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Researched and compiled by A.J. Coleman, L&T Reporter



1963

Car trouble, tractor trouble, family trouble

"To jail then to hospital," read the interesting headline on the front page of the Southwest Daily Times, the first week of June 1963. The story reported a Liberal woman who escaped injury in a highway collision, spent the night in jail, and then went to the hospital. "Mrs. Margaret J. Green, 36, of Liberal, suffered painful burns to her arm and chest while in jail when she apparently set fire to her night clothes while smoking," the Times reported.

Green had been jailed under the charges of driving under the influence of drugs and driving left of the center while not engaged in passing after her 1957 Ford convertible sideswiped a 1963 Pontiac driven by William F. Spence, 58, of Sayer, Okla.

Neither driver was injured in the accident, but all that changed when Green decided to light up in her jail cell. She was transferred to the hospital to treat her injuries.

More car trouble made the headlines that week. "Chevy SW-6419 stolen," read the newspaper. Ron Warner, 1002 N. Pershing, reported the theft of a 1962 Chevrolet. Warner reported the white sedan, bearing license SW-6419, had been stolen between 1 p.m. and midnight. He had parked his car east of the Rainbow Diner on East Pancake Blvd. at the time of the theft.

Elsewhere in the state, an older farmer had tractor problems. In a front-page article, the Times shared the story of Herman Geisler, a 62-year-old farmer who was pinned for almost three and a half hours under his tractor, in a waterway in eastern Kansas, with his head barely out of the water. His tractor overturned in a creek bed while he was working.

He was taken to Topeka hospital where his condition was reported as fair.

Worse news came from the west. "Denver man kills wife and three of his 10 children," read the awful headline of the Times. "Police said that a Denver man planned to wipe out his family of 11 early today but stopped after killing his wife and three kids," the story said. The man, Luis J. Monge, 45, was a driver at a mercantile firm. Investigators said Monge went on a rampage "after brooding over personal problems." The details of the crime were horrible. Monge first beat his wife to death with an iron bar, then stabbed the baby with a stiletto, choked the 4-year-old and beat the 6-year-old to death in the basement with a bar. "Monge then became unnerved," the story said, and called the police.

The wheat harvest was awful, but "June Brings 1963 moisture to 8.20 inches," the paper reported. June produced 3.39 inches of moisture, which was .44 inches above the normal for the month over the last 23 years and about normal temperature-wise.

Measurable moisture fell 10 days during the 30-day month. The heaviest was 1.40 inches one day and the next-highest was the following day, with 1.01 inches of moisture. Rain is always tricky when farmers want to get in the fields to work, but after two years of drought, many probably wish they could get this kind of moisture in 2013.