mr. Kinkade talked and read from the Bible.

"Many times in the Bible, drought (physical dryness) accompanies spiritual dryness," he said. "God even says at times that the purpose of hardship is to get people to turn to him."

Everyone who came participated in prayer, read scripture and listened to Mr. Kinkade, who came up with the idea months ago after hearing on the radio about someone planning a similar rally.

## Duckwalls in Oberlin closes as headquarters team arrives

**By Kimberly Brandt**  
*The Oberlin Herald*

Customers coming to shop at Oberlin's Duckwalls store last Tuesday were greeted with locked doors and brown paper covering the windows.

The downtown store was closed that morning with no warning, as a team of managers from the firm's Abilene headquarters showed up at first light to start packing and moving the merchandise.

Decatur County Chamber of Commerce Manager Glenva Nichols, whose office is across the street from the store, said she got in a little after 9 a.m. and everything looked normal. Then she saw women in the window taking out the decorations and putting up the brown paper.

A sign on the front door window says that Duckwalls has closed the store here and it invites customers to drive to Atwood or Hill City to shop.

Mrs. Nichols said when the paper started to go up, she didn't know what was happening. When she found out, she said, her reaction was, that's just the way big companies do things. It is, in fact, the way Duckwalls does things.

A press release hand delivered to *The Oberlin Herald* that morning says the sales floor of the store would close Tuesday and gave customers a little under a week to pick up their film and layaway items.

"As a normal course of business, we financially evaluate all of our

locations on an annual basis or when the lease options allow us to exit a location," said District Manager Scott Orcutt. "Our study indicated that we would be able to make better use of our assets in another location."

The company runs 36 Duckwall's stores in Kansas, he said, including the ones in Atwood and Hill City. It also operates Alco Discount Stores, including one in McCook.

Mike Bowman, an Alco-Duckwalls vice president, was in town Monday helping pack up the store so the merchandise could be moved out.

He said the company normally makes a decision like this and then comes in and does it. That is why there was no warning, he said. It was the same when the company closed its Alco store in Goodland last year and an Alco store in Garden City a little more than a week ago.

When the store in Garden City closed, the firm said Alco was getting out of towns larger than 5,500, especially those with competing discount stores like Wal-Mart.

Mr. Bowman stood inside the store last week with the door open part way. He said that the merchandise inside would go back to the warehouse.

Employees will have the choice of being transferred to another store or taking a severance package, he said.

Mr. Bowman said this was the only store in the Alco and Duckwall

chain that was being closed last Tuesday. He said he couldn't disclose any other stores that are on the list to close.

Asked if it might be a nearby Alco, he said, "You ask good questions."

Although he had been with the company for 26 years, he said he didn't know the history of the Duckwall's store here.

In less than two weeks, he said, the merchandise will be out of the store. Mr. Bowman said he couldn't say if the company owned or leased the building and would not let the reporter in to take pictures "for safety reasons."

The building is owned by Joe Currey of Hays. Mr. Currey said he received a phone call last week from someone in Oberlin that the store had closed. He said he tried to contact the company but his phone call was not returned.

The next day, said Mr. Currey, he received a registered letter about the closing.

Laurie Wasson, owner of Prairie Petals and president of the Oberlin Business Alliance, said she was sad that the store had closed. Duckwalls has closed before, she said, and then reopened. The store wasn't closed for very long then, she said, but who knows what will happen this time.

Mrs. Wasson said she is disappointed in the Duckwalls corporation for the way the closing was handled.

Mrs. Wasson said even though it

is hard, people need to have a positive attitude about the closing. Something good always comes out of everything, she said; sometimes it just takes a while.

At Times Past, Adrian Arnold



A worker loaded boxes on a semi truck Friday afternoon from the Oberlin Duckwalls Store, which closed last Tuesday morning without advance notice.  
Photo by Kimberly Brandt/The Oberlin Herald

## Girls get experience as pages on Statehouse floor helping Sen. Clark

**By Sharon Corcoran**  
*The Goodland Star-News*

Two Goodland High School seniors had a once-in-a-lifetime experience and learned a little about government last week while paging for state Sen. Stan Clark.

The students met Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, climbed over 700 steps to the top of the capitol and had lunch with the senator.

Rebecca Gattshall and Andrea Fenner went to Topeka on Tuesday to page for the senator.

"First off," Gattshall said, "we were sworn in. We were employees of the state for a day."

Gattshall and Fenner said they made copies, delivered newspapers and memos, got supplies, did research in the library and ran errands for senators. They ran from the first to the fifth floors, Gattshall said.

"Using the steps," Fenner added, "because the elevators were too slow."

"We got our exercise," he said.

Government is definitely not what the girls expected.

You would think it would be orderly, Gattshall said, but it wasn't. When the Senate convened, she said, of the 40 senators, over half were not there for roll call.



Rebecca Gattshall (left) and Andrea Fenner (right) went to Topeka Tuesday to page for state Sen. Stan Clark (back) and met Gov. Kathleen Sebelius. The girls said the day opened their eyes to what state government is really like.  
Photo by Donna Fenner

Dean and Donna Fenner of Goodland are Andrea's parents, and Donna drove the girls to Topeka. William and Diane Gattshall of Goodland are Rebecca's parents.

They met the governor briefly, Gattshall said, walking into her office, saying "hello," and having their picture taken.

Clark took them into a Utility Committee meeting, the girls said, and took them to lunch at Subway. It was Clark's idea for them to page.

"We went to get our senior pictures taken," Fenner explained.

Clark, a professional photographer, asked them to page. His secretary called with available dates, Gattshall said, and they picked one.

Despite being in close company with heads of the state, the girls said the highlight of their day was the climb to the top of the Capitol. It was quite a view from the balcony, though it was windy up there, they said, and it was worth the 700-plus steps. It took a while to get up there, Gattshall said.

"We had to take a break," Fenner said, "then we were good to go."

## Reporter joins Star-News

Darrel Pattillo joined the staff of *The Goodland Star-News* on temporary assignment, replacing Michelle Hawkins, who returned to her post at the *Colby Free Press*.

Sherman County residents may remember his name from his days as an announcer at KLOE-KKCI radio in the '90s.

Pattillo is a long-time resident of Colby, and for the past year has been the sports editor at the *Free Press*. He also does news and photography.

Pattillo, 38, hails from Southern California. He made his way with his family east to Kansas after a one-year stopover in Wheat Ridge, Colo., attending the same junior high school as former Denver Bronco wide receiver Dave Logan.

Bogue, Kan., nine miles east of Hill City in Graham County, was where Pattillo's family landed. Bogue, of course, is the hometown of former Los Angeles Rams defensive standout Nolan Cromwell.

After several trips back and forth between Kansas and California, Pattillo joined the Navy in 1981. He received an honorable discharge in 1985. Following two semesters at Colby Community College, Pattillo joined KQLS radio in Colby in 1987. After two years on the air in Goodland, Pattillo returned to Colby, taking over as sports editor at the *Free Press* in August 1997. In September of 1998, he left the newspaper. He returned to journalism in March.

day at the Capitol. The sergeant of arms on the Senate floor, Fenner said, was in charge.

The girls left before the meetings

were done, Fenner said, since we had such a long drive home and had to go to school the next day. They worked from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

NOW AVAILABLE!



Dial-Up Internet  
\$14.50  
Per Month



1318 Main - Goodland, Ks - 785-890-7400

## Take a look at some of Cynthia's new listings....

### 1308 Cherry.....62,500

This beautiful bungalow is full of charm and offers a large living room with fireplace, kitchen, 3 bedrooms, bath and partially finished basement. Boasts hard wood floors throughout house with original woodwork and new carpeting. Includes double garage and double carport.



### 1525 Broadway \$28,500

Great for students or a starter home, this 2 bedroom home offers living room, eat in kitchen with oak cabinetry, bath and bedroom on main floor. Basement offers large laundry/storage room and an extra bedroom.

To view all of Cynthia's listings visit her at [www.cynthiabutts.com](http://www.cynthiabutts.com)

Cynthia Butts, 899-3944; Donna Moore 899-6159.

**RICHARDSON'S HOMESTEAD REALTY, INC.**



**1023 Main • Goodland, KS 67735**  
**785-899-2328 or 1-800-974-2426**

**OR E-MAIL US AT: [homestead@goodland.ikxs.com](mailto:homestead@goodland.ikxs.com)**  
**Visit our website: [www.goodlandksrealestate.com](http://www.goodlandksrealestate.com)**