



Fire scene



Several acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grass was burned in a late afternoon fire Thursday. Fire trucks from Decatur County Rural Fire Department and Norcatur Rural Fire Department assisted Norton fire fighters as they quickly extinguished the blaze. The land, located eight miles north of Reager, belongs to John Ankenman.

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

Sheriff explains addressing system

By BRANDY LEROUX
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Questions about the Norton County 911 Addressing System prompted Sheriff Troy Thomson to seek some space from The Telegram to further explain its purpose.

Here is what he had to say:

“The 911 tax on the land-line phone bills goes to the county and is used for updating 911 equipment — like phones and computers. The 911 tax on cell phone bills goes to the state, and each county has to apply for grants to be able to use that money to upgrade their 911 systems,” he said.

“In order to receive that funding from the state, the counties that apply have to show improvement in their Enhanced 911 systems. Some progress has already been made.

“The aerial mapping of Norton County has been done, the cell pinpointing has been done, and was used last winter to locate a man whose vehicle had slipped on the ice. He couldn’t tell us where he was, he could only give us a general idea. The cell pinpointing gave us his location within 30 feet. The man had injuries, though not life-threatening. The cell pinpointing enabled emergency workers to get to him before his injuries became worse.

“What we’re doing right now to improve our Enhanced 911 system is 911 Addressing. Now, when someone who lives in rural Norton County calls for emergency services, the address will show up on our system. What came up on the computer was a rural route and box number, which wasn’t an exact location. We have people in emergency services who didn’t grow up here, haven’t lived here all their lives, and if you tell them to go to the Smiths corner, take a left past the Brown place, and

it’s two houses from there, they won’t have any idea where that is. 911 addressing gives us the exact location of each residence in Norton County.

“For example, 5510 Road F means the house is on Road F; the first “5” means it is five miles from the Decatur County line; the “51” means it is about half-way into the 5th section (each section is one mile), and the “0” means, like house numbers in every town with even-numbered houses one on one side and odd-numbered houses on the other, the house is on the south side of the road.”

Sheriff Thomson said he has heard from residents that some utility companies won’t connect their services unless the house has a physical address, and both Fed-Ex and UPS drivers use the 911 addresses as well.

“I know it’s inconvenient at this time, but I feel that the life-saving

benefits will make it worthwhile. Thank you to all the Norton County residents and those who live in unincorporated towns for their cooperation in this effort,” said Sheriff Thomson. “If family is visiting who are unfamiliar with the house’s address, and an emergency arises and the owners of the house are unable to talk, anyone at the house can find a piece of mail, get the address from that and tell the dispatcher, who from that address, will know exactly where to send help.”

Sheriff Thomson also said there are reflective house address signs available both in town and online. They can be placed at the end of your driveway or over your mailbox to let people know where your house is.

“Anyone who wants to know more about the signs can call either the sheriff’s office or county appraiser’s office.”

Farmers urged to spray

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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With the time near to plant next year’s wheat crop, farmers in northwest Kansas should spray volunteer wheat to help keep disease away from tender young plants.

Otherwise, wheat mosaic viruses could cut damage as much as 50 percent.

Brian Olson, area agronomist for Kansas State University, said it’s important that farmers kill any volunteer wheat, which he said has sprung up in fields all over because of the moisture this year.

The volunteer wheat can harbor the wheat curl mite, said Mr. Olson, which spreads at least three viruses, wheat streak mosaic, triticum mosaic and high plains mosaic.

To reduce the chances of their wheat crop getting these diseases as new plants emerge, he said, wheat growers need to control the volunteer wheat now.

Farmers should be spraying volunteer wheat in the next few

weeks, said Mr. Olson, to make sure that the volunteer plants are dead, with no green wheat left in the fields, before the new wheat emerges.

He said spraying the volunteer plants will break the life cycle of the microscopic bugs. That doesn’t just mean spraying the fields where the wheat is going to be planted, said Mr. Olson, but the fields around them too.

“Be a good neighbor,” said Mr. Olson, “and treat your volunteer wheat.”

Otherwise, he said, wheat curl mite will move around in the wind, landing on new wheat and infecting it.

The wheat will then harbor the mites all the way through to harvest. That can cut yields by as much as half, said Mr. Olson.

This is a really good time to be spraying, he said, because planting isn’t too far away, with a good time around Sept. 20, just before the fall crops are harvested.

Some of the fall crops in the area look good and others were lost,

he said. The crops that were alive when the rain finally came look OK, but other fields were lost during the dry spell at the end of July and beginning of August.

Lately, he said, there’s been great weather for the corn and soybeans. It’s rained off and on and the temperatures have been down.

The cool weather, he said, has put the milo crop 2 1/2 to three weeks behind in development. Mr. Olson said he thought the milo in his test plot in Colby would flower at the beginning of August, but it’s just doing it now.

There’s a chance, with the late development, the milo could freeze before the grain fills out all the way. If that happens, it could mean light test weights, he said.

Some of the milo in the area that has a shorter maturity or was planted earlier, said Mr. Olson, could be fine, but they will have to wait and see.

For the corn, soybeans and sunflowers, though, he said, the weather’s been great.

Eighteen coal cars derail near Winona

By Jan Katz Ackerman
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An early Monday morning train derailment dumped 18 coal cars on the ground a mile west of Winona, a town of about 200 residents 20 miles west of Oakley in Logan County.

“This all happened about 4:40

a.m. this morning,” Logan County Emergency Management Director George “Pappy” Lies said. “The Union Pacific line is shut down, and the company is sending three crews in to clean up the mess.”

Lies said there were no injuries as a result of the accident. He said there are no hazardous materials

near the wreck or in the surrounding area.

“The train had about 100 cars in it,” Lies said.

Margie Ausmus of Winona lives three blocks from the railroad tracks. She said it was the local fire siren that alerted her that something had happened.

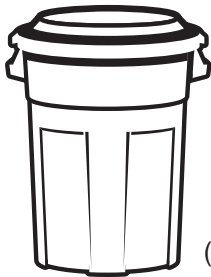


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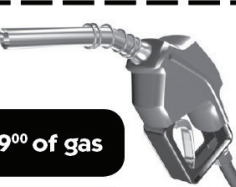


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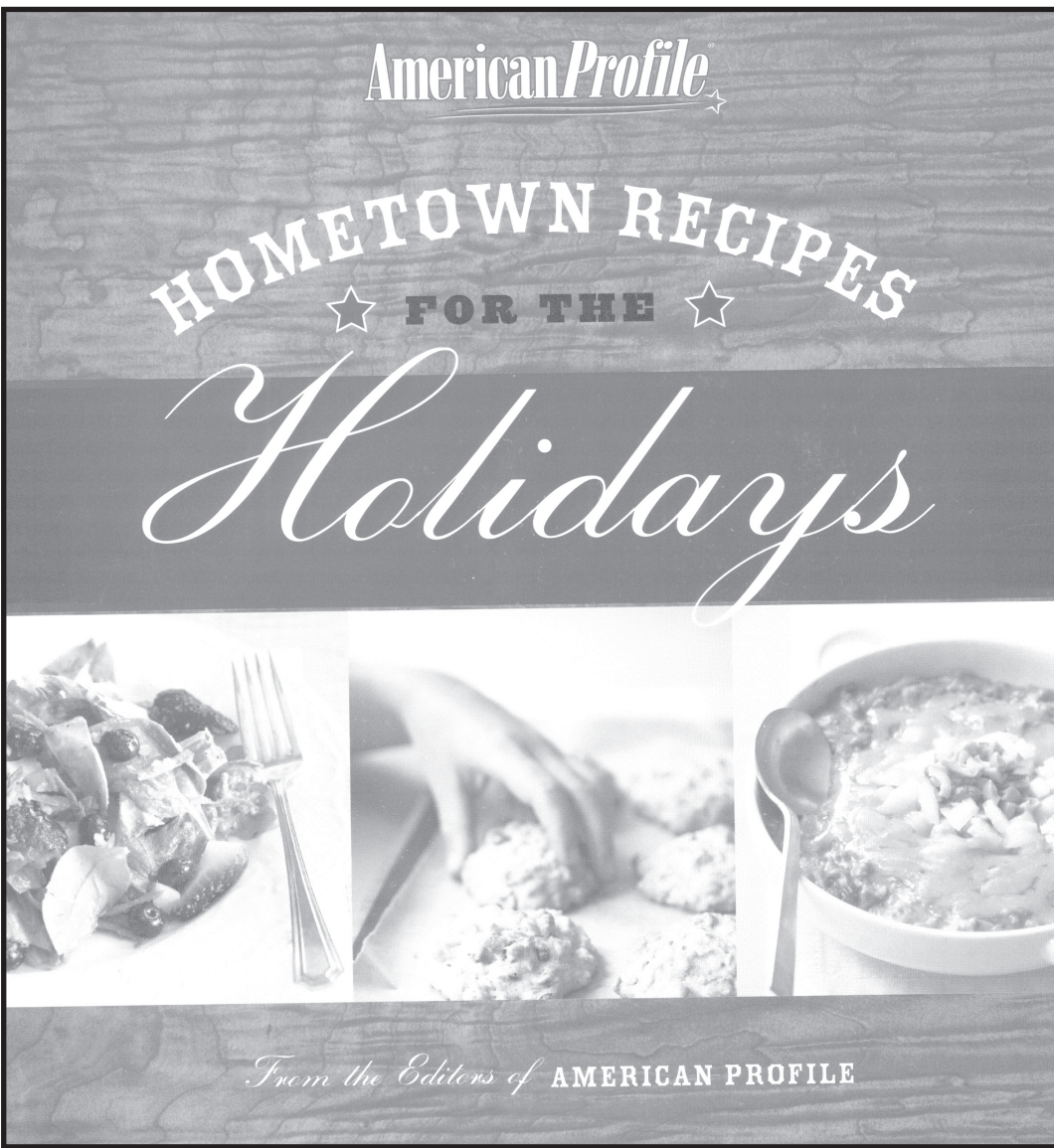
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