

Storms bring rain, tornadoes

After an overcast day Monday, Decatur County finally got some rain around 6 p.m. — and a few tornadoes.

The sirens blew three times in Norcat, the first around 6:18 p.m. when a funnel was seen southwest of the town moving northeast. The sirens blew again around 6:26 p.m. after two tornadoes were seen, one four miles east of town and one two to three miles west.

Minutes later, the spotters reported an active tornado a mile east of Norcat.

At 6:45 p.m. the sirens blew a third time in Norcat with a report of a tornado on the ground one and a half miles east of Norcat.

While the spotters kept busy in the Norcat area, the wind continued to blow in Oberlin. Finally, around 7 p.m. it started to rain.

Fifteen minutes after the hour, firemen heard of a possible funnel near Kanona, but it was never confirmed. While officials discussed blowing the sirens in Oberlin, the National Weather Service said there was no danger.

A little over two hours after the first siren blew in Norcat, dispatch was asked to give the all clear at 8:30 p.m.

By that time, the severe thunderstorm watch that Decatur County had been under all day had turned

into a flash-flood warning, with high water possible in low areas and across some roads.

The tornadoes followed a string of unusual storms that blew through northwest Kansas Monday morning, bringing rain and baseball-size hail.

It was overcast all day and the forecast included a 70 percent chance of severe thunderstorms. By early evening, however, Oberlin had seen nothing but a couple of drops of rain.

Other towns in northwest Kansas were reporting inches upon inches of rain, but there was nothing here.

The storms seemed to move all the way around Oberlin and Decatur County throughout the day.

Reports from around the area included four inches of rain in St. Francis, a “large and dangerous” tornado that hit a farmstead east of Almena before moving north into Nebraska, 4.25-inch hail in Wallace County and 2.75-inch hail in Sheridan County.

The storm also produced damaging winds. South of Sharon Springs, the top of a grain bin was blown off, trees were uprooted and several irrigation pivots blown over.

The National Weather Service expected a 30 percent chance of showers and storms overnight, but nothing again until Friday.

Wheat prices here dropping steadily since end of May

By KEVIN BOTTRELL
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With shifting supply and demand around the world, wheat prices that hit a peak in late May have been dropping steadily, even as Decatur County farmers gear up for harvest.

The wheat market took a hit Thursday to the tune of about 21 cents a bushel. The Kansas Department of Agriculture statistics report for June 1 said wheat prices in Kansas averaged \$8.09 a bushel in April, but fell to \$8 by mid-May. Since then, Hi-Plains Coop in Colby recorded prices topping out at \$8.55 per bushel on May 26, but they have fallen steadily since then to \$7.18 at the close of market Thursday.

“That’s a lot,” said Steve Ziegelmeier of ZEZ Commodities in Colby, “but with the extreme volatility of the market, that’s become normal.”

Still, the price is several dollars higher than last year. Prices averaged \$4.24 last May.

“The problem is, input costs went up as well,” said John Jenkinson, creator of *The Ag Network*, which produces national agriculture and market radio shows.

The cost of fuel and fertilizer has increased this summer, he said, reducing the benefit of high prices.

The futures market, which predicts where the market will be based on current conditions, peaked in February, Mr. Ziegelmeier said.

Wheat futures have a five-year average of \$6.14 for the first of July, he said, but before that, wheat futures were in the \$3 range.

Mr. Ziegelmeier said major crop production areas around the world had trouble in 2007 and 2008. Drought in Australia and shifts to other crops reduced the supply of wheat. In 2001, the world had 7.4

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Relay raises money

AT THE GATEWAY Friday night, Ralph Unger, a cancer survivor (above), his wife Norma and their grandson Christian Rittman walked around the arena. The Ungers were part of the planning committee for the annual event. Kathy Almquist (right) played with the Oberlin Area Concert Band during the first hour of the relay.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



About 140 people gather to talk about health care issues here

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Around 140 people talked last Wednesday about health care in Decatur County and what makes a healthy community during a Decatur Tomorrow “community conversation” at The Gateway.

Gary Anderson, owner of the LandMark Inn and one of the past steering committee members of Decatur Tomorrow, introduced Chrysanne Grund, who works for Greeley

County Hospital, but lives in Wallace County, to lead the meeting as facilitator.

Before the meeting, the Oberlin Teens for Christ put on a dinner at The Gateway. Mrs. Grund said it was the most polite group of teenagers she has dealt with in a long time.

Mrs. Grund invited everyone to sit around the tables, making sure that there was someone at each representing the sides of the “public square,” including government,

business, human services and education.

She then gave a series of questions for people to talk about at the tables, with one person in charge of taking notes at each. Those would be compiled, she said, giving an action team a place to start.

Mrs. Grund talked about what makes a healthy community. It could be having schools or the kind of programs they offer the students, she said. Some of the comments from the round-table discussions

included facilities, a positive attitude, a caring community, 4-H and business. Other questions included:

What are some examples of change and how have those changes affected people? Some of the comments included having to travel to see a health-care provider, which is getting harder for the older population; navigating health care as the people get older; no doctors; and lack of continuity and uncertainty.

What new opportunities are possible with these changes? Suggestions included advertising what already exists, creating a women’s clinic and a change in care for the elderly.

How do we help support the health care system? Suggestions included promoting local health care, using the local pharmacy and continuing to be nice to the providers after they are hired.

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Hospital still open for business 24 hours a day

The Decatur County Hospital and its Family Practice Clinic are open for business, including a 24-hour emergency room with doctors and other professionals available.

Hospital Administrator Lynn Doeden said Robin Williamson, a physician assistant, and doctors from Docs Who Care man both the clinic and the emergency room.

She said they are trying to have

the same providers here in rotation. A doctor might work for two weeks, go back home for two, then return here for two weeks.

Mrs. Doeden said they are also trying to keep two providers working every day. Ms. Williamson is seeing five to nine new patients a day. Mrs. Doeden said she’s not sure how many the providers with Docs Who Care are seeing, but the patient numbers are going up.

When there is a physician assistant or nurse practitioner seeing a

patient, she said, they always have a doctor as a back-up. Other hospitals in the area are also using these “midlevel” practitioners to cover their emergency rooms, she said.

The Family Practice Clinic, said Mrs. Doeden, has extended hours on Tuesday and Thursdays, when the clinic opens at 7 a.m. and closes at 5 p.m. They take walk-in clients from 7 to 9 a.m., although people can also make appointments for those times.

When patients see a provider at

the Family Practice Clinic for the first time, she said, they will pay a new patient charge. The charge is for the first time only, not each time the person sees a new provider.

The charges, said Mrs. Doeden, are based on the Medicare payment plan depending on the amount of time spent with the patient and what happens during the visit.

There’s some remodeling going on in the front lobby of the clinic, she said, and other areas of the hos-

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Senator to stop Friday

Just before lunch on Friday, U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran plans to be on Main Street in Oberlin to talk with people.

During his time as a congressman, Sen. Moran held regular “town hall” meetings to talk with his constituents. He says he plans to continue that tradition, traveling back to Kansas to visit with people. Sen. Moran will be in Oberlin, on Main Street, from

11 a.m. to noon on Friday.

According to a release from his office, the senator will travel to each of Kansas’ 105 counties to talk with people about their hopes and concerns. The issues Sen. Moran focuses on and the work he does in Washington, are largely based on the conversations he has with Kansans during these town hall meetings, he says.



*Community members talk about health care

(Continued from Page 1A)
One of the complaints she heard while walking around, said Mrs. Grund, is that people can't get in to see their doctor or provider all the time when they want. If everyone can get in to see their provider every time they want, she said, that's not good because there wouldn't be enough patients to pay the bills.
Another idea for helping the health care system, she said, is to talk to people who quit using the local clinic about coming back.
Mrs. Grund brought up recruiting and retention of providers. Recruiting is a full-time job, she said. Some things people want included a provider who is a good communicator, understands this culture, has kids, is married, wants to be here for the long haul and wants to be part of the

community.
One person mentioned that Oberlin already has an excellent physician assistant in Robin Williamson. The audience gave Ms. Williamson a round of applause.
Before leaving, Mrs. Grund gave people a chance for any other comments.
Sometimes, said Shelley McKenna, there has been misinformation that the hospital or clinic aren't still open. They are. The hospital has an excellent physician assistant, nurses and staff, she said, with a full-time emergency room and more.
Deanna Castle said she can't complain at all about the providers who come and work through Docs Who Care either, "so go to the doctor."
Mrs. Grund asked people inter-

ested in serving on an action team to explore health care to write their name on the piece of paper on the table.
"You are Decatur Tomorrow," she said, "not Decatur used to be."
Decatur Tomorrow started in 2005 as a strategic planning group, said Mr. Anderson. The group is affiliated with Public Square, a group started by consultant Terry Woodbury.
In 2006, the group held its first community conversation, said Mr. Anderson, and several topics came up. Those turned into action teams, he said, and the group has worked on them since.
The teams include city beautification and recreation.

*Hospital remains open

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Mrs. Doeden and the county Doctor Procurement Committee are trying to recruit others.
Trica Carney, a nurse practitioner, from Colby is working every other Thursday at the clinic and hospital and covering the emergency room.
Recruitment, said Mrs. Doeden, is a continuing job. One doctor who is interested in Oberlin, she said, is working on his Kansas license.

On Friday, they interviewed two midlevels, one from Wichita and one from southwest Nebraska. Both are interested in working in a rural area, she said.
Mrs. Doeden said they interviewed other midlevels previously. One felt Oberlin was too far away and the other other just wasn't the right fit.
She said they are trying to find a long-term fix, not a short term one.

Mrs. Doeden they are looking for someone who will be part of the community.
The administrator said that Ms. Williamson has been named as coroner for the county, a job which was formerly held by Dr. Elizabeth Sliter.
Mrs. Doeden said she also is working on getting some new specialists for the hospital's speciality clinics.

Hospital tournament set for August

It'll soon be time for the annual Decatur County Hospital golf tournament.
Play starts at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 13, at the Oberlin Country Club. Twenty-nine teams have registered, said Administrator Lynn Doeden. The tournament is a four-

person scramble, with each team paying \$300 to enter.
Other teams interested in playing should call the hospital at 475-2208.
Dinner will be held that evening at 7 p.m. at the Oberlin American Legion. Anyone who wants to at-

tend just the meal can buy a ticket at the hospital for \$30. Reservations can be made by calling the hospital at 475-2208.
There hasn't been a project set aside yet to spend the money raised.

*Market shows lower wheat prices

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billion bushels of wheat stocks, he said, but that was down to 4.2 billion in 2007. Mr. Ziegelmeier said analysts predict a crop of 6.8 billion bushels this year, with about 2 billion grown in the United States.
Farmers, including those in northwest Kansas, had a bumper crop last year, with Thomas County fields yielding 60 bushels per acre or more, he noted.
Mr. Jenkinson said there are a number of things that affect the price of wheat. Uncertainty in foreign markets, such as the financial crisis in Greece, has driven down investor confidence. The country is deep in debt and has instituted austerity measures such as higher taxes and pension cuts that prompted violent protests. Greece is in danger of having to default on its debt and could require a bailout from the European Union, he said, and it is just one of several countries to take an economic downturn.

Russia had a bad drought this season, Mr. Ziegelmeier said, and imposed a ban on grain exports, driving the market higher. Russia recently lifted the ban, which could drive international prices lower while inflating domestic wheat prices in Russia.
In North America, drought from Texas to Kansas and flooding in the Dakotas and Canada has also reduced wheat production.
The market also fluctuates based on who is buying. Mr. Jenkinson said fund managers like playing the commodity markets, especially if it looks like there might be a food crisis. If it looks like there will be a shortage of wheat, these managers buy into the market, and if there's a surplus they sell.
"The market can move just because traders want it to," Mr. Ziegelmeier said.
Market analysts are also watching corn, Mr. Jenkinson said.
"We stand a good chance of being

short on corn," he said.
If that happens, feedlot managers may switch to wheat, affecting the supply available for food production.
Harvest is finished in Oklahoma and Texas and going on now in southwest Kansas. Mr. Jenkinson said the yields in southwest Kansas have been disappointing, with yields anywhere from five to 30 bushels per acre. However, things get better the farther east and north you go, as harvest moves into areas that got more rain in the growing season.
As a whole though, wheat in Kansas has been starved for moisture, he said. Test weights are running an average of 50 pounds per bushel. The ideal, he said, is about 60 pounds.
Harvest is still a week or two away in Decatur County, although fields are continuing to turn golden brown and dry down with each passing day in the sun.

Learning some moves



AT THE HIGH SCHOOL on Monday morning, Gabi Johnson (right) and Jacqueline Marshall wait for their turn to shoot a free throw during the first day of basketball camp.
— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

Summer projects set in district

The superintendent talked about various capital outlay and summer maintenance projects during the Oberlin School Board's regular meeting last Monday night.
Superintendent Duane Dorshorst said the crew is putting in a new floor in the first-floor hallway at the high school. It will cost about \$16,600 through the Carpet Center.
They are carpeting four classrooms at Oberlin Elementary

School for about \$9,800 through the Carpet Center.
Mr. Dorshorst said they are putting new windows in the high school cafeteria through Norton Glass for \$29,500.
The board also talked about replacing the old wooden windows in the music wing at the high school. So far, there are no quotes for the project.
While they discussed fire safety

issues, said Mr. Dorshorst, there weren't any prices to do any of the projects.
Mr. Dorshorst said he is still working on getting some prices for the front entry at the high school.
Over the summer, the staff is putting in new energy-efficient lights and ceiling tiles at both schools, he said.

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			1	2	3	4
			Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	MRI'S	Nuclear Medicine Cardiac Rehab	
5	6 Dr. Rubowitz Oncology	7	8 Dr. Frankum Surgery	9 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	10 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	11
	Mammograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab		Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	MRI's	Cardiac Rehab	
12	13	14	15 Dr. Curtis Cardiology	16 Dr. Saba Orthopedics	17	18
	Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab		Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	MRI's	Nuclear Medicine Cardiac Rehab	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	DEXA Bone Density	Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	MRI'S	Cardiac Rehab	
26	27 Dr. Rubowitz Oncology	28 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	29	30		
	Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab		Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	MRI'S		

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