



Our Cup Runneth Over

After two years of severe drought, Mother Nature turned the spigots on in relief but seems to have forgotten to shut them off. Consequently, flooding has become the hazard of choice during the past three months. Oklahoma's statewide average precipitation total for the year thus far ranks as the 19th wettest since 1921. The north central region is experiencing year-to-date totals ranked within the top-ten wettest. The last 90 days have been particularly wet with parts of Grant County receiving more than 20 inches of rain.

Climate statistics in Oklahoma began being recorded in 1895 – 110 years ago. Spring 2005 was the number 1 driest year ever recorded for North Central Oklahoma with 0.52 inches of moisture; Spring 2006 precipitation was recorded at 4.47 inches.

It's somewhat standard for Oklahoma's severe drought episodes to end with a deluge instead of a trickle. The state's most notable droughts, the 1930s Dust Bowl and the 1950s, were both broken in a spectacularly wet fashion. The Dust Bowl episode was whittled away in early 1941 before being blasted from existence by a statewide average rainfall of 11.32 inches in October, the wettest Oklahoma month on record. The 1952-57 drought, considered the state's worst statistically, ended rather abruptly in May 1957 with heavy rains and major flooding on the state's largest river systems. That year still stands as the wettest in Oklahoma history at 48.21 inches.

Information is the key to the process. The challenge is one of moving people to constructive action. Anyone who would seek to understand the political forces that move Americans to action on county government issues would do well to understand the potential that lies in the dedication, commitment and skill of those who love the land – the people, as well as the servants, of Grant County.

Whatever your occupation or job is, everyone should have goals. Have each and every one of you been successful in achieving your goals in the time frame you have set? Have you encountered obstacles beyond you control? Do you understand that if you have not achieved your goals in the time frame set you have not necessarily failed and are not unproductive or unsuccessful?

I took the oath of office to serve as your County Commissioner on January 2, 2005, a mere two and a half years ago. I believed in Grant County and I continue to believe in Grant County. I had and still have a vision for Grant County. I had and continue to have plans for Grant County. Some have been attained while others are still being sought. I continue to set goals to accomplish for Grant County. Some goals that I have set are being achieved, and

our District is on a better financial footing with our available resources. The District is operating with fiscal responsibility – that was one of my goals. The goals with the roads are another matter and are more visible. Believe me, I am aware just how visible they are! Two steps forward and one step back. These goals are not being achieved as quickly as I first thought and desired them to be fulfilled and I don't like it any better than you do!

The severe drought to the relentless precipitation has definitely been an obstacle for county road maintenance and repair. It seems the more we do the further behind we become. No matter what we do or where we go an obstacle appears. With 682 road miles and more 162 bridges that measure over 20' long, District 2 seems to constantly be behind. Perhaps it is because District 2 has a mere 13 employees to maintain 682 miles of roads with road graders, repair or completely build bridges (with more than 80% of the 162 bridges on inventory being obsolete or deficient), along with an undisclosed number of bridges that are under 20', as well as an undisclosed number of culverts needing to be cleaned out, opened or replaced, trees removed, ditches cleaned out, and the list goes on and on.

I grew up as a rural farm girl in Grant County – Jefferson, Oklahoma. My work ethics follow that of my parents who taught me to always do my best no matter what – good or bad – give 110%, and to always give more than I expect to receive. To love your neighbor MORE than yourself – and to honor God first, family second, and job third, and politics should always take the back seat in matters of conflict.

So whether you are a Republican or a Democrat I would like to paraphrase John F. Kennedy, “ Ask not what your **county** can do for you, but what you can do for your **county**.” For example, if a culvert at your drive (whether to your homestead or farmstead) is beginning to silt in, perhaps you could spend 15 minutes to clean it out BEFORE it becomes plugged. If a tree limb is in your way – take it down and properly dispose of it (as not to bother your neighbor.) “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” If you mow and/or spray your ditches – we notice and we thank you. If you can scrape your roads due to ruts – we are also aware of it and we all appreciate your concern for yourself as well as your neighbor **and** your fellow man appreciates **you**. Working together, as a team, makes Grant County a better and safer place to live.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy R. Bobbitt, Commissioner

Grant County District 2