

# EXTRA EDITION

## The FRIONA STAR

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TWELVE PAGES

### FRIONA TORNADO '95 PICTORIAL COVERAGE

*Photos by Lisa McLellan, Bill Ellis, Carol Ellis, Stan Ellis, Ron Carr,  
Don Spring, Betty Lewellen, Darla Bracken*



**Hi-Pro Feeds, on the eastern edge of Friona, was in the direct path of the tornado.**



**This is all that remained of the Ed Bailey mobile home at the southern edge of the town.**

**SEE DETAILED MAP OF FRIONA'S  
TORNADO DAMAGE ON PAGE 12.**

## Sad Scenes Around The Cemetery



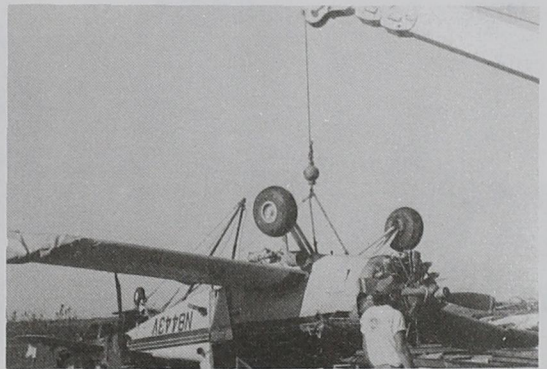
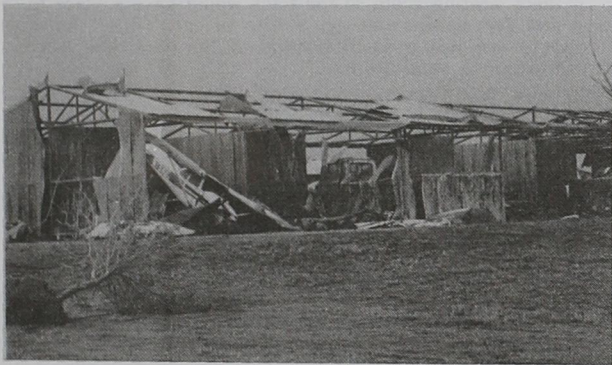
The Cemetery northeast of Friona was in the direct path of the tornado. Headstones were tossed around like dominoes and were coated with a thick crust of mud. In addition, a boxcar used for storage at the cemetery was blown through the cemetery causing more damage. The gazebo at lower left was completed almost exactly one year ago and contained a directory of

gravesites. The Cemetery Association will be needing donations to help restore the cemetery. Photo at right center shows remains of the boxcar lying on top of some graves in the northeast corner of the cemetery. Lower right photo shows city employees working with a crane and magnet to load the boxcar onto a trailer.

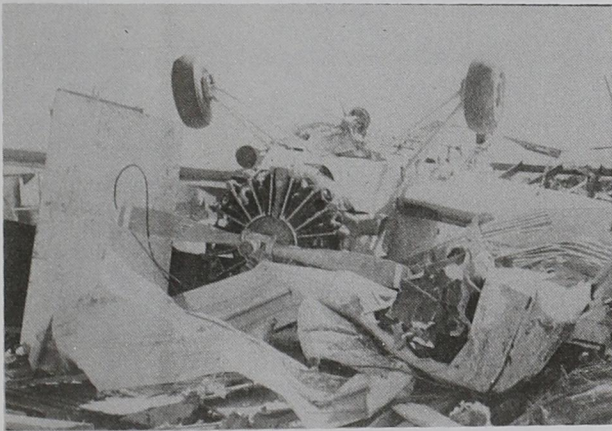


Nearly all the large old trees and evergreens at the cemetery were severely damaged and will have to be pulled up and new ones planted.

## BENGER AIR PARK AND SPRAYING WAS HIT HARD BY THE TORNADO



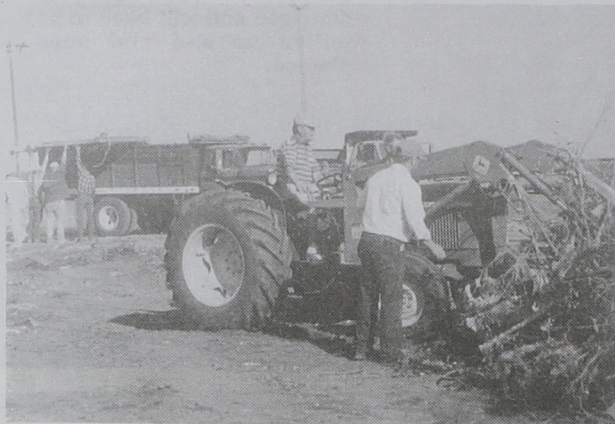
UPSIDE DOWN AIRCRAFT---A damaged plane at Benger Air Park is being hoisted by a large crane as part of the clean-up operation at the airport.



More clean-up work continues at the airport.



# People Came To Help



**EQUIPMENT MOVERS**--Several individuals and businesses brought out their large equipment to help move downed trees and large debris. Shown here at work are J. B. Douglas of Muleshoe and Delton Lewellen helping out folks on the southern edge of town.



**CREW CHOW TIME**--Clean-up volunteers spent two hard days Saturday and Sunday picking up and moving debris from various areas around town. Sunday evening a meal was provided by some of the townspeople and the Congregational Church opened their meeting room so the folks would have a place to rest for awhile and get a bite to eat. Those shown here are just a small portion of the ones who were working around town.



**PRETTY HARD HIT**--Monique (Osborn) Green and her mom, Dottie Osborn, were appreciative of the folks who came out to help clean up the devastation in the south side of Friona. Matthew Nocas (center) was a young man riding his bicycle across country and stopped to help out. Next are Patsy and Mathew Bailey of Lubbock and Amarillo, daughter and son of Ed and Delores Bailey. Ed was critically injured in the tornado. Driving the front-end loader is Gene Schueler of Rhea.

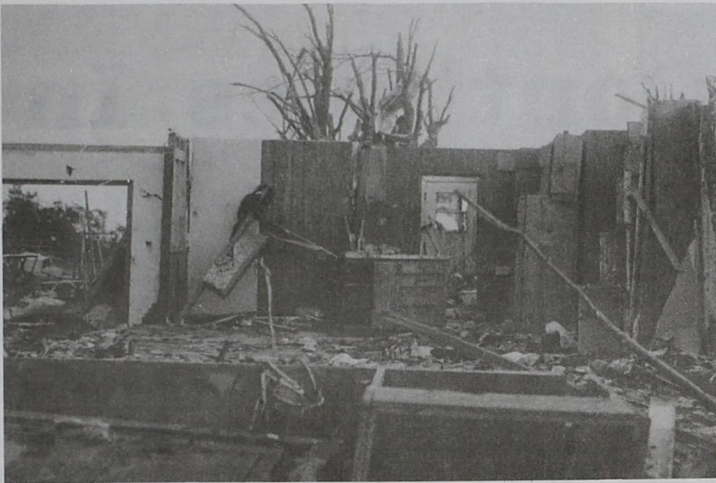


**KIDS AT WORK**--Even the youngsters got into the act of lending a helping hand last Saturday and Sunday. Shown picking up scattered cinderblocks are (left to right) Amy Murphree, Stacy Murphree, Michael McLellan and Brenda Murphree.

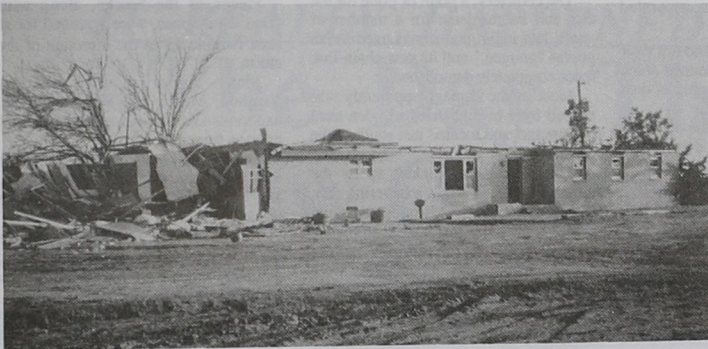
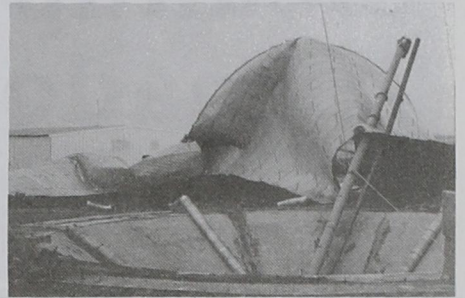


**BOVINIANS TAKE PART**.....Several members of the Bovina EMS and Fire Department were in Friona last weekend, helping with rescue and cleanup work following the devastating tornado that struck the city. Bovina's fire truck is shown as it was utilized in blocking traffic on U.S. 60 due to there being a live electric wire down in the street.

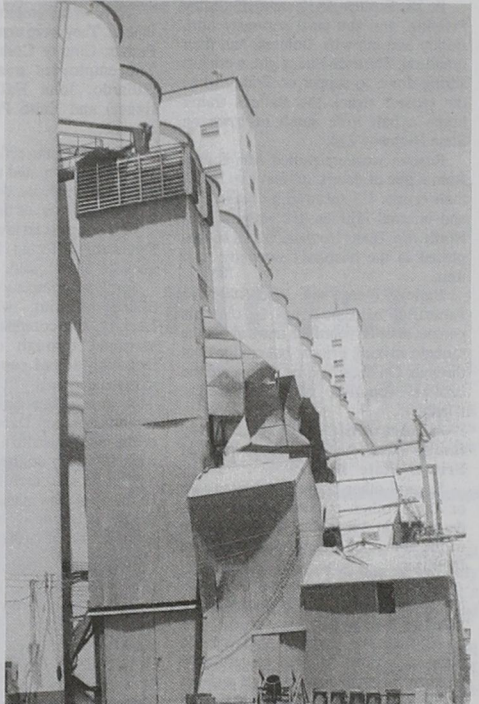
# Elevator Acts As Tornado Deflector



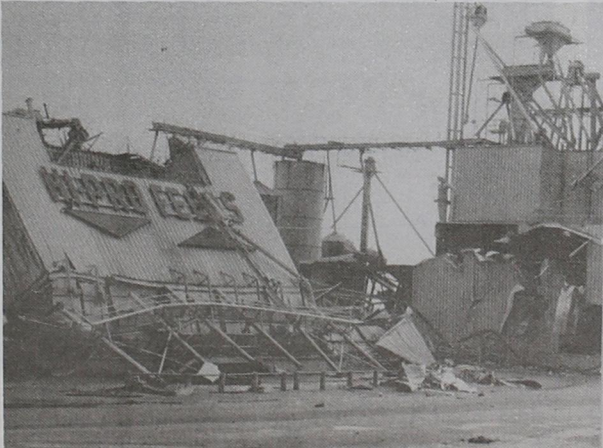
**TIM HERRING'S HOME NORTH EAST OF FRIONA SUSTAINED A DIRECT HIT**



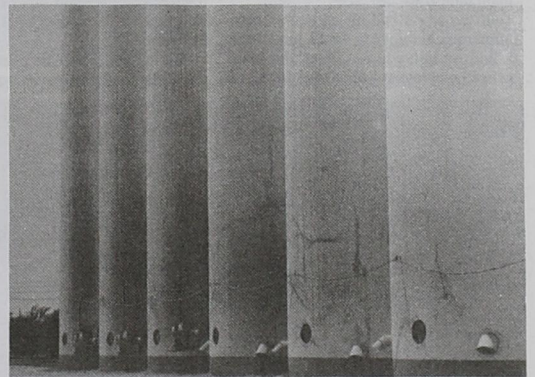
**HOME OF BOB & LYDIA WYLY, ONE MILE NORTH OF CEMETERY, WAS DEMOLISHED**



**HI-PRO BEFORE TORNADO**



**HI-PRO AFTER TORNADO**



**WHEAT GROWERS--**Top photo shows one of the grain storage bins at Friona Wheat Growers which was toppled over onto a car parked on Pierce Street. Center, one of the corn dryers was damaged. Bottom photo shows mud caked onto the south side of the elevator which acted as a deflector when the tornado bounced off, traveled south for a short way and then turned back north again, saving the center of town from devastating death and destruction. Terry Sharrock was in the vicinity and was an eye witness to the event. The Wheat Growers elevator was thought to have diverted an earlier funnel cloud from hitting the city several years ago.

**FRIONA HIT WITH F4**

# Cleanup Continues In Tornado's Aftermath

It only took a few minutes, but in that short time, a number of Friona residents' lives were affected.

And hundreds of others will remember 6:45 p.m. on Friday, June 2, 1995 as long as they live.

A tornado with estimated F-4 force struck the Friona area, devastating businesses and residences as well.

E. M. Bailey, 68, owner of Bailey Printing, was the most seriously hurt. Bailey and his wife Dolores, and their grandson, Terrence Fite, eight, were just sitting down to supper on Friday when the twister struck the Baileys trailer home a half mile south of town on State Highway 214.

Rescue workers pulled Mr. Bailey from a pile of debris, all that was left of their home. He suffered a crushed leg and internal injuries. He was taken to Northwest Texas Hospital where he was placed in the hospital's intensive care unit.

Bailey's oldest son, Matt Bailey of Amarillo, said he tried to call his parents after he heard the news about the tornado striking Friona, but couldn't get through. On Saturday, he uncovered the broken remains of his parents' telephone.

**A love fund for the Bailey family has been established at Friona State Bank.**

Several other homes, including two or three other mobile homes, were destroyed in this immediate area. Some of the homes belonged to the Mendoza families.

Several horses belonging to Paul J. Smith and Hollis Harris were lost or killed by the storm.

After playing havoc with Southside Gas, and Friona Wheat Growers' new fertilizer plant, the storm made a direct hit on Hi-Pro Feeds, one of the city's main industries.

If the storm had hit an hour earlier, numerous employees could have been killed or injured. As all of the main office's employees had left for the day, a

15-man crew at Hi-Pro's mill were the ones threatened. Hi-Pro has a storm cellar in the vicinity of the Mill, and the employees made use of it.

"We have an emergency procedure in case of a storm, and thank goodness the employees followed it," said Bill Stovell, manager of Hi-Pro's Animal Health division.

Three of the employees were slightly injured. They were treated and released at Parmer County Community Hospital. The employees treated were Omar Gillardo, John Hallums (a broken finger) and Keith Paris, a separated shoulder.

The men in the cellar had to dig their way to freedom, and experienced some breathing problems, due to a fog of dust after the collapse of the mill.

"If there was an area on the premises that wasn't affected, I just don't know about it, Stovell said.

Even the company's fairly new brick office building was demolished. Luckily, the company's records were salvaged through computer disks, including a hard copy of payable and receivable records.

A new office building completed recently for Ron Davenport, at the site of the old Monsanto Chemical location, was completely destroyed.

The tornado then hopped over U.S. Highway 60 and made Benger Air Park, the privately owned airport and spraying service, its next target.

Elvie and Virginia Jennings had closed up at 6 p.m. Friday and drove home. Less than an hour later they returned to find everything in a heap. Seven airplanes were destroyed, and all eight buildings on the company property were demolished.

In addition, about 200 antique tractors and cars and other collectibles were crushed under their steel warehouse that was collapsed.

"In my office, it tore everything off the walls. But I had the records in a box

and it wasn't touched," Virginia Jennings said.

Elvie Jennings, who had been a pilot instructor during World War II prior to starting the local airport and spraying business in 1946, said "I imagine we'll stay with it. We'll rebuild.

Jennings estimated that the airplanes alone were worth around \$200,000.

Making more of a "left turn," the storm next inflicted possibly the cruelist damage of all--when it all but destroyed the Friona Cemetery, located about a mile north of the airport.

The cemetery, a point of pride for the city and its residents for a number of years, had individual stones overturned, graves "gouged," and its new chain-link fence completely demolished.

Most of the damage apparently was caused by a boxcar that had been used for storage, and located just south of the cemetery.

The boxcar was picked up by the tornado and it served as a battering ram, knocking down headstones, twisting some, destroying decorative elements. The neat brick decorations at the southwest corner of the cemetery were severely damaged, and the recently-completed gazebo was ruined.

Even the curbing on some of the plots was damaged. The flagpole was bent, with the top part stuck in the ground. A large piece of metal was sticking in the ground outside of the cemetery to the south.

Virtually all of the stones were coated with a cement-like mud, apparently sucked up by the funnel. Some of the fence posts left standing had layers of mud on the side facing the storm, two or three inches thick.

The old trees in the cemetery were stripped bare.

Prior to hitting the area in which the Bailey trailer house was located, the storm had caused heavy roof damage at Excel, which had some 500 workers at the site Saturday and Sunday in an effort to repair the damage.

Next, the tornado sideswiped a 34-car Santa Fe freight train, knocking every car off the track, to the south side of the track, but the engine was left on the track.

Bob Hurst said he was watching the cloud just before the train was wrecked. "All of a sudden it sounded like the train changed gears. There were large balls of fire everywhere, possibly from the funnel hitting the power lines."

Mike Lamb's wrecking yard, located on the Highway 214 access road, was destroyed, as was a corn dryer.

Mendoza Muffler was severely damaged.

A cinderblock building located at U.S. 60 and Virginia, which was being used as a garage, virtually exploded.

Pieces of the blocks, along with some whole ones, were scattered for at least two blocks in the direction of the storm.

Many homes in the area, on Virginia, Maple and Walnut streets, experienced roof and other structural damage from the blocks.

One of the blocks went through the roof of a home owned by Wes Drake, and went all the way through to the living room floor.

As was the case virtually every-where the storm visited, trees were stripped, and large limbs were left dangling by a thread of a limb.

The country homes of the Bob Wyly and Tim Herring families were completely destroyed. These two homes are in a direct line northeast of Hi-Pro, Benger Air Park and Friona Cemetery.

**EXCEL CORP.**

By working 24 hours a day over the weekend, Excel was able to be up and running by Monday morning.

According to Carol Aistrup, plant controller, Excel had been planning some new construction and had cranes and building materials on site, which they were able to use for repairs.

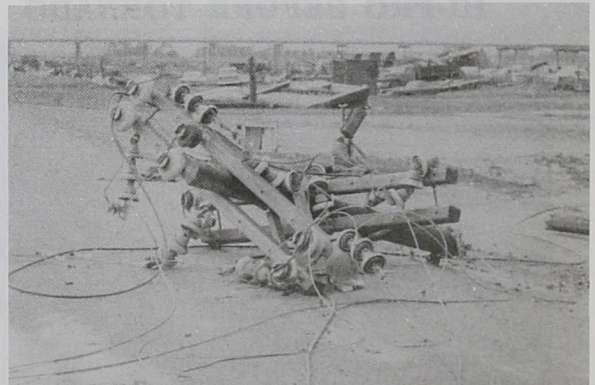
The trim and grind department, which prepares and ships hamburger meat, was the most seriously damaged, resulting in some product spoilage.

The original warehouse had a new section added. During the tornado, the new section was blown over the original warehouse and landed on the yard office.

For now, most employees are back at work, and, as Carol Aistrup says, Excel is once again up and running.



**MONSTER FROM OUTERSPACE?--**The burr hopper on the old Co-op Gin property was being used for storage by Friona Wheat Growers Fertilizer plant. The tornado left it in a hazardous condition and plans are being made to tear it down.



**DOWNED POWER LINES--**Everywhere a person looked Friday night, there were power poles broken and lying on the ground, providing a danger from live wires. This one was south of town on on Highway 2397.



**UPROOTED--**Several 50-year old trees on the old Phipps place located on Cemetery Road were completely uprooted and laid on their sides. Kevin and Gerri Roberts are renting the house and had only been in Friona for less than a week when the tornado hit the property.



**SPLIT TREE--**The tornado left a tree completely split in half at Jerry London's house on Jackson Street.

***IT REALLY HAPPENED!***

# The Day The Cows Flew Over So. Friona

By **BILL ELLIS**

By the time we caught up with Terry Sharrock on Thursday, the events of last Friday seemed more like an adventure out of "Jurassic Park" than a normal day's work.

But the adventure will be forever etched in his mind.

Sharrock was one of the "closer" witnesses of the funnel cloud that devastated the Baileys' trailer house, the Mendozas and White residences, etc.

--As a matter of fact, the Sharrocks became a part of the storm themselves.

Terry, who has been employed by Friona Wheat Growers about six years, saw the funnel "set down" near the Highway 214 overpass. It proceeded northeast, and as he was at the company's new fertilizer plant, thought it might go on north of him.

But the twister struck the large elevator bins, and made a 45-degree turn and came back in a southerly direction.

The Sharrocks jumped in their van, and tried to get away, but the twister's force prevented them from escaping.

"It ripped the windows out of the van, and we were trying to cover up our baby daughter, Megan. Then, I looked out of the corner of my eye and saw a couple of cows flying through the air," Sharrock said.

**YOU DID WHAT???**

Yes, I heard him right the first time.

"They looked to be full-grown, mother type cows. They were sailing through the air, on their sides, about 10 or 12 feet off the ground," he added.

Later on, Sharrock said he noticed five or six other cattle running east, between the liquid storage tanks at the fertilizer plant, trying to get away from the storm.



**RODE OUT STORM....**The young Terry Sharrock family had a harrowing experience during last Friday's tornado. They literally "rode out" the tornado in their '92 Chevy Astro-van, which was totally destroyed. Sharrock is shown with wife Casey and young daughter Magen.

Sharrock said he noticed that the anhydrous ammonia was escaping from a tank, and a propane tank also was leaking (at the fertilizer plant). "Several of the small nurse tanks had cracked valves, and they were leaking, and I'm trying to get out of there without running right into the tornado," he said.

Energas' line in the area was also broken, Sharrock believed, and there was a lot of hissing and spewing.

"The wind velocity was amazing. I don't know how it kept from turning over the van. A bob-tailed grain truck and a heavy grass spreader at the plant were both overturned. I think you could say that we're a group of walking miracles," Sharrock said.

About the time he thought their ordeal was over, the storm

participant said he saw a second, smaller funnel, come down out in the field. Luckily, this one did not develop like the first one, and did not stay down long.

For his part, Sharrock had a needle stuck in his leg when the storm was over. He was hit in the head by an airborne board, and had some cuts around his face. Sharrock's wife Casey had a piece of glass in her leg, and the 13-month-old daughter just had a small nick on one of her cheeks.

The parents were treated and released at Parmer County Community Hospital.

The family's 1992 Chevy Astro van was totally destroyed, sustaining several smashed-in spots besides losing all its windows.

"I wish I knew how long it (the tornado) lasted. It may have

been only a minute or two, but it seemed like an eternity," Sharrock said. "It's amazing that we walked away. It makes you appreciate being alive," the Friona resident concluded.

**POOL ROOF GOES AGAIN!**

In 1970 the Friona Municipal Swimming Pool was one of the only indoor pools in this area. On June 11 a tornado hit the west side of town and took the top off the indoor pool.

The city decided to repair the wall and leave the top off, since lots of young folks enjoy getting a tan when they go swimming anyway.

June 2, 1995, the swimming pool roof was hit again by a tornado. This time it was just the roof over the snack bar and dressing room facility which was hit, since there is no longer a roof over the pool, itself.

**THE OSBORN FAMILY**

Forrest Osborn had been in Veteran's Hospital in Amarillo for several days with a heart problem. His daughter Monique Green, who is a school teacher at Angleton, south of Houston, came up to Friona as soon as school was out, to be with her folks for a few days.

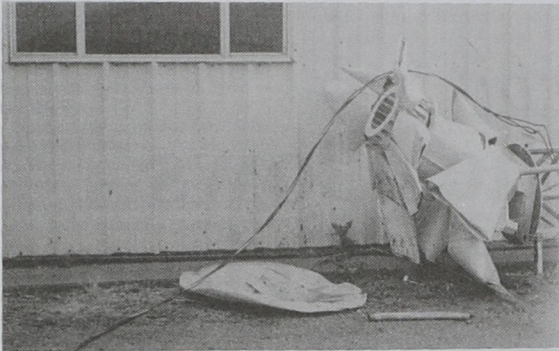
Dottie Osborn and Monique had been to Amarillo on Friday to visit Forrest in the hospital and were coming home while watching the dark clouds which loomed on the horizon.

While fighting to keep the car on the road in the heavy winds, Dottie hit some debris in the road and didn't realize the car was damaged, so they kept on until they reached Friona shortly after the tornado had gone through town.

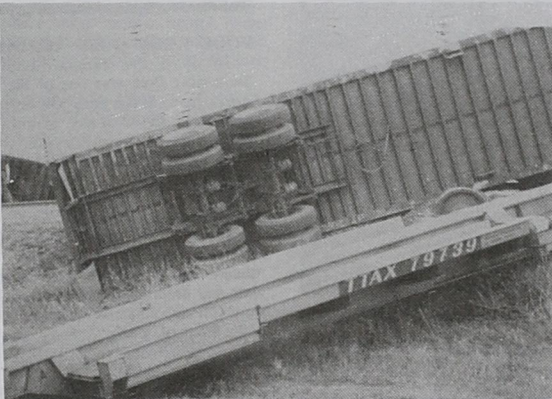
The Osborn's home is just about the last house on the south side of town on the west side of Main Street. The home sustained roof, tree, and window damage. Dottie said just about every mobile home in that area of town ended up in her back yard, but a large crowd of volunteers gathered the next day and had most of it cleaned up in short order. She indicated that they were so grateful for all the help people had given.



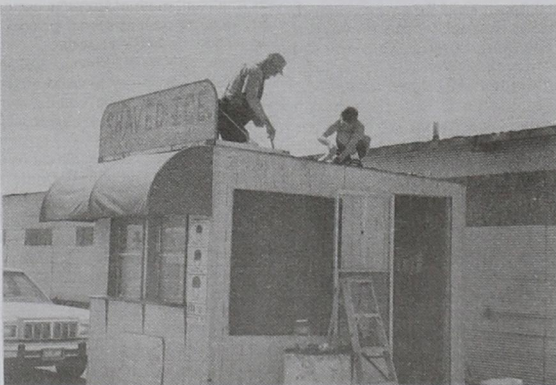
**ROOF DAMAGES HOME--**The roof of the ambulance bay at the Fire Station blew over onto the home of the Mark Rodriguez family on Washington Street.



**EMERGENCY SIREN DOWNED--**The emergency siren at the Fire Department had just started sounding the tornado warning signal for about 30 seconds before the storm blew it over.



**TRAIN DERAILMENT--**The Santa Fe railway experienced a 36-car derailment during the tornado.



**SMALLEST BUSINESS--**Lisa and Katy Weathery's little shaved ice stand on the highway also sustained some storm damage. The girls' granddad, Kenneth Neill, and nephew Corbin Neill, fixed it up for them as good as new.

## Friday--Popular Day For Local Tornadoes

When last week's tornado hit on a Friday evening, the employees of the Friona Star began to recall previous funnel clouds, also coming on Friday.

For example:

On Friday, May 29, 1992, a twister beat up a corn dryer belonging to Jim Roy Wells just east of Friona. Caprock Feeders west of Bovina sustained damage to their office roof.

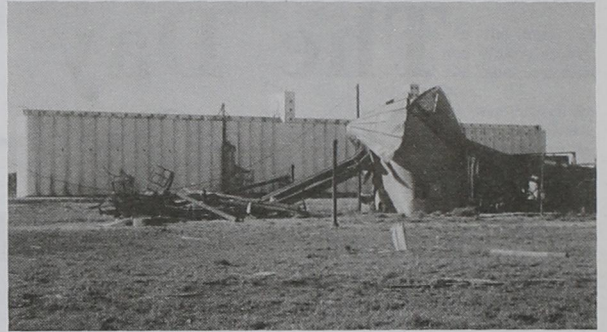
On Friday, May 10, 1991, the Roger Johnson family's home (belonged to Marvin Mimms) was destroyed just north of Lazbuddie. The Johnsons survived by being in their basement.

On Friday, June 11, 1971, a tornado struck the western side of Friona. The roof of the city swimming pool and at Friona Motors were the main damage.

On Friday, April 17, 1970, a bad tornado hit the Lazbuddie community, killing Mrs. Alton Morris.

(And now we can add: Friday, June 2, a devastating tornado hit Friona, doing millions of dollars in damage, but critically injuring only one.)

The last "local" tornado we find that wasn't on a Friday was on May 5, 1976, when a funnel did damage in the Euler-Woods area. This funnel was photographed by then high school senior Hal Blackburn.



**CORN DRYER DESTROYED...--**The corn dryer belonging to Monty and Edward Allen on FM 2397 (Highway 214 access) was ruined by Friona's tornado of June 2. This is the dryer that originally belonged to Deon Awtrely.

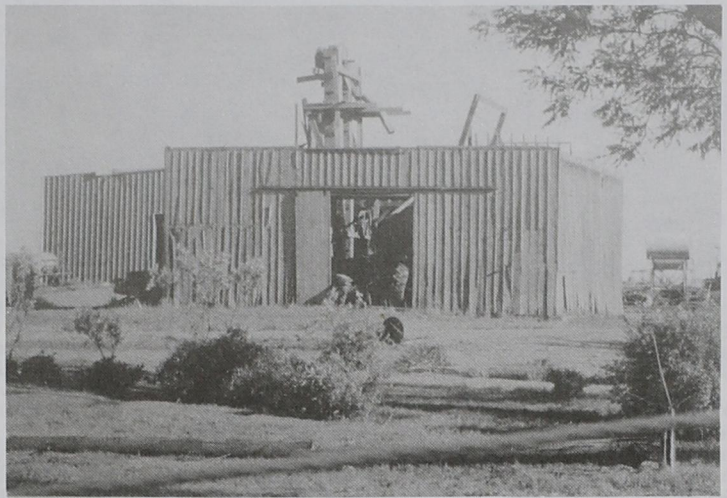


**TRUCK TAKES A TUMBLE--**Milton Frazier was pretty befuddled when his 18-wheeler blew over with him in it on Friday night. He was parked between the Excel plant which was in the process of losing its roof and the railroad track which was in the process of a train derailment.



# Three Historic Old Barns

**GOODWINE BARN**--One of Friona's landmarks for nearly 90 years has been the sight of the old Goodwine barn down at the south end of Main Street. The Goodwine home and barn were among the first buildings to be built when Friona was first being settled. Last Friday's tornado took the top off the old barn, exposing the grain mill inside. The structure will have to be leveled at sometime in the future. The old two story home also sustained some damage. Father and son, John Fred White and Noel White, now own the property. They are nephew and great-nephew of the Goodwines.

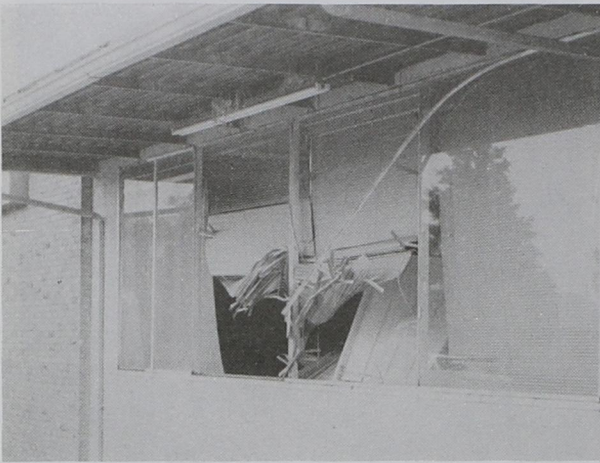


**EULER BARN**--The old red barn, about a mile southeast of town, is located on the Euler farm and is probably the oldest structure in Parmer County. It was built around 1900 and served for several years as the school house at Summerfield before it was moved to the Euler place by steam engine in 1920. The Elmer Euler family lived in the building for about seven years and then built a regular farm home. Frances Euler says they'll probably fix the roof.



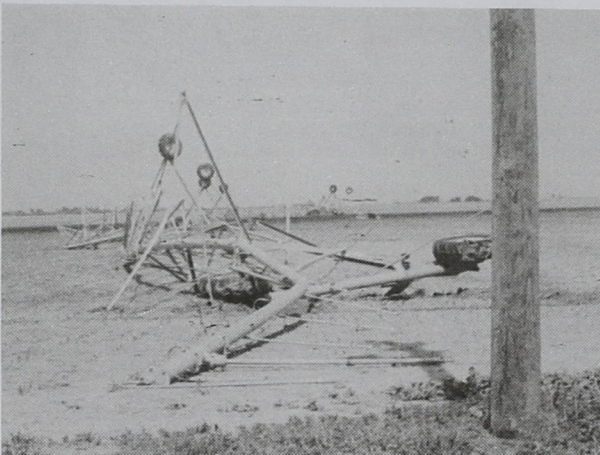
**HARDESTY BARN**--The interesting top of the old Hardesty barn was also destroyed in last Friday's tornado. The Hardesty farm is located northeast of Friona on Cemetery Road. The barn was built in the 1920s and is still owned by the Hardesty girls.



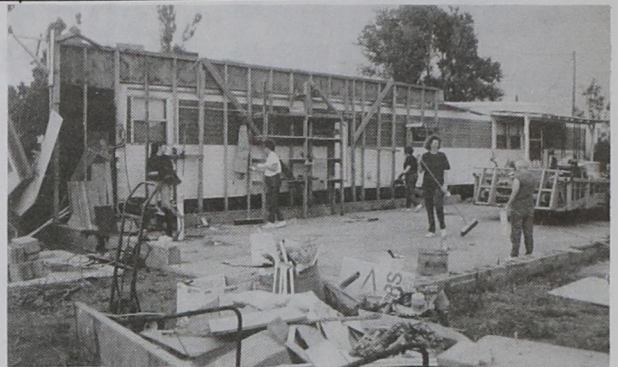


### MAIN STREET DAMAGE

For the most part, Friona's Main Street was fortunate in that it escaped major damage, probably thanks to the fact that the powerful funnel was deflected by the Friona Wheat Growers elevator: good for Main Street but turning the fury toward South Main. Bi-Wize Drug (shown) sustained three broken windows and a knocked over display case.



**SPRINKLERS WERE TARGETS.....**Sprinkler systems were common prey to the June 2 tornado, and an estimate turned in to the Friona Star this week indicated that as many as 40 systems may have been hurt or destroyed by the storm. This one belonged to Rex Wells on the Cemetery Road.



**LENDING A HAND....**Many volunteers gathered at the site of Ed Bailey's mobile home at the south end of Main Street, to clear away the debris and help salvage the couple's personal belongings. Bailey was critically injured when the tornado hit.

## Red Cross Helps Homeless To Cope

The American Red Cross has been one of the organizations in the forefront of assisting the families who lost their homes during Friona's tornado of June 2.

Betty Henson, chapter manager for the Deaf Smith County chapter of the American Red Cross, said on Friday that she believed that as of that date everyone who had lost their homes had places to stay except for possibly one family.

Ms. Henson said it was the Red Cross' function to see that everyone has clothes to wear that day; food to eat that day, and a place over your head that night. The organization works with churches and civic groups to make sure that all of those having needs are taken care of.

"I feel it is truly amazing, the progress Friona has made in getting cleaned up after the storm, and trying to get back to normal. It is almost unbelievable. This has been an eye-opening experience to many people as to how small-town people work together to help their neighbors who have experienced losses," she said.

The Red Cross had designated 11 homes as totally destroyed,

nine of which were mobile homes and two permanent (the Bob Wyly and Tim Herring) homes.

Among those who lost trailer homes were the Mendoza families, including Eddie Mendoza, David Romero family, the E. M. Bailey family, the Garners, and six families who lived in the old Friona Bi-Products area.

"Sometimes it was difficult to recognize a trailer, since the destruction was so severe. Then, too, we discovered that there were three buildings at the bi-products area, but one of them housed three families," Henson said, responding to how the reported number of homes destroyed, or number of homeless families had bounced back and forth.

"Everyone in Friona has been so nice in helping the homeless find places to live. It has brought out the best in people," the spokesperson said.

In the near future, it is planned to merge the Parmer County and Castro County chapters of the Red Cross with Deaf Smith County's chapter, and create one chapter known as the "Tri-County Chapter," Henson said.



**DESTRUCTION....**Samples of the tremendous destruction that was heaped on the area south of the Santa Fe tracks by the June 2 tornado can

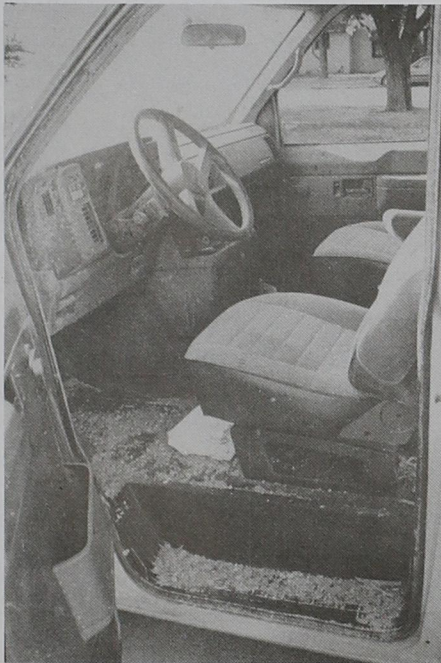
be seen in these photographs taken June 3 in the Friona Bi-Products area.



**MECHANIC SHOP**--The Stanberry Mechanic Shop at the corner of Highway 60 and Virginia Street was completely demolished, with concrete blocks from the building scattered all over the Drake Addition.



**ROOF DAMAGE**--The roof of the Stanberry garage ended up in the front yard and street in front of the Ureste home on Walnut Street. The metal roof did quite a bit of damage to the Ureste's house and yard.

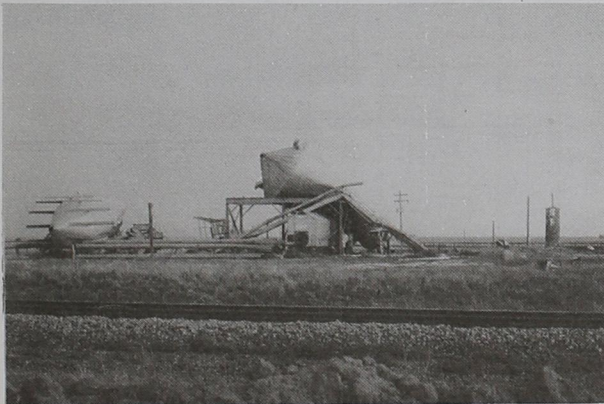


**TORNADO SHELTER?**--The Terry Sharrock family waited out the tornado in this Chevy van near Wheat Growers Fertilizer Plant. Every glass in the van was blown out. (See story on page nine of Friona Star's June 10 edition.)

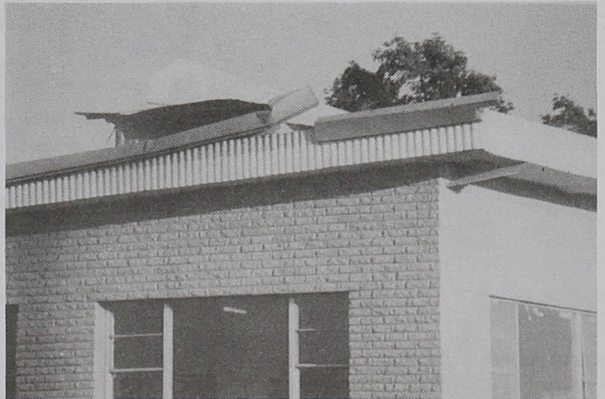


**HOLE IN CEILING**--Jerry Shields points to a hole in the ceiling and roof of his house where a concrete block came through during the tornado, landing in the baby's stroller. Jerry, wife Heather and baby J.W. were all in the basement. The block was thrown from the Stanberry building on the highway.

## TORNADO STRIKES TWICE



**TOPPLED GRAIN DRYER**--For the second time, the grain dryers located on Harold Wells place on East Highway 60 have been destroyed by a tornado. The last time was in March 1992.



**SWIMMING POOL ROOF**--The roof at the city's swimming pool snack bar was torn up once again. The last time was in 1970 when the indoor pool became an outdoor pool.



**WRECKAGE**--What appears to be a portion of one of the trailer homes at the southern edge of Friona, ended up wrapped around a tree.



**POLE PEOPLE**--Everywhere one looked last week, there were people up on poles working to restore services to the homes and businesses in Friona.

## 25 Friona Businesses Affected By Tornado

Twenty-five Friona businesses were either partially or totally destroyed by the tornado on Friday, June 2.

A city official said that local businesses suffered over \$25 million in losses due to the storm.

A list compiled by the City of Friona showed the following businesses affected (total losses indicated by \*)

- \*Friona Wheat Growers Fertilizer
- \*Southside Farm Supply
- \*Friona Bi-Products
- \*Mike Lamb Auto Salvage
- Excel
- \*Hi-Pro Feeds
- Mendoza Muffler (50%)
- \*Allen Custom Cutting

- Stanberry Trucking
- \*Marilou Taylor Rentals
- \*Friona Wheat Growers (grain)
- Racer Truck Wash
- Bob's Pump
- Millard Warehouse
- City of Friona (sewer plant)
- City of Friona (all else)
- \*Reeve Farms (corn dryer)

- Winkles Trucking
- Santa Fe
- \*Benger Air Park
- \*Friona Cemetery Assn.
- Wells Bros. Feeds
- Southwestern Public Service
- \*Livestock Advisory (Ron Davenport)
- \*Farwell Grain Exchange

## Where The Tornado Touched Down

