

The Goodland Star-News

Presents

Conservation 2011

February 11, 2011



Bankers Award
Dwight and Judith
Chipperfield



Windbreak Award
Terry and Rebecca
Baker



Friends of
Agriculture
Ken and Laurie
Klemm



State Essay
Winner
Dani Mangus

Awards Banquet 6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 14, Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall

Quiet success mark of Bankers Award winner

By Tom Betz
 nt.betz@nwkans.com

Winners of the Annual Sherman County Conservation District Bankers Award are Dwight and Judith Chipperfield who live in Goodland, but farm around the Ruleton area.

Dwight said he was surprised and pleased to win the award, which is the first conservation award the farm family has won.

He grew up in the McDonald area where his father had a feeder cattle operation. He was in the first graduating class in 1976 from Cheylin after the Bird City and McDonald schools were combined.

After graduation he went to Colby Community College where he met his wife, Judith, who was from Brookville. The couple went on to school at Kansas State University where Dwight got a degree in Ag Engineering and Judith became a registered veterinary technician.

After graduating from K-State the Chipperfield's moved back to south of McDonald where Dwight worked with his father for a couple of years before his dad retired. Dwight went to work for the Brewster National Bank

in 1982 and moved to Brewster. He found some farm land west of Ruleton, and worked for the bank and the farm for a while. He said the first crop on the farm land was in 1990.

Judith worked for local veterinarians until 2002, and the family built a house at 210 Harrison Ave. Goodland in 1998.

Helping with the farm is their son Jace, 26, and his wife, Melissa. Jace was a Goodland High School graduate in 2002, and went to K-State where he received an Ag Engineering degree in 2006. In high school Jace was involved in Scholars Bowl and Science Olympiad. Dwight said Jace met Melissa at a church convention and she is a farm girl from central Missouri.

Jace and Melissa live about five miles southwest of the Chipperfield shop building in Ruleton west of the Frontier Ag elevator. Dwight said the building was erected in 1991, and is a convenient place for them to store and work on the farm equipment.

The Chipperfield family is focused on farming, and that is what they do.

When asked what he does for fun, Dwight said, "Work. About all the recreation we have is working."



Dwight Chipperfield showed the strip-till process he and his son Jace use successfully to raise corn on an irrigated circle west of Ruleton.
 Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

Sherman County Conservation District • Program 2011

INVOCATION	Fred Wedel
Meal furnished by the Sherman County Conservation District, BANKWEST, First National Bank, Western State Bank, Peoples State Bank and Farm Credit Services of Western Kansas PCA-FLCA	
WELCOME	Lonnie Whiteker
PROGRAM	EXPRESSOS
ELECTION	Lynn Ihrig and Scott Jarrett
INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS	Lonnie Whiteker
PRESENTATION OF AWARDS	Lonnie Whiteker

(Recognize former Award Winners)

Friends of Agriculture Awards	Dean Graber, Fred Wedel
State Poster and Limerick Awards	Sandy Rodgers
Poster, Limerick, Essay Contest	Sandy Rodgers/Scott Jarrett
Windbreak Award	First National Bank
Bankers Award	First National Bank
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NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Fred Wedel	District Conservationist
Jason Smith	Conservation Technician





Dwight Chipperfield with the John Deere no-till seed planting machine he uses on his farm ground.

He said they have done a little custom cutting for a neighbor, but basically concentrate on the farmland they have.

He said they are a small farm operation, and most of what they raise is irrigated wheat and corn and dryland wheat and corn. He said they do have a few acres of sunflowers.

Looking at a field west of Ruleton Dwight said they will plant a no-till corn crop in the dryland acres in the corners of the irrigated circle that were dryland wheat last year. He said the circle is a strip-till operation and will be planted to corn.

He said they went to no-till about five years ago on the dryland. He said they switched to no-till mainly for moisture conservation and the added benefit of reducing the chance for wind erosion and very little water erosion with the no-till.

"We have come a long ways in learning how to get things done," he said. "Even on the strip-till we started that because of moisture conservation concerns. We had all those hot dry years in the early 2000s, and we needed to leave more residue on top to save that moisture and the added benefit is not blowing in the wind or washing away.

"It is a little more efficient way of farming where basically you have

your strip tillage operation, which includes fertilizer application and then you plant the ground. The rest of it is essentially just spraying to control weeds and then you harvest."

He said they bought their own sprayer when Jace came back from college in 2006, and that has helped their operation.

Dwight said his dad's farm, where he worked as a young man, was more of a focus on feeder cattle. He said the area has a lot of grass, but the farmed acres were dryland wheat. He said he wasn't sure when his dad started the farm and cattle operation, but it seemed he had been there forever. He knew his dad started sometime in the 50s.

Dwight grew up in the 50s and remembers some large dirt storms from the 70.

"The 70s were not fun," he said. "Some of the dirt storms in those years were reminiscent of the dirty 30s. That is what we hope to avoid by leaving more on the top, and believe a lot of the conservation efforts have helped reduce the wind erosion."

Dwight thinks the future possibility of a wind farm in the Ruleton area would be good. He knows at least two wind test towers have been erected with one north and one two miles south and west of Ruleton to gather

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Chipperfield (above) has two trucks to haul wheat, corn or sunflowers, and was working on kingpins for one of the trucks. Dwight stood on top of the ladder into the John Deere combine they use for all the harvesting. Nearby are the corn and wheat headers and the grain cart. The equipment is housed in the building Chipperfield built in 1991.



wind data.

"We ought to be able to turn them with all the wind we have," he said.

In the years of farming Dwight said he has seen some major changes.

"I guess we all try to get more efficient," he said, "that is what makes the money. One of the things is to improve yields and biotechnology to improve the crops."

He said the biotechnology started with the hybrids in the 50s.

"Now we have come to where we are inserting genes for root work resistance and corn bore resistance," he said. "Roundup ready has been the big one and one of the primary reasons we can do no-till to plant dryland corn. You can go out and spray with Roundup to kill the weeds, but not the crop."

He said another big change is the Global Positioning System that makes life a lot easier.

He said they test the soil every year, and try to fertilize accordingly. He said there can be some differences especially on land that was machine leveled. He said one of the fields was cut pretty severely and they have put manure on the land at least once and that helps.

Dwight said he has not done much with other conservation programs like wildlife habitat as the ground they farm does not have a lot of area that would do for those types of programs.

"Basically all the land we have is farmable," he said. "If we had some conservation reserve acres I am sure we would, but we just don't have many acres that aren't farmed."

Chipperfield's have a John Deere combine and most of the farm equipment is John Deere green. Dwight said the technology in the equipment has gotten much larger and you can do more with the pieces of equipment. They have a 35 foot header for wheat and a 30 foot header

for corn.

He said with the increase in technology they have had to learn how to make the repairs, and that Jace, being as young as he is, is pretty electronic savvy and does a lot of that stuff.

Dwight said the technology is geared more to the electronics than when he went to college, but feels Jace got a good education in the basics. He said Jace was on a national award winning scale tractor team, and was good experience for him.

Dwight said last year was an exceptional year. He did not want to say how much yield he had for wheat or corn, but said it was an exceptional year for both.

"We are not off to as good a start this year as we had last year," he said. "Last year was the best dryland wheat we have had since we have been here."

He agreed it was probably a record year for corn in Sherman County.

"It was an unusual summer," he said. "You didn't go very far east to find where they had a hot, dry summer and it wasn't that good for them. It was a good moisture pattern for our area."

At harvest time Dwight said they have two semi trucks and have the one combine plus a large grain cart. He said for wheat they did hire another combine, but just had the one for corn. He said either he or Jace are usually in the combine and his wife Judy, and Jace's wife, Melissa, handle the grain cart.

He said one thing that was good last year was they got lucky about the lack of hail. Dwight said he had seen some wild hail storms through the years. He said there have not been any tornadoes, but one came pretty close when they built the shop back in 1991.

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Three important topics for Sherman County

By: Fred Wedel
District Conservationist

The annual meeting of the Sherman County Conservation District will be Monday, Feb. 14, 2011. Take this time to enjoy a delicious meal and visit with your neighbor. District Manager Sandy Rodgers, the Sherman County Conservation District Board of Supervisors and I look forward to seeing you on the 14th. Students and producers are given recognition for a job well done. The annual meeting completes the year just ended and is the start of a new year of resource management on the working farms and ranches of Sherman County.



Wedel

As we look forward to the 2011 growing season, I have three topics on my mind. All three are important for Conservation Agriculture in Sherman County.

First, Zero tillage cropping systems.

SUNSHINE + WATER + PHOTOSYNTHESIS = \$\$\$\$\$

All of the agriculture products grown for sale are the result of the above formula or "LAW OF NATURE." The list includes wheat, corn, sunflowers, soybeans, alfalfa, and grass. The grass or rangeland is then marketed in the form of meat or milk from beef, dairy, sheep or goats. In most years in the semi-arid climate of Sherman County, water (precipitation) is the most

limiting nutrient in the formula. So a system of "Conservation Agriculture" that captures and preserves the most precipitation is vital to the economic prosperity of any rural community.

No-Till farming promotes soil quality and soil health in ways that intensive tillage systems never will. Soil quality always precedes water quality and air quality. The terms "soil quality" and "soil health" are used interchangeably. Soil Quality is defined as the ability of soil to: absorb and store water and support plant and animal life, including soil micro-organisms. When the soil is returned to the "biological health" of the past, the water cycle, carbon cycle and nutrient cycle bring the soil

eco-system back into balance. This means soil structure, soil organisms, soil organic matter, macro pores, and water infiltration rates improve greatly. Large amounts of surface residue and standing crop stubble after a crop is harvested prevent the soil from baking. Wind speed at the soil surface is reduced resulting in lower evaporation rates and more stored soil moisture resulting in better crop yields. Tillage always dries topsoil, destroys soil structure and reduces moisture infiltration rates. Crop residue always increases organic matter, reduces wind speed at the soil surface, reduces moisture evaporation, minimizes run-

off, reduces soil erosion and more importantly is food for the soil micro-organisms. The soil is really a living breathing ecosystem that stores, transforms, and cycles nutrients through the soil. Remember, the air we breathe is 78 percent nitrogen. Legume cover crops cycle this nitrogen into the living soil and make this nitrogen available for crop and forage production...and the nitrogen is free!

Farmers and Ranchers I have met in the past 15 years are the most successful producers I know. I have asked them many times if they thought there was ever a time when tillage is beneficial. All say No!! I have been using 100 percent no-till on my farm since 2002 and will continue to do so.

Second, Converting expiring CRP land to Cropland.

Several things should be considered when converting expired CRP land to cropland. Keep concentrated flow areas or other critical eroding areas in grass cover. Use continuous CRP practices such as grassed waterways, field borders, filter strips or re-enroll the most erosive areas of a field into the General CRP sign-up starting March 14th. No-till is the preferred method when converting CRP to cropland so benefits accrued over the last 10 to 20 years in CRP will be maintained. No-till systems in conjunction with a diverse crop rotation, and minimal fallow periods are

most effective to improve or maintain soil organic matter, aggregate stability, soil infiltration, and available water holding capacity. The Conservation Compliance provisions of the Food Security Act require USDA Agriculture Program participants who produce annual agricultural commodities on HEL fields to apply an "approved conservation system" on those fields. Contact the Goodland NRCS office for assistance with planning the transition from CRP back to cropland.

Third, Conservation Compliance.

The Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation Compliance (WC) provisions were established by Congress in the 1985 Farm Bill, with amendments in 1990, 1996, and 2002.

The objectives of these provisions are to: Reduce soil loss due to wind and water erosion, protect the Nation's long-term capability to produce food and fiber, reduce sedimentation and improve water quality, and assist in preserving the functions and values of the Nation's wetlands. To maintain USDA benefits and program eligibility, fields designated as highly erodible (HEL) must be protected from excessive soil erosion when used to produce agricultural commodities. When an approved conservation cropping system is followed, a farm retains

See TOPICS, Page 8

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ideas and tools that can make his business a little more efficient; a little more productive. He listens hard when other people talk farming. But mainly, he takes a long look at his own program and decides things for himself. Throwing out what didn't work and sticking with the things that did. Upgrading his system until his goals are reached and then upgrading some more. He's hard to please, but he's fair. A good farmer, in short, is one of America's greatest natural resources.

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Windbreak winners grow towering Austrian Pines

By Pat Schiefen

pjschiefen@nwkansas.com

Terry and Rebecca Baker have been working on their future home and windbreak for 14 years. They are this year's winners of the Windbreak Award.

The couple have watched their Austrian Pines grow from three feet and less tall to a towering wall that protects their future home from wind, snow and noise from Highway 24 on the south. In front of the pines the couple planted Rocky Mountain Junipers. They planted 77 pines and 68 junipers.

Terry said they planted that type of juniper because of the dense foliage and because they didn't turn that orange brown in the winter than cedars do.

He said they bought the pines from Gibsons and the junipers they got from a little nursery by Weskan. Terry said they dug the junipers up themselves to be moved. He also didn't think the nursery was there anymore.

When they planted the trees they put down weed barrier and had a drip system. Rebecca said they will also occasionally water with a sprinkler to get some of the dirt off of the needles and to moisturize them. A cold dry wind will desiccate the needles.

Early on he said he lost six to eight of the pines.

The couple at the present time are worried about the pine beetles which have been moving westward in Kansas.

So far they haven't had to water the trees but once this winter, said Rebecca.

A house the couple has been building is nestled in the center of the windbreak. Terry said they used a moved in building for part of the studding on the house.

"We have been building as we could afford it," said Terry.

The couple said they enjoy coming and enjoying the quiet of the countryside in the summer.

Both agree that they are going to move in eventually when they finish the house. They said they want to have everything done when they move in.

The home was built on land with native grass that had never been plowed, he said.

Rebecca said that they are going to put in a yard in the front of the house but the rest will stay in native grass.

The couple said that their neighbors in town tease them about when they plan to move in.

By building the house as they had money and time they won't owe that much when they finally get to move in.

Terry said they are still planing on adding some deciduous trees. He said they had planted lilacs in the back and don't know whether the bushes are going to make it or not. First he said they had borers and after the borers were treated the bushes got wilt.

They are definitely not the same as the old



Rebecca and Terry Baker in front of the towering Austrian Pine and Juniper windbreak at their home. They planted the trees about 14 years ago and are the Sherman County Windbreak Award winners.

Photo by Pat Schiefen
The Goodland Star-News

varieties of lilacs, he said.

Terry said to keep his rabbit damage down to a minimum he goes ahead and gives the rabbits food.

He said they see a squirrel once in a while but that they generally move on.

Terry has his own construction business.

"I have been busy as heck," he said. He has been doing mostly commercial remodeling.

Rebecca said she works for MidWest Energy reading meters. She reads meters in Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace and Rawlins Counties.

Before that she said she had worked for the City of Goodland as a billing clerk.

The couple has one son, Dustin, who is 26 and is taking welding at Northwest Tech.

Terry said that welding will give Dustin a choice of what he wants to do. Before that Dustin had worked with his father in the construction business.

The couple said they were totally surprised when they had learned that they won the Windbreak Award.



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Partnership creates forest-related program

By **Bob Atchison**
Kansas Forest Service

The 2010 Kansas Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy has identified sustaining and protecting forest and agroforestry ecosystems and water quality and quantity as two of the most important forest-related natural resource concerns in Kansas.

This is supported by natural resource inventories that suggest nearly half of the state's 43,436 miles of windbreaks are in poor condition; 46 percent of Kansas woodlands and forests are classified as "cull" having no merchantable value; and sedimentation from streambank erosion and other sources has reduced the storage capacity and life span of many reservoirs by 50 to 100 years creating potential water supply shortages.

Fortunately a new and unique partnership has been created between the Natural Resources Conservation Service and state forestry agencies in Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas through a grant from the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative to address these resource concerns.

An initiative of the 2008 USDA Farm Bill, CCPI has the potential to bring an additional \$800,000 to Kansas for riparian tree planting, windbreak renovation, and forest stand improvement projects in the next four years.

CCPI works through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program providing for forest and agroforestry projects.

Forest, woodlands, windbreaks, cropland, and grassland all have the potential to qualify for the program if a "resource concern" is identified. Primary resource concerns for the program are the health and condition of trees in windbreaks, woodlands and forests; soil erosion of streambanks; and water quality issues associated with excessive sediment.

Specific examples might include old windbreaks with gaps and dead trees or shrubs; streambank erosion where additional tree planting can provide long-term reduction in soil loss; and forests or woodlands that are either over crowded (need thinning) or would benefit from additional tree planting, or contain a high percentage of invasive or undesirable trees.

Private landowners statewide are eligible to sign up for the program if they meet the agricultural producer requirements for EQIP. Forestry and windbreak applicants are exempt from the requirement that a minimum of \$1,000 of agricultural products must be produced or sold annually by applicants.

Applications for EQIP are accepted continuously at the Sherman County NRCS office located at 210 W. 10th in Goodland. Applications are batched after a set cutoff date for funding.

Locations and contact information for USDA Service Centers may be found at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov. Available at the Web site is an EQIP Self-Assessment Worksheet for Forestland Health. Completing the worksheet prior to applying may improve chances for funding. Payment rates are available at the Web site.

NRCS will refer EQIP applicants to a Kansas Forest Service district forester who will schedule a site visit with the applicant and develop a management plan to guide the project. NRCS will then rank and prioritize the application based on criteria developed for Forestland Health.

Cheatgrass can be effective forage

By **Jim Wright**
Grazingland Management Specialist

Heavy stands of cheatgrass can be efficient and effective livestock forage. In early spring the protein values of cheatgrass can be over 18 percent, and it tends to grow (and re-grow after grazing) rapidly.

Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) is an annual introduced grass species that generally germinates in the late fall, winters as a seedling, and grows profusely when conditions are right in the spring.

After growing rapidly in the spring, it will set seed while depleting upper level soil moisture. The seed is mature in a very short period of time and capable of germination if conditions are right. Each seed has an awn that protrudes 1/2-3/4 inch in length and can cause mechanical damage to livestock if grazed late.

For utilization of the benefits of grazing cheat-

grass and/or to aid in its control, livestock should be put on pastures in the early spring in higher than normal numbers; moved through several smaller pastures at a rate where they will be back in the starting pasture in three weeks to start moving again; and taken off the pastures when the warm season grasses start to grow rapidly to allow them a chance to recover.

If this process is completed two or more consecutive years, cheatgrass can be reduced and controlled to the point native species can better compete. Livestock will do well on this type of control because of the nutritive value of cheatgrass as long as they are removed before the plants change color (reddish purple) or set seed.

Visit your local NRCS office at 210 W. 10th in Goodland to learn more about natural resources conservation. More information is also available on the Kansas Web site at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov.

Three important topics

TOPICS, from Page

eligibility for USDA benefits. Benefits subject to compliance provisions include COMMODITY PROGRAMS, CONSERVATION PROGRAMS, LOAN PROGRAMS AND DISASTER PROGRAMS. Contact the NRCS office to review your conservation compliance

plan or learn more about approved conservation systems.

I enjoy working with the people of Sherman County. Call for an appointment or just stop by the "Conservation Office" at 210 West 10th in Goodland, Kan. District Manager Sandy Rodgers and I look forward to having a chat with you about your farming or ranching goals.

District poster, limerick, essay contest winners

Sherman County Conservation District poster, limerick and essay contest winners

Posters 3rd and 4th grade

- 1st Emanuel Briones
- 2nd Zeke Beringer
- 3rd Dezirae Williams
- Honorable mention Ethan Wolf and Jade Atrzer

Posters 5th grade

- 1st Blaine Sederstrom
- 2nd Brooke Keim
- 3rd Darby Hays
- Honorable mention Katie Purvis and Demi Mitchek

Limericks 3rd and 4th grade


- 1st Kaitlin Thomposon
- 2nd Jaquelin Diaz
- 3rd Joseph Tompkins
- Honorable mention Garin Ihrig and Hunter Helton

Limericks 5th grade

- 1st Wence Hendrich
- 2nd Blaine Sederstrom
- 3rd Kit Boyington
- Honorable mention Shania Smith and Kaitlyn Townsend

Essays 5th grade

- 1st Blaine Sederstrom
- 2nd Shania Smith
- 3rd Hannah Eslinger




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