

Honoring 17 years of good will



ABOUT 15 VOLUNTEERS surrounded Bargain Box Plus founders Marilou Long (seated, left) and Ann Mines as Pastor Charlotte Strecker-Baseler led the group in a

hymn after blessing the store for its reopening after being remodeled.

— Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp

Longer runway could bring in business

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
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If the Airport Advisory Committee got its way, and a longer runway was built at the Oberlin Municipal Airport, what would happen? Sid Metcalf, the chairman of the Airport Advisory Committee, said that the committee has contacted "many entities" that have said they will use the airport if the longer runway is built.

"I can't give you any specifics, unfortunately," he said, "because I'm not in a position to quote them. One is a government entity and there's also a couple of private

entities. "With a larger airport facility, we feel that down the road some day, we could attract businesses out of the Front Range that want to get off the Front Range because of the congestion out there. "We have wide open skies and very little air traffic, so larger planes like cross-country business jets and the like could have a place to land, refuel and take off again without having to spend too much time on the ground. We've been told we're in a prime area, halfway between the coasts, and that's half the range of a business jet. They have to stop

right about here to refuel if they're going from coast to coast." Mr. Metcalf said that ideally, a longer runway could also bring in businesses that might set up here permanently. "We could get a small freight service in here to serve the Tri-state area," he said. "That would be something down the road, one of the things we've looked at. . . . We don't have a rail service or Interstate, so if we hope to sustain our town here, we're going to need some way in and out of it for these people that want to bring industry here. "Everybody is talking about a

possible oil boom in the region out here, and oil men love to travel in airplanes. There's a vast number of possibilities. You build it, they will come, you know? "We've been told these things by a lot of people, but being told something and a having firm commitment to it are two different things. We've been told by a lot of entities that they would use (the longer runway) if we had it, but like I said, I can't quote any of them, because I don't have it in writing."

Farmers survey for damage to wheat crop, land

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
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Between the drought, the freezes and the fact that some wheat is just now emerging from the soil, it can be difficult to tell the extent to which a given field has suffered. But there are some simple signs farmers can look for to try and figure out how much they may or may not lose in this year's yield. "The questions are, what should farmers expect now?" said Jim Shroyer, a Kansas State University Research and Extension crop production specialist. "If freeze-damaged wheat heads out, will that head be viable and produce grain? It all depends on what stage the wheat was in when the freeze occurred." "Wheat that hasn't started to joint yet will probably suffer damage to the existing foliage, but the growing points will be protected by the soil

and should escape injury." "Wheat in the jointing or stem elongation stages can usually tolerate temperatures in the mid- to upper 20s with no significant injury," said Keith Van Skike, a Twin Creeks Extension agent in Norton. "But if temperatures fall into the 20s or lower for several hours, the lower stems, leaves or developing head can sustain injury. If the tillers were in the jointing to pre-boot stages at the time of the freeze, he added, and appear to be green and growing now, then the heads should be fine. If the head had been killed, he said, then you would be able to tell. But if the leaves coming out of a whorl are green-and-white striped, he said, then chances are that tiller died. Frosty white or brown leaves at the tip, however, may yet survive the damage.

"If the leaves of tillers are yellowish when they emerge from the whorl," he continued, "this indicates those tillers have been damaged. Existing leaves may also be damaged so severely that they turn bluish-black and water-soaked in appearance, then bleach out. This usually results in the fields having a silage smell." If your wheat tillers were in the boot stage when the freeze happened, Mr. VanSkike said, then there are several possible outcomes. "The head may be fine," he said, "it may be partially damaged or it may have been completely killed. In any of those cases, the head may continue to emerge, but fail to develop if frozen. "If the head is fine, it will turn from lime green in the boot to a darker green when it emerges. If the head is freeze-damaged, some or all

of the spikelets will become yellow and/or water soaked in appearance as it emerges."

Pasture lands, at least, will survive

While the last month's cold temperatures and late freezes could be devastating for some crops, there is an upside: though grass may start growing later, cattlemen, at least, should be OK. "It's not gonna hurt any," said Walt Fick, a Kansas State University specialist in range management. "What it will have a major affect

on is it will slow down grass growth with the cold temperatures. With the warm-weather grasses you have, they like 70 to 80 degree temperatures, so when it's cold like this, the growth stops. But the moisture is good; it can help give these plants a start for the season — and how much moisture they get is important. . . . Whatever moisture you get will help

get your plants started. "When these pastures are ready to graze will depend on the warm temperatures and moisture. There are a few cattle pastures getting green here (in Hays), but not many. I'd say they'll be delayed by at least two weeks until they're ready for cattle to feed on."

Range school to focus on soil health this year

"Creating Range Wealth Through Soil Health" is the theme for the Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition summer range schools, says Tim Christian, state coordinator for the group. A Mid-/Shortgrass Range School will be from Aug. 6 to 8 at Camp Lakeside, near Lake Scott, and the Nature Conservancy Smoky Valley Ranch in Logan County, he said. The theme emphasizes the need for ranchers and land managers to employ grazing, structural and management practices that are good for native grasses, which in turn sustain or improve soil health, he said. The benefit to ranchers is the ability to harvest the increased forage as soil water intake increases, microbial activity is stimulated and other cyclic functions come into balance, said Christian. "Our cadre of instructors — ranchers and agency, university and organizational staff members — will balance a good deal of hands-on

instruction with classroom presentations," he said. Registration fees remain at \$300 per person, Christian said. That covers course materials, lodging and meals, and other costs. Ranchers, landowners and students may qualify for a \$150 scholarship. Agency staffers may qualify for \$100 in scholarships. Forms are available at www.kglc.org under 2013 Range Schools. Scholarship applications must be submitted by July 23. Partners include the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Fort Hays State University, Kansas State University, the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and

Tourism, the Nature Conservancy, the Kansas Section of the Society for Range Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners Program and *Feed-Lot Magazine*. The coalition organized in 1991 as a nonprofit educational organization to help people regenerate Kansas grazing lands through voluntary management, economics, ecology, production, and technical assistance programs. For information, contact Christian, state coordinator, at (620) 241-3636 or tdchristian@cox.net, or Ken Sherraden, assistant coordinator, at (9785) 922-7061 or kennethsherraden@sbcglobal.net.

*New runway nixed by feds

(Continued from Page 1A) propeller aircraft to take off with plenty of room in case of an emergency, said Sid Metcalf, chairman of the city's Airport Advisory Committee. When the weather is cool, a plane this size can safely land and take off from the 3,507-foot existing runway, but when the air is warmer, above so many degrees, depending on the aircraft, that becomes a little trickier. Warmer air is thinner and provides less lift for a plane's wings, and bigger aircraft are affected more by this, he said.

The new runway has been controversial because of the potential \$8.15 million cost. Phase 1, which involved repaving the north-south runway, was completed last summer. It cost the city and county \$120,000 — their share of the total \$2.4 million price tag — as part of a deal with the Federal Aviation Administration.

Due to a change in federal regulations, the existing runway also got shortened by 600 feet at the south end to create a buffer zone between the runway and both U.S. 36 and the county fairground. It could only be extended by 400 feet to the north because the ground drops off there.

At that time, the federal share of the cost was 95 percent, with the city and county to pay 5 percent. The county paid \$50,000 and the city \$70,000. The same deal was to apply to Phase II, but Congress changed the law to a 90/10 percent deal. If the agency had agreed to Phase II of the project, it could have set the city and county back \$815,000, and the agency would have paid over \$7.3 million.

"The total project (for both phas-

es) is \$12 million," said Mr. Metcalf, "and the city was responsible for 10 percent, though it was 5 percent before. They changed the rules on us in the middle of the game. The vote for the project (in a special election) was over two to one (485 to 282) in favor of it; it's been about two years since that vote."

Asked if he thought stopping the project would endanger the town's future, Mr. Metcalf replied:

"Well, I don't know if I'd go that far, but I think without it, the whole community and the county is in danger of losing ground faster."

Mrs. Larson told the council at the April 18 meeting that plans to build a longer runway at the airport had been put on the back burner while city and state officials sorted out changes in state and federal programs.

The longer runway might still be built, she said then, but it could be a long way down the road, and the project is already on its seventh year.

"It will take years," Mrs. Larson said, "and we just have to take it one step at a time."

Prior to hearing the news of the Federal Aviation Administration pulling out of the deal, Mr. Metcalf had his theories on why it was taking so long to commit to the city's project.

"I think one of the reasons they're stalling on us is that they're out of money," he said. "The sequestration deal has put a bind on everybody, statewide, nationwide. . . . It's not a good deal. Unfortunately, I don't have the answers on what should be done. I don't think anybody does right now."

*Fireworks may still show

(Continued from Page 1A) working on the old list that was put on hold from last year, and so hadn't given any new citations.

• Heard that there has been a spike in reports of dogs running loose and that people have not been picking up after their pets when they let them outside. Mrs. Larson said that the

city will start cracking down and giving tickets to those who don't clean up after their pets.

• Heard from Sexton Jeremy Tally that he had decided to buy a pavilion instead of a gazebo to house the new electronic cemetery directory, and hoped to have it installed by Memorial Day.

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