

County roads bill introduced to House

By Karen Krien

At the Friday Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting, Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, reported on House Bill 2135 which has been introduced to the Kansas House.

The bill deals with roads and highways and concerns mostly county roads. There have been some amendments to the bill including the change which, if passed, will no longer allow county road crews to clear the personal drives of rural residents.

The bill states that the commissioners or township boards shall not

rent or hire county or township machinery for any private purpose.

There are many residents in the western half of Kansas who live in the country but do not have tractors or other equipment to clear the drive to a county road and there are not people and equipment for hire who can clear the drives.

In the eastern half of the state, the temperatures are warmer and there are contractors and others who have the equipment for hire who will remove snow.

Supervisor Flemming said that the way the bill will read, if passed, it will forbid county crews to re-

move snow from any drive, even if there is a medical alert.

"It (the bill) is kind of going backwards," the supervisor said.

Supervisor Flemming has been contacted to possibly testify against the changes of the bill and maybe get a petition going but, as of Monday, he was waiting for Senator Stan Clark to do more research on the bill.

The bill is not supposed to come up in the House before the middle of March so there is still time but Supervisor Flemming and others in this area think it is important that the changes in this bill do not take place as proposed.

New grocery store opens March 12 in Bird City

Bird City is looking forward to having a grocery store again and the wait is almost over. Hometown Market (formerly Bird City Market) will open Wednesday, March 12.

Several months and many hours have been spent to make Hometown Market a better and more complete store. New coolers, refrigeration system, upgraded electrical and

plumbing changes have been put in place.

New owner Brenda Johnson knows that the differences will take time to get used to but said, "when you come in just plan to spend some extra time to get familiar with where the things are that you need." She and her staff will be there to help.

Although the market looks like

new, many things will remain the same. Hours will still be 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. And Hometown Market will have a great selection of fresh products.

There will be a grand opening event in the future to celebrate the reopening but the date has not been set. Until then, the opening of doors next Wednesday is highly anticipated.

Registration books for general election close on March 17

Terry Miller, election officer, announced that people can register to vote during regular business hours at the offices of the county clerk at the courthouse; the city clerk's office at 113 W. Washington, both in St. Francis; and, in Bird City, at the First National Bank on Bird Avenue. However, the registration books will close at the end of the day on March 17 and remain

closed through the day of the general election on April 2.

When a voter has registered, his or her registration will be valid until the voter changes their name by marriage, divorce or legal proceedings or changed the place where they are living.

Those who will need to register are citizens 18 years of age and upwards or will have attained the age

of 18 at the next election or those who have changed their name or place of residence. The person can register by applying to the election officer in person or by mail. Application forms shall be provided by the election officer upon request.

Those not registering before March 17 may register after the election as the books will once again open on April 2.

Senator to visit Bird City

Senator Stan Clark and Representative John Faber, along with Senator Karin Brownlee, Olathe, will be in Bird City on Saturday from 7 to 8 a.m. at the Senior Citizens Center on Bressler Street.

The information presented will be from many of the issues being considered and discussion will be held on anticipated issues and their impact on everyone.

On March 8, the legislators will travel to Herndon and will be at the Downhome Cafe from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. following their visit at Bird City, then at Oberlin, 10:15 to 11:15 at the Gateway Room; Almena from noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Senior Citizens Center; and at Stockton from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Willows.

Prayer day scheduled

Friday March 7 will be the World Day of Prayer. This year's event is being hosted by St. John's Lutheran Church of Bird City with the service beginning at 2 p.m.

This event is meant to bring Christians together from every denomination for a time of prayer, praise and song. This year's theme is "Holy Spirit Fill Us". St. John's hopes to have many neighbors present.



Dan Busse displays a cache of ancient Indian relics found in Cheyenne County.

State awards given

Eighteen Cheylin students received the Kansas State Award for grade proficiency for last year. Each scholar proved they could master skills in either math, reading or writing.

The fifth graders to seniors, with their parents, were honored with a pizza supper and make your own sundae at the cafeteria as other students watched.

Entertainment was provided by Dan Busse who presented ancient native American artifacts from his private collection along with an informative discussion.

Superintendent Dave Zumbahlen congratulated each student and handed out certificates to Vance Churchwell, Naomi Reeh, Amanda Walden, Justin Miller, Josh Johnson,



CHEYLIN STUDENTS earning the award for grade proficiency were treated with their parents to a pizza supper at the cafeteria.

Times staff photos by Casey McCormick

Terrence Jensen, Samantha Beeson, Aubrey Kehlbeck, Hayley Young, Tyler Knapp, Cristi Antholtz, Jacob Jensen, Matt Wilson, Andrew Smith, Michael Sager, Afton Krien and John Simmonds.

Other honorees were Michael Sager who was a double award winner for both reading and writing and Sydney Busse who missed the luncheon as she was on vacation with her family.

Commissioners talk about prairie dogs

By Karen Krien

The county's noxious weed supervisor discussed prairie dogs when the Cheyenne County Commissioners met on Friday.

Supervisor Dan Schlittenhardt and others had heard rumors that people are bringing prairie dogs into Kansas and dropping them off.

However, other than some prairie dogs moving into places where they have never been before, there is no evidence, no one coming forth, saying they saw the act or even having a vehicle license number.

Supervisor Schlittenhardt said that it was against the law to transport prairie dogs without a license.

The supervisor said that House Bill 2027 dealing with eradication of prairie dogs and giving more authority to local commissioners, had passed through the Kansas House and moved on to the Senate. He said that the amended bill gives more authority to the local boards and had taken out the Wildlife and Parks Department.

At a prior meeting, the commissioners had asked the supervisor what was the best way to control joint grass and he reported that it was Roundup which should be applied before the grass starts greening up.

Signing

Gary Rogers, emergency manager, Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, and J.R. Landenberger, St. Francis city manager, further discussed the equipment and materials for making road

and street signs.

The law states that signs in an area where the speed limit is 20 miles per hour or less need to be no smaller than 4 inches high but, where the speed limit is higher and there are more than 400 people traveling that road, the street sign will need to be 6-inches high.

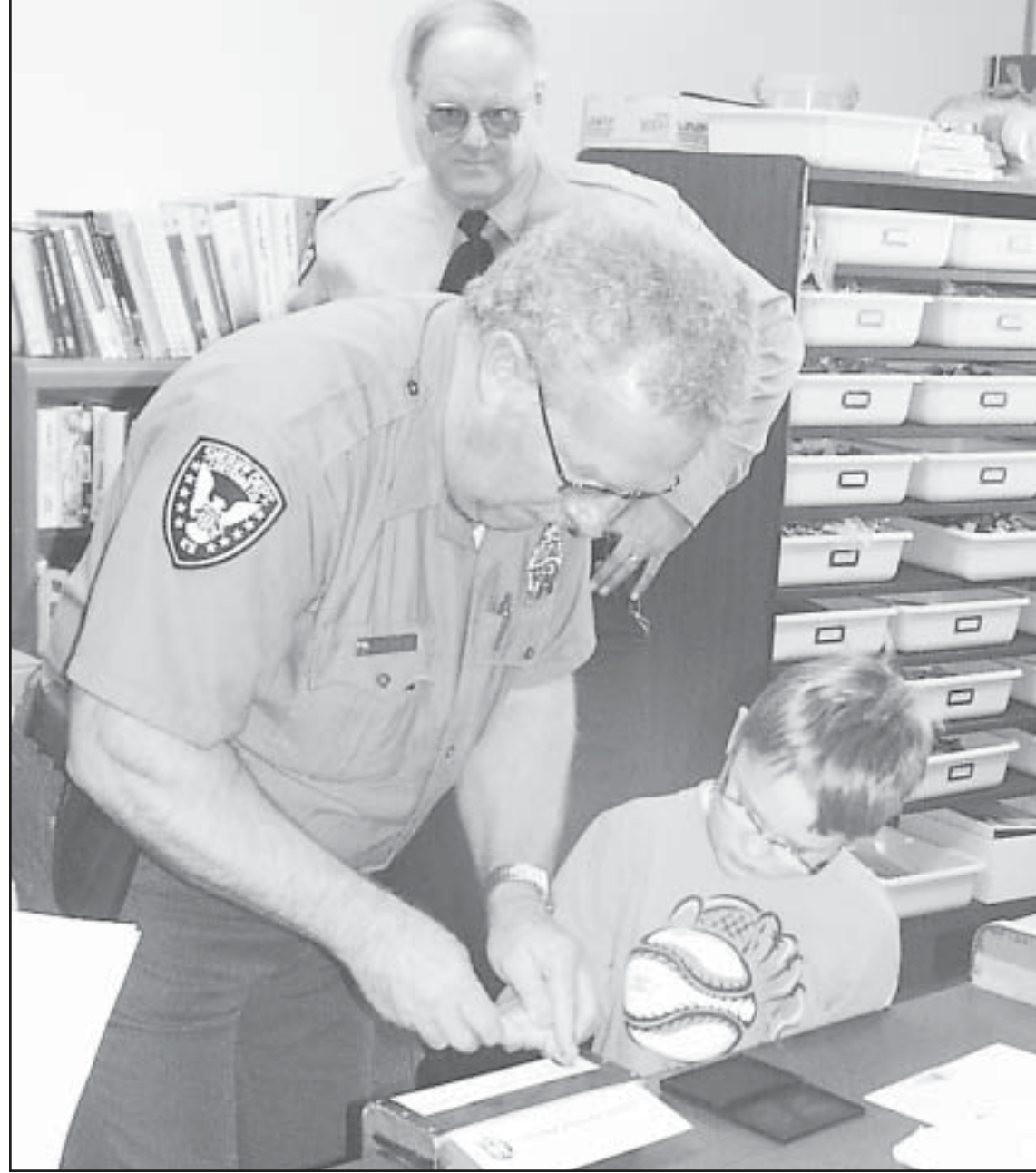
When the county roads were signed, the limit was for the 4-inch high signs and they do not have equipment for the 6-inches signs. Several options were discussed but prices were not definite. Manager Rogers will look into prices and what is needed and report at another meeting.

Overtime

The commissioners discussed overtime charged by Cliff Flock, undersheriff. There had been 15 hours in January and at the last meeting, Tim Raile, commissioner, said he had done a spot check on the overtime claimed and found all claims to be reasonable. However, commissioner Ron Krien was not satisfied with that and felt that both the sheriff and undersheriff need to come to the next meeting.

Commissioner Raile said the sheriff had pointed out that overtime was a way of allowing the undersheriff to earn more money and would better compare with the salaries received by the St. Francis Police Department. Commissioner Raile didn't approve and said maybe the commissioners should take a look at the department's salary

See Dogs on Page 6



FINGERPRINTING the school children of Cheylin was on the agenda last Wednesday. Jacob Brubaker is quite fascinated as Eddie Dankenbring, sheriff, takes his prints.

Times staff photo by Casey McCormick

Cheylin students finger printed

In an effort to keep the children of Bird City and McDonald more safe, the Cheyenne County Sheriff's office provided the opportunity to elementary-age students to be finger printed. As part of the National Child Safety Council, Sheriff Eddie Dankenbring, along with the aide

of Bird City Police Officer Stan Harp and Cheyenne County Undersheriff Cliff Flock, finger printed students from kindergarten to sixth grade.

Although it is a good idea for all students to be identifiable in an emergency Sheriff Dankenbring was only able to process the

younger students. But if parents or guardians wish to have older students finger printed he said, "come to the Sheriff's office and we'll perform this service."

Parents are welcome to either keep a copy for their own records or have them put in the student's school records.

Change of address and phone number

Bird City Times

Rich Ave. - Apt. 10

Phone 785-734-2659 • Fax 785-734-2659

Or Phone 785-332-3162

Severe Weather Week reminds people of coming storms

It is still cold in northwest Kansas but spring and summer are just around the corner and the possibilities of tornadoes and severe weather increases. The first tornado in 2002 occurred on April 11 in Reno County and the last tornado sighted in the year was Dec. 18 in Cherokee County.

In order to be more aware and more prepared for a tornado and severe weather, the National Weather Service and the Kansas Division of Emergency Management have designated next week, March 10 through 14, as Severe Weather Awareness Week in Kansas.

A statewide tornado safety drill will be conducted during the day on Tuesday. A second evening drill is planned in parts of the state on the same date but the evening date is not planned in Cheyenne County.

"Should the weather be threatening on Tuesday, the drill will be postponed until Thursday," said Gary Rogers, the county's emergency manager.

All across Kansas, each county's emergency management agency will participate in the tornado safety drill to prepare for the severe weather season. Schools, hospitals, industries, public facilities and citizens are encouraged to test their readiness should a tornado or severe weather event actually occur.

What to look for

Local outdoor warning sirens, NOAA Weather Radio alarms, and the Emergency Alert System will be activated to signal the start of the drill. Actions should then be taken as if it were a real emergency. The drill will test everyone's readiness for a life-

threatening severe weather event, such as a tornado. Other severe weather threats that must also be prepared for include: flash flooding, large hail, lightning and damaging winds.

The year 2002 saw another very active tornado season with a total of 95 tornadoes in Kansas, 44 above normal. The 61 twisters in the month of May set a new monthly record, while two late season tornadoes hit in mid-December. Severe Weather Awareness Week comes just before the traditional peak tornado months of April, May and June.

"However, when the atmospheric conditions are right, tornadoes can occur at any time of the year," Manager Rogers said.

Last year, 90 percent of the tornadoes occurred during the peak months.

Spotter training scheduled for area

The schedule for spotter training has been set in the tri-state area. A spotter training class is held each year and helps train new spotters as well as giving experienced spotters a refresher course.

"The class is set for individual education on severe weather," Emergency manager, Gary Rogers said. "If people can't de-

pend on the radio and television for up-to-date weather forecasts, they need to educate themselves."

"The more spotters — the better, especially rural spotters! If we have trained spotters in designated areas, there will be less spotters we will need to send out and sometimes, it can be dangerous."

Anyone interested should plan to

attend the spotter training class in Cheyenne County at 7 p.m. on April 15 in the St. Francis Community High School cafeteria. There are also other trainings planned in the area. For more information, contact Manager Rogers at 785-332-2560.



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McDonald News By Vera Kacirek

Death

Albert Reeh, a former member of the McDonald community, has died. He and his wife Agnes lived in the community for many years, and their children attended school in McDonald.

Smokey Bear poster contest

The Smokey Bear posters were returned to Cheylin students this week and the winners were announced. There were not as many posters as in past years, but the quality was very good. Winners were first grade: Ty Carmichael, first place; Connor Hazuka, second place; third grade: Roberto Ponce, first place; fourth grade: Ashley Klippert, first place; Caleb Keltz, second place; David Burns and Teryn Carmichael, third place; Heath Antholz, honorable mention; fifth grade: Ana Ponce, first place

The posters of Roberto Ponce and Ana Ponce were sent to the regional chairman in South Dakota, but winners have not yet been selected. Poster prizes were provided by the McDonald Town

and Country Garden Club. Club members recognize the teachers who take the time to encourage students to participate in the poster contest.

Twenty-three friends met at the Frosty Mug on Thursday to help Joan Tongish celebrate her birthday. She received many lovely cards, gifts and lots of good wishes. Vivan Curry presented Joan with several posters, each representing one of the many "hats" that Joan wears in her service to the community.

Weekend guests of Dorothy Headrick were Drew Doggett of Kansas City and Mark and Anna Dirks and children of Greeley, Colo. Saturday visitors were Stan and Verda Wancura, Kathy Loop and Mike Knapp.

Betty Knapp spent from Tuesday to Saturday in Sidney, Neb., with her sister, Lorraine McCabe. Lorraine's husband, James McCabe who was very ill, died on Thursday. His funeral service was Saturday in Oshkosh, Neb.,

with burial in the Antelope Valley Cemetery.

Jerry and Betty Knapp were Sunday dinner guests of Zelda Knapp.

Karlyne Atchison and Amelia Banister visited in St. Francis this past week with Helen Sykes, Viola Jones and Alvin and Marie Holzwarth.

Tessa Davis returned home on Sunday after spending several days in Denver with her dad, Barney Kacirek.

Doug and Mary Tongish and Mikayla Cody were Saturday visitors of Joan Tongish.

Vance and Betty Lewis were Saturday visitors of Lenora Spicka and Fanny Peacock and enjoyed playing cards with them.

Eleanor Swihart, Vivian Curry and Joan Tongish attended the Western Plains concert in Goodland on Sunday presented by the Denver A-Capella Project.

Barney Kacirek came on Monday to attend the funeral of Albert Reeh and was a guest of his daughter, Tessa Davis.

Dogs

Continued from page 1

tries but, right now, there just wasn't enough money for a higher salary in the sheriff's budget.

The clerk will notify the sheriff and undersheriff to be at the next meeting.

Video on disaster response

Manager Rogers had asked that elected officials attend the Friday meeting to watch a video to help first responders and elected officials better understand and know their responsibilities if there is a disaster.

Local Environmental Protection Group

Mike Balthazor, Chad Zimmerman and Kenneth Knorr, representing Local Environmental Protection Group, informed the commissioners that state funding for their group was being cut and, right now, there is enough money to cover expenses. However, within the next year, there will be a shortage unless grants are received. They asked that the commissioners fill out a questionnaire and also asked for any suggestions. Commissioner Jane Brubaker thought there should be a fee based on population and Commissioner Ron Krien suggested that it might be possible for them to do testing for landfill wells.

Road and bridge department

Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, talked about tractors for summer mowing and how they should be financed — no decision was made. He also talked about planned work for county roads; that the three illegal landfills had been cleaned up; and about House Bill 2135 which may forbid the renting of county equipment and cleaning personal drives during emergency situations.

In other business

In other business:
• Treasurer Dolores Jenik asked the commissioners what they wanted to do about uncollectible personal property taxes. She reported that now, if taxes are not paid, the person wanting to purchase or renew a license will not be allowed the license until the taxes are taken care of.

• As the commissioners reviewed the list of bills and vouchers, they commented on the cost of prisoner care, wondering if there was going to be sufficient funding; questioned that Colby Community

College was billing the county for Cheyenne County as well as Rawlins County emergency medical technician students and wanted to make sure that Rawlins County was not also being charged; noted that batteries for radios for the fire department should come out of 911 funds — not the fire department funds.

• The commissioners approved to share costs with the city(s) for responder training for the firemen in the county but since the St. Francis Fire Chief had requested the share, they wanted to make sure that Bird City Firemen were also included. They will make the final decision at the March 14 meeting.

• The commissioners agreed to the ambulance write offs of \$7,691.08.

• Signed the resolution to encourage cities to recycle, agreeing that the county will pay up to \$1,000 to cities during the 2003 calendar year.

• Susan Hobrock, Cheyenne County Development Coordinator, and Roger Jensen, St. Francis City Councilman, went over the bills of the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Organization. They noted that they would like to be the two local directors in the organization and also asked that the commissioners write a letter of approval for the organization's bills which they okayed.

• Attorney Berens was asked about foreclosing on S & S Productions concerning back taxes. He said that there would be expenses but Commissioner Brubaker pointed out that someone had tried to buy the gas wells for \$150,000 but the owner wanted more. Attorney Berens will look into the matter and report findings at the next meeting. The wells have been up for auction and if the wells sell, there is a chance that the county could claim some of the back taxes.

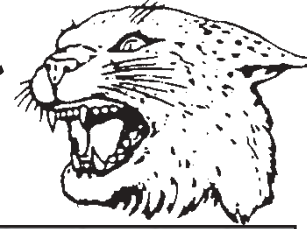
• The commissioners agreed two to one to sign a letter of support for having a residential county magistrate judge.

Next meeting

The next commissioners' meeting has been moved from March 15 to March 14. They will begin at 8 a.m. in the commissioners' room in the courthouse. This and all commissioners' meetings are open to the public.



We're Proud of Our Cougars ~ Thanks for the memories.



Back row, l to r: Hannah Louderbaugh, Afton Krien, David Banister, Jacob Jensen, Josh Moyer, Brandon Gordon; second row: Jacky Roesener - Asst. Coach, Shellie Felzien, Tiffany Antholz, Becca Mason, Andrew Marshall, Alex Hengen, Dennis Hengen - Coach; third row: Chase Krien, Megan Sramek, Amanda Banister, Cristi Antholz, Angela Brogan, Haley Young, Kelly Simmonds; front row: Joy Zumbahlen, John Simmonds, Amanda Poore, Matt Wilson, Jill Zumbahlen, Michael Sager, Annie Hengen.

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