

# Week’s rain brings hope for wheat

**By STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
*sdecamp@nwkansas.com*

This week’s moisture has been minimal, but helpful, as farmers are at the peak of wheat planting, and waiting for just the right amount of rain to help their crops along.

“We take what we can get, the way we are now,” said Keith VanSike of the Norton office of Twin Creeks Extension. “We need every bit we can get. Right now, guys are probably planting into limited moisture or barely enough to get the seed going.

“The top has been pretty dry, and wheat farmers, when they’re planting, they want to get it down into moisture, but not into a heavy rain for fear it will seal it up. An inch and a half to two inches is a good depth to plant. The loose soil that’s there is dry, and if you get a one-to-two-inch pounding rain, if the furrows fill up with soil and moisture at the same time, it seals up and packs so the emerging wheat shoot can’t get through it to find sunlight. It can’t emerge through the crust of soil. So the trick is to plant it in

adequate moisture right now and hope for a light rain, just enough to get the top moisture to meet the moisture down there by the seed, without being packed.”

After Friday’s rain and Saturday’s snow flurries, the Decatur County Co-op said it had only gotten a total of 0.26 inches precipitation at the elevator in Oberlin. The National Weather Service office in Goodland reported no measurements for Decatur, but said McCook had 0.12 of an inch, and had only 7.6 inches for the year.

Mary Knapp, a climatologist at Kansas State University, said that from Sept. 30 through Oct. 6, Oberlin had .03 of an inch, and for the year to date, 9.22 inches. Last year, she said, Oberlin had 19.22 inches by the end of September. From 1931 to the present, only four years have been dryer than this one, she said.

“Hopefully, we got just enough rain to cover but not pack the wheat down into the soil,” Mr. VanSike said. “You’ll have to go ahead and get (your wheat planted) if you

haven’t; this is a pretty optimum time to plant, from here through the 10th of October. As we get further past the second week, people will have to start compensating for cooler days, and they’ll have to add more seed. After about the 6th or 7th, they need to add about one or two pounds extra a day to compensate for cooler temperatures and shorter day length.”

The wet snow that fell over the weekend brought an additional .26 of moisture, according to the official weather records.



**AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD** member and County Commissioner Gene Gallentine pulled his Beechcraft Bonanza airplane (above) out of its hangar Thursday night for a quick cruise over the newly finished runway (below) at the municipal airport.

## Airport runway returns

**By STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
*sdecamp@nwkansas.com*

The city’s Airport Advisory Board plans a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10 a.m. today at the municipal airport to celebrate the completion of Phase 1 of the airport project, which has repaved and repaired the existing runway and taxiway.

The runway has been open the last week or two, and has even seen some new traffic, said board member Kevin Brown.

“We got a fly-through here the other night,” he said. “This guy saw our little runway and came right in. Dropped about \$400 on fuel and stayed in town Sunday night. He was just going to tie down in the grass, so we pushed him inside. Most places, that’s \$50 or more, but we didn’t



charge; we’re just happy to see some traffic return.”

“He was really appreciative,” said County Commissioner Gene Gallentine, another Advisory Board member. “I took him down to the Frontier (Motel) and we delivered the courtesy car down to him there. He was just so overwhelmed, I think, at the hospitality. He asked if he could buy me gas for taking him to the Frontier.”

“We need to get a sticker for the courtesy car,” Mr. Brown said, “so people know when they see it that there’s someone here spending money on the town that wouldn’t be here without the airport.”

The other members agreed, and started brainstorming other things to do before beginning Phase 2 of the project, which involves building a new, longer runway. Phase 1 cost \$2.4 million total, with 95 percent of that being picked up by the Federal Aviation Administration, and the other 5 percent by the city and county. The city paid \$70,000 and the county \$50,000.

Phase 2 is still pending, said Sid Metcalf, the advisory board’s president, but construction could begin next year.

The new runway has been controversial because of the potential \$8.15 million cost. For Phase 1,

the city and county had to come up with 5 percent, but because Congress changed the law governing the grants, the city will have to come up with 10 percent of the total cost, estimated at \$815,858.

Other tasks the board discussed include repainting the round-top hangar before winter, getting a sign put up to prevent bigger trucks from using the runway during harvest (because the weight limitation is 30,000 pounds) and putting a second fire hydrant on the south side of the field in case of an emergency.

## Trial for man accused of murder to start soon

The murder trial of Dylan Coryell in the death last fall of an Oberlin serviceman is set to run for two full weeks, from Monday, Oct. 22, to Friday, Nov. 2, and the last hearing before the trial will be at 10 a.m. today.

Janet Meitl, clerk of the district court, said the hearing is only to take care of a few motions before the trial starts. Jury summons have been sent out, she said, and the 13 jurors will be picked during the first two days of the trial.

Potential jurors are sent a summons in the mail, said Mrs. Meitl, based on lists the court receives from the driver’s license bureau and voter registration, so anyone with a

driver’s license could be contacted to appear in court.

Mr. Coryell faces charges of first-degree premeditated murder (or an alternative charge of felony murder), felony aggravated battery and felony aggravated burglary after the shooting death of 22-year-old Corey Cook on Sunday, Oct. 16. Mr. Coryell allegedly shot Mr. Cook while he lay in bed with Sarah Campbell, who testified she had relationships with both men.

Mr. Cook’s father, Todd Cook, said last year that Corey was part of the 823rd Special Tactics Unit out of Moody Air Force Base in Georgia. He had been at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio for school, graduated and was on his way to Georgia. His dad said he had two weeks to get there and had come

## Flu shots scheduled for kids and adults

Are you ready for flu season? County Health Nurse Marilyn Gamblin and school nurse Jo Mason will be giving flu shots to kids this week to try and curb the nasty illness from springing up in Oberlin schools.

Decatur Community High School students will be getting their shots on Thursday and Oberlin Elementary School kids will get theirs on Friday. On both days, the nurses will start at 7:30 a.m. and keep going until they’re done.

Adults can get their shots either on Election Day, Nov. 6, at The Gateway, or they can make an appointment with the Decatur County Health Department

by calling (785) 475-8118, Ms. Gamblin said.

“By getting your flu vaccine before you see or hear about the first case of flu in your community, you give yourself and your family the best opportunity to stay flu-free throughout the rest of the season,” said Ryan Burns, director of immunization for the state Department of Health and Environment.

Mr. Burns said in a statement that everyone 6 months and older should get a shot, noting that it takes about two weeks after the vaccination for the antibodies to provide protection against the flu.

## New doctor agrees to work at hospital

The Decatur County Hospital has hired a new doctor who specializes in internal medicine to join its Family Practice Clinic in Oberlin.

Dr. Robert L. Rosin is a 1976 Decatur Community High School graduate and has lived and worked all over Kansas. He received a bachelor’s degree in chemistry, then went to medical school and did his residency at the University of Kansas.

“He has verbally accepted the position here in Oberlin,” said Charlie Myers, interim administrator at the hospital. “I’m not sure when he’ll be

starting – there are still a few things to work out – but my guess is he’ll be here within the next two weeks.”

Dr. Rosin is board-certified in internal medicine, but he cannot deliver babies, Mr. Myers said.

“His professional interests will be in intensive care, peri-operative medicine, which deals with a patient’s condition before, during and after surgery, and cardiovascular diseases,” Mr. Myers said. “An internal medicine doctor deals with an older population primarily. He will see kids and babies, but he will not deliver them.”

## New housing form set up for grants

**By STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
*sdecamp@nwkansas.com*

The state Department of Commerce has set up a new system by which cities can apply for housing grants, which includes a full survey of the city, its houses, demographics and needs.

The Housing Assessment Tool, known as HAT, requires that a city assess itself before applying for a grant. This includes an on-site visit by the department before any grants are given, said Steve Zodrow, the city’s administrative assistant, who reported Thursday on a presentation he attended.

Mr. Zodrow told the City Council he attended the presentation by Linda Hunsicker from the department Sept. 25 in Norton.

“Basically,” said Mr. Zodrow, “they want communities to really sit down and assess their housing needs, from a local and regional perspective, on what we really need and will need in the future. They’re hoping that going through this, we’ll realize what our strengths and weaknesses are. To pull this off, we’ll need a lot of help from organizations and businesses. From (the department’s) point of view, the more you get involved, the better look you’ve taken at what you’re doing.”

Mr. Zodrow said the point most stressed during the presentation was the visit by state officials. If the department comes to a town and sees junked cars, trash and bad houses, he said, they will score the community a zero out of 25 on that

part of the evaluation.

“They’ll assume you don’t have a housing problem,” he said, “but a much deeper problem in your community. She said that you’d score so low you wouldn’t get a grant.”

The two-page assessment looks a lot easier than it is, Mr. Zodrow added. The point system is based on a total of 150, with the assessment itself being 15 points and the on-site visit 25. The other scored categories, he said, are development of the proposed project, solution of need, public interest and leverage.

To get any housing grants from state or federal agencies, he said, the city will need to do a top-to-bottom accounting of all the property in town. Every civic organization, including the Oberlin Business Alliance and the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., would be involved, along with the banks, businesses, school district and others.

Scott Sproul, executive director of Norton City/County Economic Development, said people in Norton have been working on their survey since May and are only about 70 percent through it.

At the council meeting, Mr. Zodrow said Mr. Sproul told him Norton had discovered some assumptions they had about their city were untrue. The biggest example he gave, Mr. Zodrow said, was that they had no idea how high of a percentage of their housing was rental properties.

Councilman Tim Bowen asked if (See HOUSING on Page 5A)

## Deadline to register to vote looms near

The deadline to register to vote for the November general election is next Tuesday. If your address has changed, said Stephanie Blau of the Decatur County clerk’s office, you’ll need to re-register.

To register, you can go to the clerk’s office on the second floor of the courthouse or go online to [www.ks.gov](http://www.ks.gov), said Nora Urban, deputy county clerk. The office will be open until 8 p.m. Tuesday night for anyone who waits until the last minute, and until 5 p.m. other days.

The office hasn’t seen an unusual amount of registrations or re-registrations this year, Mrs. Urban said, and will not be doing any off-site registrations before the election.

If you won’t be 18 by Tuesday, but will by Election Day, Tuesday,

Nov. 6, then you can register, Mrs. Blau said.

The state Elections Department, part of the secretary of state’s office, recommends that 17-year-olds who will be eligible to vote register online, print their confirmation and bring it with them to the polls with a valid photo ID. If your polling place doesn’t have your name on the rolls yet, you will be able to fill out a provisional ballot, which will be verified later during canvassing.

All voters need to have a valid, government-issued photo ID, said Mrs. Blau, such as a driver’s license, when they come to vote. Those without an ID will be allowed to cast a provisional ballot, but will have to return to show their ID for their ballot to be counted.