

AMS Meeting – 11/24/09

Special Guest: Gene Burns, Kanarado, KS
1930's Dust Bowl

4:00pm: Gene Burns – 1930's Dust Bowl

Homestead Act of 1862

- 1/4 mi plots of new land in the Great Plains
 - Many families moved to these promising lands to start new lives
 - Build houses
 - Plant crops
 - Encouraged by government to make improvements on the land, then can own after 5 years for \$5
 - Brought Gene Burns' family from Nebraska to Kansas
- Poor farming methods contributed to the Dust Bowl
- Planted "winter wheat," which was planted in the fall. Drought the following spring kept tilled soil dry. Could not recover

Events leading up to the Dust Bowl

1. Great Depression of 1929
 - Ended with WWII
2. Extreme drought during 1930s
 - Fires
 - Dust storms – too dry to rain; just brought wind and dust
3. Grasshopper Plague - 1931
 - Destroyed crops
 - Egg pods are vulnerable to fungus in wet soil – population explodes during drought
4. Rattlesnake Plague -1932
 - Burns' father killed two dozen within two weeks
5. Dust Bowl dust storms – 1930s
 - Dust brought on pneumonia-type illnesses, and caused death by suffocation
 - Many families abandoned farms and properties
 - "Black Sunday Storm" 1935

Other events during the time:

Grapes of Wrath

- Found new work working in vineyards

Jackrabbit roundup

5:00 – Q&A

5:15 – Announcements: Dine Pierz, President

- Bake Sale very successful: \$580 profit
- COD AMS calendars now on sale: \$15 each
- Storm Chase Meeting: Friday, December 4 @ 7:00pm, Room M147
- AMS trip to NWS, Chicago/Romeoville – coming January 2010
 - Mark Ratzer: follow-up on winter wx

-Tour of NWS