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JULY FOURTH Kid's Parade found lots of kids dressed in red, white and blue. Just a few of those participating were: left, Rider Zweygardt, was wearing his fireman's hat and riding in his shiny fire truck; clockwise, Tyce McAtee was riding his decorated trike; bottom, everyone lined up for a parade, accompanied by patriotic music, around Sawhill Park. Herald photos by Karen Krien



Lightning strike fire burns approximately 300 acres

By Karen Krien

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Despite the rain on Saturday, the Cheyenne County Commissioners, at a special budget meeting on Monday, said the burn ban throughout the county was still in effect.

The rain gave the St. Francis volunteer firemen a rest after weeks of being out almost every day and, on some days, two and three times.

A large pasture fire on Thad Douthit Farms land southwest of St. Francis occurred on Wednesday evening after lightning struck. The flames also leaped onto land belonging to Tom Hnizdil.

Firemen had responded to a fire in Sherman County and, on their way back to St. Francis, saw a glow, indicating a fire to the west. Through Thursday, firemen were called out four times to extinguish flames which kept popping up across the pasture, much of it due to a steady wind.

"We were there most of the day," said George Harper, St. Francis fire chief.

Bob Holzwarth used his tractor and disc around the pasture. Supplying tankers and water were Bruce Feikert, Kyle Schultz, Stan Keller, the county and city of St. Francis. Bartlett Grain and the St. Francis Equity gave access to their water.

There were many people and volunteers on the scene, Chief Harper said. The emergency medical service was on hand to pass out water, sports drinks and snacks.

The fire chief reported that approximately 300 acres were burned. Some of the cattle had managed to break down the fence and other cattle had gathered around the windmill, an area that was not affected by the fire.

At that same time, there was a fire at Hale Ponds which nearly burned down the town of Hale. The Hale fire department had asked for mutual aid from St.

Francis and Idalia but, not only was the St. Francis fire department fighting a fire, Idalia firemen also had a fire to fight.

In a normal year, Chief Harper said, we have around 35 to 40 runs. This year, and we are just barely through half of it, we have had almost 60 runs. Our biggest concern now is lightning strikes but people still need to realize that even though we have moisture in the ground, everything on top is dry.

Use common sense, he said. Don't start any fires.

A couple of weeks ago, the emergency medical service requested bottled water and drinks, as well as snacks for them to take to the firemen. They were amazed at the response but, with fires that last the entire day in temperatures of 100 or more, that supply dwindles quickly. They are still taking donations of supplies as well as money to purchase supplies. Stop by the emergency building to drop off donations.

Needed rain on Saturday totals from 2 to 4 inches

By Karen Krien

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After a month of sweltering temperatures and only a trace of moisture, it rained!

The clouds were around all day Saturday and temperatures were hot but not 100 or above like it had been for days. About 9 p.m., clouds heavy with rain could be seen coming in southwest of St. Francis. Within a half an hour, there was thunder and lots of lightning and it started to rain.

Severe thunderstorms with hail and possible flooding were predicted by the National Weather Service but, little if any hail was reported and no flooding.

Throughout the night, there was more thunder and lightning and it continued to rain, sometimes in torrents, sometimes gently falling.

North and northwest of St. Francis, there was more rain with 3- to 4-inches falling. Dale Patton, about 9 miles northwest, reported 4.2-inches rain. A mile north, Dennis Krien had 4 inches. Salem Lutheran Church which is between the Krien's and Patton's farms received 3.5 inches.

Pete Kinen, northwest of St. Francis on K-27, reported around 3 inches. Straight north, Bob Ochsner reported 3 inches and the sides of the roads were washed with deep gullies.

Southeast of St. Francis, Andy Beikman received 3.60-inches rain. South of town, John Lampe had 2 inches. West of St. Francis, A.J. Jones had a lower report of 1.5 inches.

In St. Francis, Kathy Woodcox, weather observer, reported 1.71-inches rain Saturday night and a trace on Sunday morning. She also had .18 inch recorded on July 4.

Overall, it was a much needed drink for the pastures, crops and lawns.

Mrs. Woodcox, on July 4, had a high of 104 degrees but temps had cooled down to 77 degrees on Sunday, July 8. People woke up to a very pleasant 54 degrees on Tuesday morning.

The National Weather Service is predicting temperatures to be no higher than in the lower 90s this week and a chance of rain over the weekend. However, by the first of the week, the weather forecasters are looking at high 90s again.