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Traditional Patterns

By Mary Ann Osmus

Isn't it wonderful to be in a place where the weather changes at a drastic pace? There are many places or climates that always stay the same or require a long period of time for change to occur. The saying in Oklahoma is, "If you don't like the weather, hang around and it will change." Although Will Rogers made that statement about Oklahoma in general, it also applies to Western Oklahoma. As in other places, in Western Oklahoma there's usually a series of events which occur to bring about a weather change.

Usually in the event of weather patterns, the wind comes first. It will start gradually and work itself up to wind gusts that seem to blow us away. When the wind begins blowing in Western Oklahoma, all of us may as well be prepared for

the wind to last a while. When I first moved here, I found the weather to be a little different from the weather in Mississippi, my home state.

The weather doesn't just happen there as it does here. I used to wonder why Western Oklahoma trees look so strange; I soon discovered that the strong winds caused the trees to bend and stay bent. Also, there's seldom wind here without accompanying dust.

My first experience with Western Oklahoma dust occurred about three years ago. I was driving home one day from shopping about forty miles away from where I live, and the dust started blowing across the fields into the highway so thick I couldn't see the road. So finally I had to pull off the

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road for about an hour until the dust settled. Such dust storms are one of my big dislikes about Western Oklahoma weather.

The wind and dust in the air usually mean that there's rain somewhere in the forecast. There are two significant factors concerning Western Oklahoma rain--Either there's no rain, thus creating a drouth, or there's a downpour. I have seen the times that the grounds would crack and form small craters because of the lack of moisture. That's usually the time that farmers worry about their crops and gardens. Then again, they worry when there is rain. When the rain starts here, there's rain until we're tired of it; or there could be enough of a sprinkle to settle the dust.

So the weather in Western Oklahoma may be consistently different, but at least it's consistent. There are always many factors that relatively affect the weather. The patterns set by the weather are usually a sign of what's expected to happen next. When a person plans things around here, he should be willing to postpone or cancel because of weather changes. Weathermen predict the best they can, but such predictions often fail. 

Mary Ann Osmus moved from Greenville, Mississippi, to Okeene about ten years ago. She is presently an Elementary Education major at SOSU with later plans of teaching at the Okeene Gospel Academy.

Illustration by Jerry R. Johnson



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