

RADIO DIARY

(Continued from page 1-H.)

equipment for service should plan to pay. The county, of course, is leasing equipment and county officials appear to be doing everything they possibly can to speed the relief.

Glen B. Custer, the American Red Cross field director from the regional St. Louis office, arrived in O'Neill about three o'clock. He is now meeting with the Holt board in the courthouse.

Lt. John Cleary, National Guard, Grand Island, is with us here in our studios. Lt. Cleary is in charge of the "weasel" crew.

(Interview with Lieutenant Cleary.)

A battery of telephones has been installed in the courthouse which will be manned on a 24-hour basis by the American Legion Auxiliary to take distress calls. Persons in need of aid please call any of these numbers—400, 403, 404, where your message will be taken. There will be someone on duty there all through the day and night.

If anyone has neighbors who are without telephone connections kindly call in their names.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 27—WJAG (NORFOLK), 4:30 p. m.

Good afternoon, everyone. This is Bill Beha speaking to you from our O'Neill studios in The Frontier building.

From O'Neill... the hub of the storm disaster area... we are bringing you 15 minutes of up-to-the-minute news concerning the progress of emergency measures in this snowbound area.

Today's broadcast is under the sponsorship of the Holt county chapter of the American Red Cross. A general field representative from the St. Louis regional office is in O'Neill directing relief activities in behalf of the national American Red Cross organization... and a few moments later in the broadcast we're going to hear from this field representative, Mr. Glen B. Custer.

Holt county, as most of you know, is an enormous county—one of the largest in the state of Nebraska. From all corners of the county yesterday and today have come urgent requests. The common cry is for "fuel and food... fuel and food."

All these requests for help are being routed through the Holt county distress headquarters in the courthouse. There, members of the Simonson post 93 of the American Legion auxiliary are manning a battery of telephones night-and-day and are processing all calls. Priorities are established and the most urgent and compassionate cases are serviced first.

For example, a few hours ago there was a hurry up call for medicine for a ranch family near Stuart. A plane was dispatched promptly.

Earlier today the American Red Cross sponsored a dozen food flights in which quantities of staple foods were taken to needy.

(Interviews with Mrs. Glen Tomlinson, of distress headquarters, and Mr. Custer, ARC field representative.)

Thank you, Mrs. Glen Tomlinson and Mr. Glen B. Custer. We know that you, other members of the auxiliary, Red Cross, Chamber of Commerce officials, and Holt county officials are doing a magnificent job here... and doing everything that possibly can be done.

This disaster scene out here in O'Neill has a number of very ironic twists about it. In the first place, it seems that almost every effort is thwarted in one way or another. For example, General Henninger, the Nebraska adjutant general and the state relief director, has dispatched bulldozers to O'Neill. Three of these left Omaha by railway yesterday and a convoy of equipment left Omaha today by highway. Up until now none of this equipment has reached O'Neill... all because of the eternal battle with the elements.

Andy Clark, chairman of the Holt county board of supervisors, a few minutes ago reported that no definite word has been received in regard to Holt's plea for 20 more bulldozers that are urgently needed. General Henninger promised definite word today.

Mayor Clyde Allen, of the village of Ewing, a few moments ago, told us of a half-dozen "most urgent" distress cases in the territory South of Ewing. He reported that the Jack Schindler family has been without fuel for 10 days. In that family there are four little children.

The Ludwig Koenig family South of Ewing is burning virtually "everything on the place, including fence posts" to keep warm. Mrs. Koenig is in an Omaha hospital and Mr. Koenig is there with two small children. This is only a sample of some of the hardship. If any neighbors are listening and feel that they can help the Ludwig Koenig or the Jack Schindler families in any way... try and do so.

Other South of Ewing families needing help are those of Earl Schindler and John Fagel. Ewing's Mayor Allen says in

behalf of the South-Ewing country that unless there is relief real soon there will be "some very terrific suffering."

Since we spoke to you a few moments ago regarding heavy snow-removal equipment coming from Omaha, General Henninger has just advised Holt county officials that more equipment is on its way.

The wind is blowing at a velocity of up to 25-miles-per-hour now and is growing steadily worse.

We've just had another call from Ewing. The state rotary snowplow has begun work on highway 108 South from Ewing. Progress is being made at the rate of one-half mile per hour.

But this afternoon's snow, which is being accompanied by some wind, may interfere with the opening of this road—highway 108—so people are urged to be certain they can travel before they venture out.

Because of snowfall this afternoon at Ewing... the airlift there has had to be abandoned.

Planes are still operating in-and-out of the O'Neill airport.

Down in the Chambers community this afternoon workmen with some small snow-plowing equipment are trying to reach a stricken herd of livestock on the Leonard Thomazin farm, 5 1/2 miles South of there. Many of his livestock already have perished... the surviving stock are in a very weakened condition... and efforts are being made to get trucks there.

Leo Adams, a Chambers banker, told us that the crying need in that locality is for snow-removal equipment.

The Holt county board of supervisors, swamped with requests for reopening of roads and other emergency calls, has been working for days to get help from outside. Little dribbles of help have arrived.

Today, though, the supervisors laid their cards on the table in an open appeal to all agencies outside the storm area.

"We don't face a crisis today, tomorrow or a week from tomorrow. Our crisis began a month ago," the supervisors asserted in a prepared statement. They went on to say:

"We feel that Governor Peterson has done what he could do. An American Red Cross representative has arrived and is doing everything possible. This is not enough. If air power is peace power... if the Army and National Guard are vigilant and standing by in peace as well as in war... if the scheme of reclamation is worthy of its tremendous cost... then we in Holt county, Nebraska, believe that the time has come for action from one of these agencies. "Remember... our crisis began a month ago."

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28—

WNAX (Yankton and Sioux City) and WJAG (Norfolk)—9:45 a. m. (simultaneous transmission.)

Good morning, everyone. This is Bill Beha speaking to you from O'Neill, Nebraska, a storm-stricken city of 3,000 persons situated about 120 miles West of Sioux City, Ia., or about 200 miles Northwest of Omaha, Nebraska.

The storm story in O'Neill today is an old, old story to the people in this North-Central and Northwestern section. Since November 18th the weather-beaten people out here haven't seen the ground. And... today... it's the same old story all right—but it's a little worse.

A northerly gale that started up a little after noon yesterday has brought in several inches of fresh snow. This, added to more than 60 inches of previous snow since that historic November 18th blizzard, has had this region in a state of complete paralysis for many weeks.

Many people have not been heard from for weeks. Christmas mail is piled high in postoffices. Larders and fuel supplies are depleted; rural people are confronted with the grimest livestock situation in history.

This fresh load of sugar-fine snow is being dumped today into a few newly-opened road cuts and again virtually all transportation lines are blocked.

This new storm has meant a sudden stopping of just-begun efforts to relieve the isolation and near-starvation of many farm and ranch families and their weakened and sick livestock.

But there is still hope that if ever the howling wind dies, the authorities and relief agencies may be able to get back on top of the situation that has had the weary country folks staggering since mid-November.

I must tell you here that the rural residents of this Nebraska and South Dakota territory... the folks who live in O'Neill and other small cities and towns... are not suffering in any comparison to the rural people—those who live miles from a highway.

After a week of intensive effort, which saw Nebraska's Governor Peterson declare that a state of emergency existed in 21 Nebraska counties, authorities yesterday saw heavy Army engineer equipment rolling into town in the face of this new storm. This snow-removal equipment, some of it

weighing in the neighborhood of 22 tons, has been a full week reaching here, battling the eternal weather problem, icy roads and disrupted communications.

The plan is to start out on blocked county roads and then to branch out to outlying ranches that haven't been visited by men or machines in many weeks. Even then... the big job will be to get hay and feed to the livestock, which are strewn over vast areas of the ranch country.

This big equipment will supplement privately-owned bulldozers and snow-removal equipment which has been fighting a losing battle for several weeks.

U. S. Air Force equipment was called in last week to open the O'Neill airport. Three days were required to open a 1 1/2-mile road to the port and airstrip.

Small, ski-equipped craft have been making mercy missions of all types over a wide area.

To give an idea of the immensity of the snow-removal job, consider this example: One air force plow started East from O'Neill on a county road yesterday morning. By nightfall it had travelled only two miles. There are more than 3,000 miles of public and other general-use roads in Holt county alone. In other words, it would take 1,850 snow-plow days to open all the roads—it another storm didn't intervene!

The American Red Cross started Thursday to take food, fuel and medicine to isolated farm families.

Three local pilots went up on Thursday morning, dropping leaflets to farms and ranches in outlying sections. These leaflets told the farm residents to lay out signals in a code to specify their needs. They reported that at most farms there was someone in the yard who picked up the leaflet as soon as it dropped, but just as soon as the pilots were ready to retrace their routes, the new storm came up, and they were grounded.

Meantime, another mission had been flown—food packages were dropped to about a dozen families living in the area North of Atkinson. The packages contained flour, sugar, coffee, canned milk, dried beans, bacon, oatmeal and other staples.

There had been no information from these families for sometime, Mr. Custer explained. It wasn't known just what their needs were, so the food packages were dropped as a stop-gap.

One airman is missing this morning. He took off from the O'Neill airport on a late mission yesterday and has not been heard from since. Airport officials believe he is safe at some farm house in the vicinity of his objective.

In the area distress headquarters, in the basement of the Holt county courthouse, women of the American Legion auxiliary are standing by, telephones 24 hours a day. In their first day of operation, they received 41 calls, most were for food and fuel.

Some cattle men are dubious as to just how effective the airlift will be. They're afraid the hay will be scattered so widely that the skinny, weakened cattle won't be able to get to it.

But with many herds in their second month on short rations, the cattle men are willing to try anything.

One unusual aspect of the hay lift proposition is that O'Neill, the gateway to the world's biggest hay-raising country is practically without baled hay. There's a lot of the feed out in the fields, but can't be reached by man or beast. As a result some local men are shipping hay in from Kansas.

Typical of the trouble the cattle growers are meeting is the case of Bob Strong, who runs 160 head on his place 16 miles South and West of O'Neill. Three days ago, he hired a bulldozer from Schuyler, Nebraska, to start out from O'Neill for his place. The first 12 miles were fairly easy going for the dozer; they traveled along Highway 281, which had intermittent drifting.

But the dozer crew headed out across the fields Wednesday evening, and it took them all night to go two miles.

Thursday morning, six trucks, carrying 30 tons of hay, followed the bulldozer's path across the field. They got within two miles of Mr. Strong's place, and he met them with a team and wagon and hauled the hay in the rest of the way himself.

He's been lucky, though, he said. He has lost only one cow and one horse.

However, the other stock couldn't have lasted much longer.

Those are only a few highlights of today's situation at O'Neill. I could go on for a long time, telling of the calf that lived for 21 days buried in a snow drift, of the expectant mothers who have been flown from their farm homes to the O'Neill hospital, of the farmers in the Eastern part of Holt county who are chopping off the tops of fence posts to use for fuel, of the solid dollars that the storm has cost the ranchers.

But it all boils down to this—this region is going to be a long time recovering from recurring blizzards of 1948-'49.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 28—

WJAG (Norfolk), 1:30 p. m.

Hello everyone. This is Bill Beha speaking to you on a live broadcast from our O'Neill studios. The sun is breaking through the overcast sky... as we peer out the windows of our studio here... and folks, believe me, this good old sun is the only bright spot in the picture out here in O'Neill right now.

The overall picture is grim... as grim as it can be. The wind out in the open hasn't diminished... visibility is about zero... and all highways are closed.

The O'Neill airport is closed for how long we cannot say, but the 1 1/2 miles to the port, which required a hectic three days to open earlier in the week, is now shut-off and the newly-opened air strip is filling in with fresh snow.

Late last night and early today the American Red Cross field representative, Glen D. Custer, has taken steps to expand the ARC phase-off the distress headquarters here in O'Neill to service requests for human aid in Boyd, Rock and

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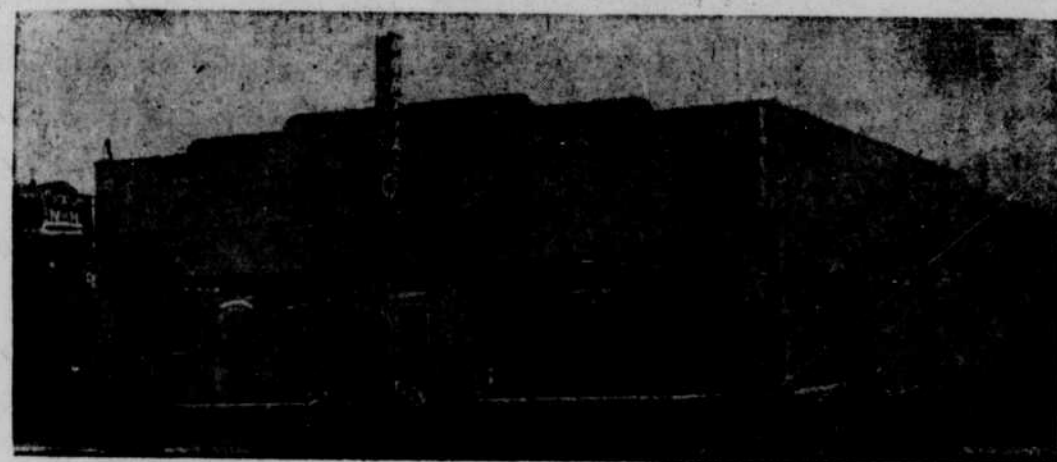


FIND CHIMNEY? ... Drifts were so high at the Les Liesewald place, near Chambers, that the house chimney can barely be seen peeking around the corner of the house.

Wm. Krotter Co. of O'Neill

PONTIAC CARS — NEW IDEA, M-M & CASE FARM IMPLEMENTS

Extends Heartiest *Congratulations* to the Community!
IN ITS DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR



PICTURED above is our new store... completed in 1948 in West O'Neill. The showroom and store is our pride and we invite you to stop in anytime when you're needing farm or home hardware and farm implements.

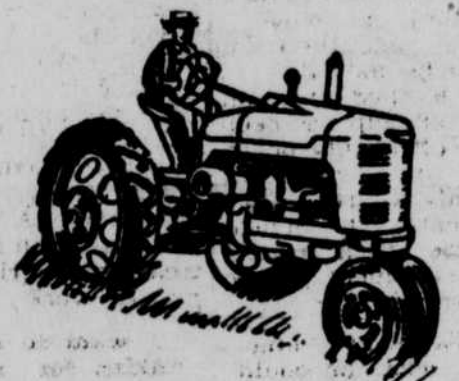
WE'RE proud, too, of our service department, where factory-trained, skilled workmen are on hand to care for your needs.

Farm & Home Hardware Dept.

- Prestelite Electric Ranges.
- Marion Electric Apartment Ranges.
- Renown Combination Bottled Gas and Coal or Wood Ranges.
- Knox Mealmaster Coal and Wood Ranges.
- Orbin Bottled Gas Ranges.
- Elgin Stel Kitchen Units (Base Cabinets, Wall Cabinets, and Sinks).
- Preway 10-inch Oil Heaters.
- Servel Bottled Gas Refrigerators.
- Combination Deep Freeze and Refrigerator.
- Plumbing Supplies.
- Shower Cabinets.
- Lavatories.
- Stools.
- Soil Pipes and Fittings.
- Galvanized Pipe and Fittings.
- Faucets.
- Cooking Utensils.
- Sunbeam Electric Coffee Makers.
- Electric Waffle Irons.
- Electric Toasters.
- Reverse Ware Pots and Pans.
- Carpenter Tools.
- Shot Guns and Rifles.
- Sporting Goods of All Kinds.
- Garden Tools of All Kinds.
- Reo Royal Power Lawn Mowers.
- Hand Powered Lawn Mowers.
- Garden Hose.
- Motor Oils and Greases.
- Century Tractor Tires and Tubes.
- Century Passenger Car Tires and Tubes.
- Tractor Tire Chains, 12x38, 11x38, 10x38, 10x28.
- Passenger Car Tire Chains (All Sizes).
- Barb Wire and Fence.
- Fence Tools.
- Staples and Nails.

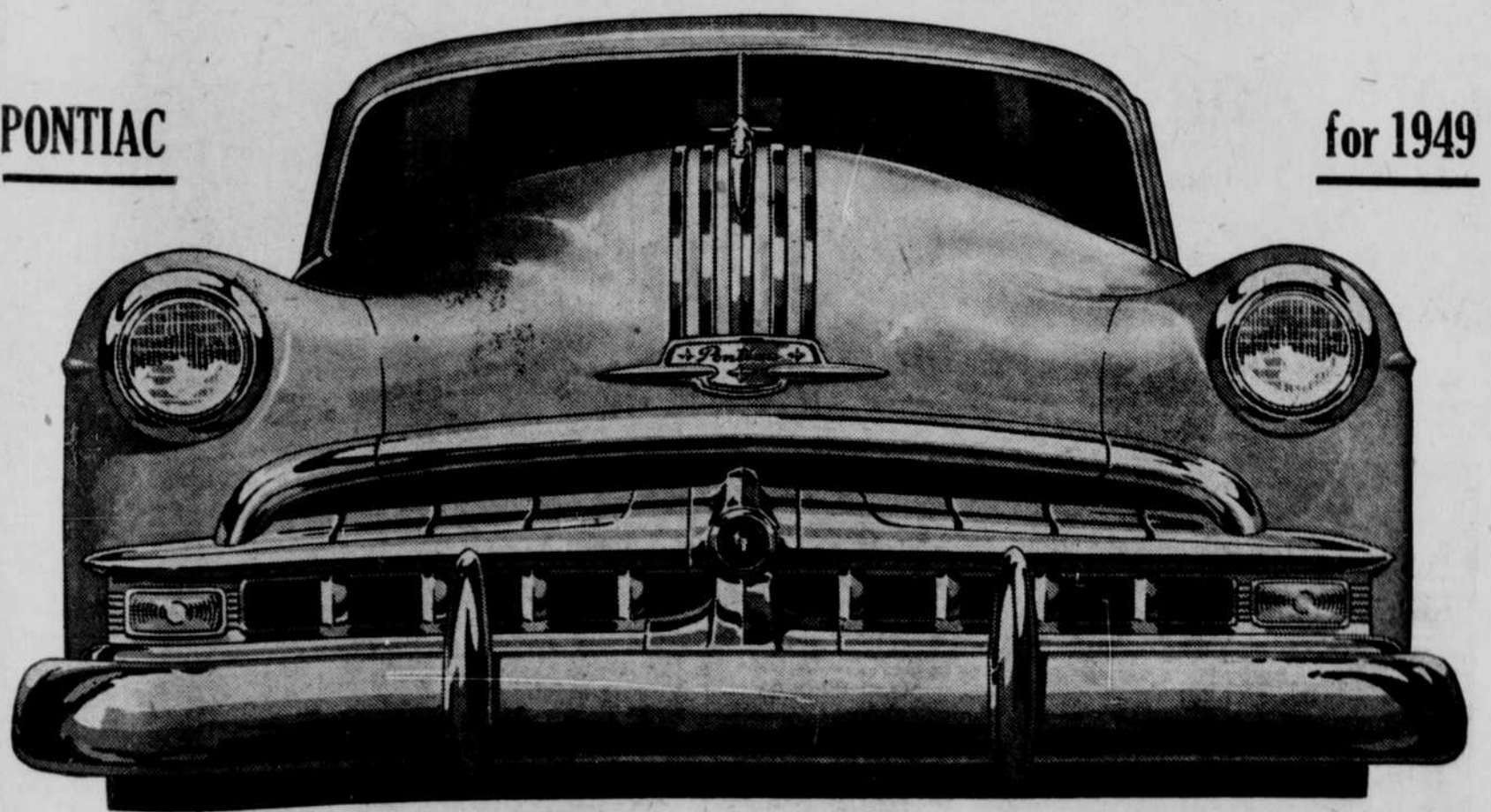
Farm Implement Dept.

- 1—New Minneapolis-Moline G4 Combine (12 ft.)
- 1—New Minneapolis-Moline 14 ft. Windrower.
- 1—New UTU Minneapolis-Moline Tractor.
- 1—New ZAU Minneapolis-Moline Tractor.
- 1—New RTU Minneapolis-Moline Tractor.
- 1—New 21-ft. Minneapolis-Moline Disk Harrow.
- 1—New 6-ft. Minneapolis-Moline one-way Plow.
- Mounted Cultivators for RTU - ZTU and UTU Tractors.
- New Case and Minneapolis-Moline Semi - Mounted Grass Mowers.
- 2—New VAC Case Tractors.
- 1—New VA Case Tractor.
- 2—New 12-ft. Case Windrowers.
- New Mounted Cultivators for SC, DC and VAC Tractors.
- 1—New NCM Case Pickup Baler.
- New Case and New Idea Farm Trucks.
- 1—New Idea Single Row Corn Picker.
- 1—New Idea No. 12A Manure Spreader.
- 1—New Minneapolis-Moline 4-wheel Manure Spreader with tractor hitch.
- 1—New Case 2-bottom 14-in. Tractor Plow on rubber.



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We extend to you and your family a most cordial invitation to come in and see the great new 1949 Pontiac! Definitely and decidedly, it's the finest, most beautiful Pontiac we have ever been privileged to show. You will admire everything about it, the flashing smartness

of its completely new Bodies by Fisher—its many new features—its fine performance. Here's a real step forward in the motor car world... one that you should see without delay!