



2024 Logan County Weather Summary



MARCIA HORA - THE STAPLETON ENTERPRISE

This picture taken from the Augusta Wind Golf Course south of Stapleton, shows the immense cloud of smoke that engulfed the village as the fast moving wildfire prompted the evacuation of Stapleton, Gandy and the surrounding area. The fire stayed north of the South Loup River and missed both villages, but outbuildings, livestock, hay and shelter belts were lost.

By: Deanna Brummet
NWS Reporter

Every year it seems Logan County's weather summary is tagged as "One For the Books." 2024 has been no exception. January welcomed the New Year with frozen fog on the 1st & had below average moisture in snow (0.28 in 3" snow). Of course the wind blew with the strongest being 32 mph. South of Stapleton strong wind & near zero visibility caused dangerous whiteout conditions on the 18th.

Eight times in January the temperature was below zero. On the 14th the maximum temperature was -10 degrees & on January 16 the coldest wind chill was -18 degrees. In contrast & on par for Nebraska's unpredictable weather, January ended with 63 degrees on the 30th & 62 degrees on the 31st.

February produced 1.20" of moisture in ten days with just 1.3" of snow. The only temperature below zero in February (-1 degree) occurred the 28th, as a reminder it was midwinter. On February 26, dry conditions with a 47 mph wind spread a fire rapidly from the Lariat Ranch WNW of Stapleton east to just beyond Highway 83 north of Stapleton, causing town & area residents to evacuate quickly.

Tragically, Kennard & Jo Lovitt's ranch site exploded in a huge cloud of black smoke, seen from the National Weather Service reporting site 5 miles west of Stapleton. At the time, both were assisting their daughter & son-in-law whose home was being threatened by a grass fire in Lincoln County. Lovitt's house was spared, but outbuild-

ings, trees, & fences were a total loss. Sadly, beloved horses, along with injured bulls, cows and calves had to be put down. The historic Leach barn one mile north of Stapleton was also destroyed but the house was saved. Sand began to blow across the bare hills north of Highway 92 the next day, & only charred shelterbelts were left to protect them.

A 42 mph wind added to the fire hazard on March 3 & snow finally fell on March 8, with a wet 6.2" containing 0.85" moisture. The month ended with 1.30" in 8.8" of snow & added rain. The wind chill dipped to -6 degrees with a 30 mph wind on the 26th as a reminder that Nebraska weather remains unpredictable.

April didn't come in as a lamb but it did bring 0.07" of rain the first two days. It was windy from April 15 to the end of the month, topping out at 43 mph on the 15th. Four lightning events added to the fire danger. The end of the month totaled 2.90" moisture with 0.4" snow, 0.43" above average.

May brought small spotty rains, but 1.52" fell on the 21st. On the 17th & 18th the temperature rose to 80 & 90 degrees, respectively, with plants sprouting and crop planting in high gear. However, May was 1.4" below the normal average of 2.33 inches.

As if cued, June began with 1.82" of rain the first three days & rains continued throughout the month ending with 4.54"- above the average of 4.06". Lightning struck too closely nine times, with one strike just a few hundred feet from the NWS observation site. Dozens of storm chasers

assembled in Stapleton, watching the skies on the 17th. With 84 degrees at 11 pm & wind clocked at 43 mph, conditions were ripe for a severe weather event. Hail damaged crops 7.5 miles southwest of Stapleton but thankfully, no tornados developed.

July 1 began with a 38 mph wind at 6:30 am & more rain the next 3 days, totaling 1.40". Quarter size hail was reported 10 miles east of Stapleton. Lightning occurred 10 times & fog 7 times. Smokey haze from Canadian fires caused low visibility & an eerie feeling, along with hazardous air quality, especially on the 23rd. The month ended with 2.80" moisture & only 5 days in the 70's. Nine days were in the 90's & 17 days in the 80's.

Smoky haze, fog & cloudiness were present in August with 13 days in the 80 degree range & 10 days in the 90's (99 degrees on the 5th). August 9-12 temperatures were only in the 60's. A clear day with no smoky haze was cause for celebration on August 30. It rained 9 times for a 1.89" total, but below the 2.60" average. August 31 began a 43 day stretch without rain.

September began with 90 degrees and ended with 90 degrees. It was 80- 89 degrees 20 days & 90- 99 degrees on 9 days. Only .56" of rain fell, which didn't begin until the 18th. A 39 mph wind coupled with 90 degrees produced a hot afternoon on the 12th. Smokey haze reoccurred on the 5th.

October continued unseasonably warm with 91 degrees on the 3rd and 5

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Cell Phone Ban In Schools

Governor Jim Pillen testified before the Nebraska State Legislature's Education Committee on February 4 in support of LB 140, which proposes banning the use of cell phones by school students. Sen. Rita Sanders introduced the bill.

"There are two reasons for this bill," Pillen said. "First, it addresses what has become one of the most frequent and difficult to manage distractions in the classroom - students' cell phones. The second reason for this legislation is the serious impact that constant cell phone use has on our kids."

LB 140 requires school boards of each public school district to adopt a policy establishing rules and standards for cell usage. The bill also spells out certain exceptions

such as when the cell phone is authorized by a teacher for educational purposes, in the case of an emergency, and for monitoring and management of a student's health care.

During his testimony, Pillen referenced findings from Jonathan Haidt's book, "The Anxious Generation How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness."

Haiti noted that young people receive 194 alerts from top social apps each day, equating to 11 notifications per waking hour, or one notification every five minutes.

Sanders said that for students to have the best chance of success in school, creating an educational environment free from digital distraction is

key.

"I am committed to supporting policies that prioritize the well-being and academic growth of every student," she said. "By removing electronic communication devices from the classroom, we can create that environment, allowing both teachers and students to fully succeed."

Pillen added, "Our teachers need to be focused on helping their students learn, not policing cell phone use. LB 140 provides a common-sense approach to this issue, so that all our schools are on a level playing field."

Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers and Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Brian Maher also testified in support of the bill.

We Did It!

The Village of Stapleton Board of Trustees heard a report from Lacy Kinderknecht, representing the Stapleton Splash Pad Committee, at their regular meeting Wednesday, February 12. Kinderknecht reported an updated quote reduced the amount of the project. The Village Board approved the quote for Phase 2. Only \$811.00 is needed to make sure there is enough money to cover all costs associated with the splash pad. The board thanked the committee consisting of Veronica Neal, Lisa Kinderknecht, Bethany Deardoff, Matthew Powell, Morgan Hecox, Julia Ramirez, Jill Schaeffer, and Lacy Kinderknecht for all of their hard work in making the Splash Pad for Stapleton a reality.



Total Raised
as of February 7, 2025

\$159,020.96

New donors include:

Mike & Michele Needs: \$150.00
Kaman & Klara Dailey: \$300.00
Johnston Well Drilling: \$500.00
Live Fit Gym: \$100.00
Rex & Jeana Hanna: \$100.00
Aaron & Sandy Hagel: \$100.00
Kimber's: \$500.00
TeeJay & Chelsey Myers: \$100.00
Logan County Ag Society: \$100.00
Blaine & Linda Smith: \$100.00
Craig & Toninette Clark: \$100.00
Kendall Allison: \$100.00
Metal Donation: \$629.75
Bob & Bethany Deardoff: \$200.00
David Barnum: \$100.00
Anonymous Donor: \$5,000.00

To donate to the

SPLASH PAD PROJECT

please make your check out to the Village of Stapleton and write splash pad on the memo line.

Drop your check off at the Village Hall in the Stapleton Community Center or mail it to:

Village of Stapleton, P.O. Box 133
Stapleton, NE 69163

Proposed marker in Gandy

The Village of Gandy has approved the installation of a marker being donated by Larry and Carol Hardesty of Kearney. Hardesty said the marker will be an 18 x 18 cast aluminum sign to be placed in Gandy near the site where Parker the Outlaw was arrested.

The marker will read:

"Near this site on August 15, 1887, Logan County Sheriff Jesse Doan captured Charlie Parker, the outlaw. Parker had robbed a U.S. Army Paymaster in Wyoming of an Army Payroll of over \$7,000 on March 18, 1887. A few weeks later, Parker showed up at the Haskell ranch about 50 miles west of here, where he proceeded to build a store nearby. After being robbed by three fake government agents, Parker chased them east. Failing to catch them, he stopped in Gandy on his way back to his store. Sheriff Doan confronted him in a Gandy stable and after a struggle subdued Parker. He would serve four and a half years in the Wyoming Territorial Prison for this crime. After his release, officials took him to Texas where he served 10 years for an unrelated crime, for which the Texas governor later pardoned him."

Weather

DATE	HI	LO	MT
8	44	13	0
9	30	8	0
10	43	17	0
11	27	0	.01
12	4	0	.26
13	14	-12	.02
14	21	-8	0

Observations

Wind: 29 mph at 1:52 a.m. on February 8; 25 mph @ 5:23 p.m. on February 10; 20 mph at 9:16 p.m. on February 13; and 22 mph @ 4:00 a.m. on February 14.

Wind Chill: -3 degrees at 6:00 a.m. on February 8; -9 at 10:20 p.m. on February 10; -12 @ 12:55 a.m. on February 11; -11 at 6:00 a.m. on February 12; -25 @ 7:17 a.m. on February 13; and 1 degree @ 4:00 a.m. on Feb. 14.

McPherson Co. News



- *Over The Hills*
- *Graphic Files*
- *High Quality Hay After Calving*
- *Blood Mobile April 4, 2025*

Public Notices

- Logan County Tax Sale Notice
- Logan County Ag Society Bid Notice
- * School District R-1 Board Proceedings

Save The Date!

Stapleton Public Schools will hold their speech night and dessert and pie fundraiser on Monday, March 3. Serving will begin at 6:00 p.m. and it is a free will donation. Bingo for Books will be conducted that day from 5-6 p.m.

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