

Two families talk about rebuilding

By Linda Schneider
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On March 28, more than 60 tornadoes were recorded to have touched ground in Kansas. One of those tornadoes passed Bird City, barely missing the town but hitting several farms.

Tornado skirts by

Ed and Phyllis Carson's farm was one of those farms. Their home did not receive a direct hit, but damage was extensive. When Mr. and Mrs. Carson came up from the basement, the inside of the house did not appear to have been hit too badly. However, it was soon discovered the two-story house had been lifted off its foundation and set back down. The home they had lived in for 26 years had to be torn down.

Tornado moves on

Just northeast of Bird City, the tornado veers toward the Ketzner farm. This time it was a direct hit. Nick and Heidi Ketzner, along with their sons Dylan and Brady, barely made it into their earthen cellar before the tornado passed right over them. The destruction was complete. The house Mr. Ketzner had bought in 1992 and brought his new bride to was gone. Not one structure on the farm remained undamaged.

The damage

Cheyenne County Emergency Manager, Gary Rogers, reported that an estimated \$240,000 of structural damage was done by that one. This estimate does not include vehicles, crop damage or outside structures.

The cleanup and rebuilding

Within 24 hours of the tornado, the residents of Bird City were out in the hundreds helping the surrounding farms with cleanup. However, it did not stop there. In the eight months that have followed since that fateful day, meals have been provided, money has been raised by fund-raisers, donations have come from private contributors and families to help with the rebuilding. Some of the construction work has been done by Bird City residents, family and friends on weekends.

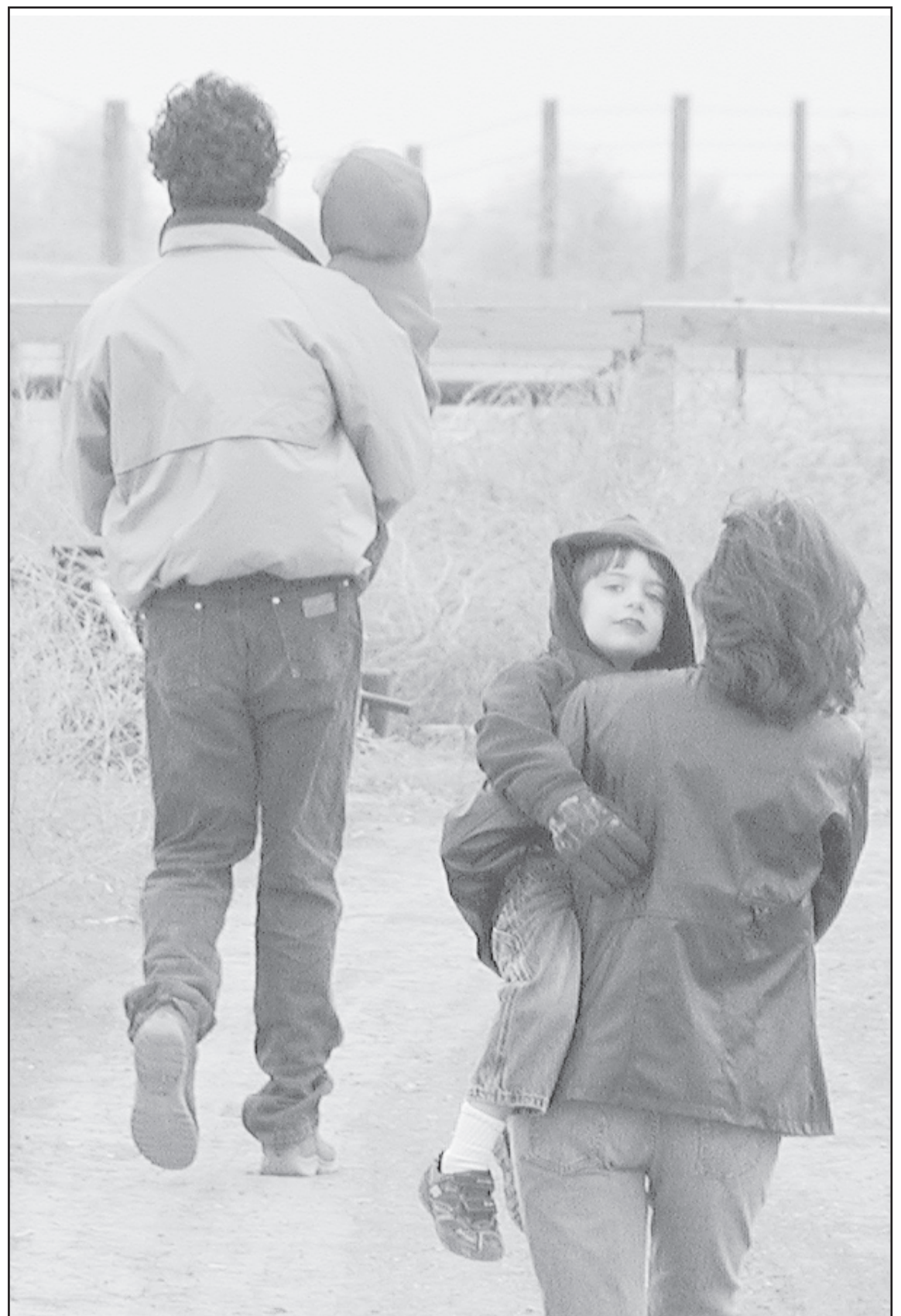
Today

"The rebuilding is almost complete," said Mr. Carson.

But, it has not been easy. Construction work still turns up foundation damage. When thinking about that night and what could have happened, Mrs. Carson said she is very thankful these days.

For the Ketzner family, everything had to be replaced — furniture, clothing, everything. Some things are not replaceable though. Mrs. Ketzner cannot locate their wedding album and has been trying to get in touch with the photographer who took them. Nor can the baby pictures of her or husband be found. But life has moved on for the Ketzners, in fact, they will be adding to their family in May.

On March 28, a tornado made its way through Bird City. Tornadoes are devastating occurrences and not everyone is able to rebuild. But Bird City is a community of residents who will be there to help in times of need.



THERE ARE SOME THINGS that are certain in life ~ taxes, death and those daily chores. The Ketzner family heading for the barn.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider



PLANTING NEW TREES was just part of the rebuilding for Nick, Heidi, Dylan and Brady Ketzner.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider



ED AND PHYLLIS CARSON are sitting in their recently rebuilt home talking about what has happened since the March 2007 tornado.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Look for Christmas On Us winners in today's ad section of newspaper

By Karen Krien

Look for the ticket numbers in the ads on the Christmas On Us pages located on pages 1, 2 and 3B in this issue.

This is the first week for the grand Christmas giveaway and, this year, there are more prizes with the numbers. Besides the numbers for \$50 in scrip, there will be chances for a prize at each of the participating businesses. To claim one of the prizes, the ticket must be brought into *The Herald* office, 310 W. Washington, St. Francis, then matched with the number in the ad.

"It is important that the numbers be matched by Monday at 5 p.m. because, on Tuesday, new tickets will be drawn and there will be new numbers," said Karen Krien, publisher. "The numbers from the week before will no longer be good to claim a prize."

Those winning a \$50 scrip prize will be photographed for next week's papers. They will also need to tell how they plan to spend the money. Those

winning a prize at a business will be accompanied by one of the staff from *The Herald* to the business where they will be pictured with the owner and the gift they won.

The Christmas On Us promotion will go on for the next three weeks and will end on Monday, Dec. 17, with the drawing for \$1,000 scrip, grand prize, and \$100 scrip, second prize. Any remaining \$50 weekly giveaways and business prizes that have not been claimed will also be given away at that time.

"It is a merry time of the year and giving away money and prizes makes it even more fun," said Casey McCormick, ad manager.

Remember the deadline for matching the ticket numbers! Anyone with a ticket matching a number in the Christmas On Us ad pages must claim their prize before 5 p.m. the next Monday by bringing it into *The Herald* office. There is an exception to the deadline

the week of the Christmas On Us drawing and, then winners must claim their prize by noon on Monday.

Check out the new numbers placed in ads each week because if ticket numbers from the week before are not claimed by the following Monday, they will no longer be considered.

"Start collecting those tickets today and you might be the \$1,000 winner," Mr. McCormick said.

Participating businesses in the Christmas On Us drawings are:

- Bier's Hometown Store
- Goodell Greenhouse and Garden
- Hilltop General Store
- Owens True Value
- Parkhill Restaurant
- Ross Manufacturing
- St. Francis Super's
- Schultz's
- St. Francis Equity
- The Saint Francis Herald
- United Methodist Thrift Store
- Video Kingdom

Enhanced 911 system installed in December

By Karen Krien

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The announcement was made at the Thursday Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting that the new Enhanced 911 system should be up and running by the end of December.

Jim O'Laughlin, president of Allied Information Solutions, was hired earlier to oversee the installation and equipment purchases. He was at the Thursday meeting to update the commissioners on the progress. He said that when the equipment has been installed and is up and running, it will be one of the best systems in the state.

The dispatch center will be located in the southwest part of the sheriff's office in the courthouse. Enhanced 911 will better serve the county residents as it will enable mobile or cellular phones to process 911 emergency calls and help emergency services such as fire and medical personnel, to locate the geographic position of the caller.

When a person makes a 911 call using a traditional phone with ground wires, the call is routed to the dispatch center. Dispatchers then send out an emergency call to the proper services.

When the dispatcher receives that call, the exact location of the phone from which the call was made is known.

Mr. O'Laughlin said the county project is still on budget and commended the commissioners on keep the 911 funds, which are collected through the telephone bills, in check.

He said the mapping has been done and the staff at the appraiser's office had done a very good, clean job. He said the new photography will be much clearer and will also be done by Dec. 15.

One of the more difficult jobs in the installation is running the necessary cables to the dispatcher's office.

Mr. O'Laughlin said he was applying for a grant in 2008, which would cover some of the maintenance expenses over the next five years. This would free up the county's 911 Fund to build up for replacement equipment as needed.

Dispatch office

The commissioners watched a CD on real situations dispatchers handle. Carol Gamblin, communications director, had brought the CD and said that a dispatcher generally lasts at the job about seven years — that the burnout rate is high.

Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, said every person in the county should be able to watch the CD and see just what a dispatcher does and goes through.

Andy Beikman, chairman, noted that the dispatcher's job is so important as they need to know who to send where in different situations.

"We don't want a cop sent into a situation that they don't know what they are getting into," he said.

Mrs. Gamblin has interviewed dispatchers and, before they are hired, they will also watch the CD.

Happy Thanksgiving