



RETURNING HOME Monday evening, Tony Vandike, found his evergreen tree laying across the street at 5th Street. Monday's storm broke the tree at the base sending it to the ground.

Times staff photo by Peggy Horinek

Stormy weather hits city

By Peggy Horinek

The siren was blaring above the wind on Monday afternoon while the green sky was a frightening color. Weather spotters and law officials were traveling the roads looking for tornadoes and severe weather. Cliff Flock, under sheriff, was north of Bird City on K161 when he said, over the scanner, that there was hail and before he could hardly get the words out, he said that the hail had just broken the windshield of the vehicle he was driving.

In Bird City there was only a small amount of pea size hail. The rain came down in sheets and Bird Avenue was completely under water between First and Second streets. The wind was clocked at 91 miles per hour by Rod Young at the airport. The wind knocked down trees and limbs all over



'THIS IS NOT THE WAY I LEFT IT!' Caleb Frink looks at the swing set in the yard of his grandma Peggy Morris' home. The swing set was just one of the many victims the Monday storms left behind.

Times staff photo by Peggy Horinek

town and there were several reports of windows broken out and fences blown down. The electricity was out for over an hour due to limbs on electrical lines. A trucker reported that a bridge north

of Bird City on Highway 161 felt loose when he crossed it, but when the state crew was called out to check on it they found that it was still safe.

Around 5 a.m. Tuesday morning, the

sky was again lighting up with streaks of lightning and the sounds of thunder rumbling. Forecasters are predicting a week of moisture and perhaps more thunderstorms.

Grand opening coming

After being closed for a few years the Frosty Mug has opened under the ownership of Ty and Amy Wilkens. They are planning a grand opening for Friday and Saturday before Labor Day.

Both evenings, starting around 4 p.m. they will have an outdoor garden set up in a tent on the south side of the restaurant. They have hired a disc jockey and have built an outdoor dance floor. The dance will start at 8 p.m.

There will be drawings for door prizes both evenings. This should be a fun time for everyone and a good way to celebrate the Labor Day weekend. Come and bring the whole family.

Mr. Wilkens can handle a big group as he was coordinator of dining and housing at Kansas State University before coming back to McDonald.

The restaurant will be open on Labor Day to serve dinner and supper.

Direct and counter-cyclical program sign-up begins Oct. 1

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman has announced that sign-up begins Oct. 1 for the direct and counter-cyclical program for crop years 2002 and 2003. The United States Department of Agriculture will begin making payments to farmers soon thereafter.

"Aggressive implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill continues to be a high priority at the department of agriculture so that farmers and ranchers receive program benefits as soon as possible," said Secretary Veneman. "The recent announcement is a major milestone and comes less than three months after the bill was signed by President Bush."

The 2002 Farm Bill provides for payments to be made to eligible producers of covered commodities and peanuts for the 2002 through 2007 crop years. Direct and counter-cyclical payments are made to producers with established crop bases and payment yields. Payment rates for direct payments are established by the 2002 Farm Bill and are issued regardless of market prices. Producers also are eligible for counter-cyclical payments, but payments are issued only if effective prices are less than the target prices set in the 2002 Farm

Bill. The effective price is equal to the higher of the average loan rate or national average market price received by producers, plus the direct payment rate.

Aug. 2 letters were mailed to farm owners and operators asking them to verify acreage history reported to the Farm Service Agency. Based on this information, a second letter will soon be sent to farm owners and operators providing them with several options unique to their farm for establishing or updating bases. The 2002-07 base options include: (1) using the farm's 2002 production flexibility contract acres as the base acres; (2) adding oilseeds to the 2002 contract acres; and (3) using the farm's 1998-01 planted acres.

The letter will also inform owners that if they elect to update their bases using the farm's 1998-01 planted acres, they will have the opportunity to use their current farm program payment yield or to update their yields using the farm's 1998-01 production. The updated yields may only be used for counter-cyclical payments. To update yields, owners or operators must provide verifiable production evidence. The letter will provide a date that owners and operators should be-

gin providing base and yield information to their Farm Service Agency service center.

In absence of verifiable production history, producers can use 75 percent of the county average yield. The letter will notify each producer of the farm's 2002 production flexibility contract program payment yield and 75 percent of the county average yield. In most cases, the 75 percent yield will be the lowest possible crop payment yield for counter-cyclical payments attributed to the farm.

Commodities eligible for both direct and counter-cyclical payments include wheat, corn, sorghum, barley, oats, upland cotton, rice, soybeans, sunflower seeds, canola, flaxseed, mustard, safflower, rapeseed and peanuts.

The department of agriculture will soon make available an Internet-based tool to help producers understand their base and yield options.

Sign-up for the 2002 and 2003 direct and counter-cyclical program ends June 2, 2003.

Producers who have questions should contact their local United States Department of Agriculture service center of the county Farm Service Agency office.

Haying, grazing deadline date now November

Bill R. Fuller, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency has announced that an extension has been received for the emergency haying and grazing of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres.

Executive Director Fuller had submitted a request to the Secretary of Agriculture, Ann M. Veneman, to extend the deadline for the haying and grazing of Conservation Reserve Program acres past the Aug. 31 deadline. Secretary of Agriculture Veneman extended the emergency authority of haying and grazing of Conservation Reserve Program until Nov. 30.

Executive Director Fuller said, "Livestock producers in the western two thirds of Kansas have suffered drought conditions not seen since the 1930s. We are very pleased that the authority has been received to allow an extension of time for the haying and grazing of Conservation Reserve Pro-

gram acres. This will be of great benefit to many livestock producers who are in short supply of feed and forage supplies."

Authority for the haying and grazing of the reserve acres was first limited to the western Kansas counties but was expanded on July 15 to include all of Kansas counties due to continued severe drought conditions. Executive Director Fuller said, "This emergency action will permit Conservation Reserve Program participants to continue to hay and graze livestock from Conservation Reserve Program acreage."

Secretary of Agriculture Veneman had earlier announced that the United States Department of Agriculture would waive rental reduction fees to encourage donation of hay to farmers and ranchers in immediate need. The policy continues to be in effect.

Citywide yard sale scheduled for Sept. 21

A young housewife and mother living in Bird City asked if it was possible to have a citywide yard sale event four years ago, and that is how Melinda Bassinette planted this seed and PRIDE developed the event.

The advantage of the city wide yard sale is the low cost, \$5 is the fee to get on the map. It also pays for ads in five area newspapers as well as radio time and posters.

The set up for your sale is in your own location so collecting your items and marking them can be done on your own time schedule.

The event is well attended by neigh-

boring towns as it pays them to make this trip for 15 to 20 sale sites instead of an individual yard sale.

Another big plus is PRIDE also provides a site, on the same day, to dispose of unwanted items after your yard sale is finished.

This event happens the third Saturday of September each year. Everyone is welcome to sign up at the Blue Bird Cafe in Bird City and any questions will be answered there.

Low prices to make the yard sales very appealing. Maps will be available at the north entrance of Bird Ave. Join the fun as a vendor or as a customer.

Tech help available Sept. 5 in McDonald

Tom Betz, Internet service director and troubleshooting technician for the nwkanssas.com, will be in McDonald to assist people with their internet service on Thursday, Sept. 5. nwkanssas.com is expanding its technical support services by coming to each of the communities on a rotating basis. The McDonald area was selected as the first technical stop as its number of users is below those needed to maintain the service for the community.

"When nwkanssas.com came to McDonald three years ago, we were the first local Internet Service Provider to provide a local connection and we had 25 customers who helped us bring that service on line," Mr. Betz said.

However, today, there are a number of alternative providers who have entered the market and the numbers have fallen below the minimum level.

"We are asking the people of McDonald to let us know if they want to keep our service by bringing the minimum number of customers back to a break-even level at least, or that they are satisfied with the additional providers and we no longer are needed. Without these additional providers, we cannot maintain service to the area."

While in McDonald, Mr. Betz will be willing to talk to people about connection problems and even make house calls if necessary. He will also have applications available for people to sign up. He will be at either the Frosty Mug or the bank and will have a cell phone (785-821-1633).

The price for one month of nwkanssas.com internet service in McDonald is \$24.95. However, the customer can get six months for \$99.80 and for \$196, can receive a year of service.

Farm Service Agency election set for Dec. 2

On Dec. 2, an election for a Farm Service Agency County Committee person from the local administrative area will be held. This area covers the northwest part of the county which is currently represented by Roger Moore.

The nomination for candidates is now open and the forms can be picked up at the Cheyenne County Farm Service Agency on west U.S. 36 in St. Francis. The agency phone number is 785-332-2183. Forms must be returned to the county office by Oct. 28.

The county committee is an important part of the delivery of United States Department of Agriculture services to farmers. The county committee system needs everybody

— from voters to active participants as candidates for the committee membership.

Anyone wanting to be a candidate or knows of someone who would qualify and be willing to serve should come to the office and pick up an application.

It is easy, it is important and it is the county residents' Farm Service Agency County Committee.

