

## Happy New Year



DOUG AND KAREN FLEMMING have their driveway decorated with lots of holiday cheer.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

## Digital cinema goal is close

Just two months after the Cheyenne Theater's Digital Cinema fund drive was announced, a \$5,000 contribution from Ole and Betsy Cram pushed the total above the \$33,000 goal. Coupled with the \$62,500 pledged by the St. Francis City Council, the goal, which seemed nearly impossible to the Theater Board merely six months ago, is now within grasp.

The board is extremely gratified by the overwhelmingly generous response both from county residents and from those people who no longer live here, said Robert Grace, member of the board. The 230 donations received to date have arrived from 30 states: Texas to Alaska, and California to Connecticut. More than 100 donations came from Cheyenne County residents, who donated 56 percent of the total amount collected.

The Theater Board is still accepting donations, Mr. Grace said, as the complex installation may take more money than originally estimated and there may be future interest expenses.

Digital cinema will provide many advantages to the theater, including better quality images

and reduced operating costs. In addition, the Cheyenne Theater will be able to show 3D movies. Finally, the new technology "future-proofs" the theater against obsolescence, since it will no longer be reliant on the rapidly dying 35mm film format.

The digital cinema conversion process is complex and labor intensive, requiring a new screen and supporting framework, new projector, digital servers, improved sound system, and some structural modifications to the booth wall. Finally, the new system will have to be tested, calibrated and the old equipment will be removed.

The Theater Board is now working with local banks and the city council to establish a leasing arrangement with the hope that the equipment can be ordered early in January. There is a three- to four-month delivery delay on the popular digital projectors, but the board's goal is to show the first digital movie before Memorial Day, 2011.

To learn more, or see a list of donors, please go to <http://cheyennetheater.com>.

## Baby shower set for unwed mothers

The Cheyenne County Knights of Columbus is sponsoring their annual Pro-Life baby shower during the month of January. All during the month they will be collecting items that are needed to raise an infant.

All the items that they collect will be donated to the Mary Elizabeth Home for Unwed Mothers in Hays. They do an excellent job in helping unwed mothers by teaching them how to take care of an infant from before birth through 1-2 years of age.

Most of these mothers are young teenage mothers that have nowhere else to go and everything they do is done through donations.

needed are diapers, bottles, clothing for infants, infant bathing supplies, blankets and any other items needed to raise an infant.

They can also use office supplies.

If you have any items that you would like to donate they may be left at the Catholic Church in Bird City or St. Francis or contact either Dennis Wright (785) 734-7044 in Bird City or Mike Antholz (785) 332-3482 in St. Francis.

Those who don't have any items to donate may also make a cash donation if they wish. If an item is purchased to donate, please leave the price tag on the item for the report that is needed to send to the state at the end of the month.

## Employee retires after 27 years

By Karen Krien

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After over 27 years, Vera Keller is retiring from the Farm Service Agency.

Mrs. Keller began working in the Natural Resources Conservation Service office where she worked for a year. The position at the Conservation Service office, then known as the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), opened and someone said I should apply, Mrs. Keller said, and I got the job. That was over 27 years ago.

She said she has enjoyed working in the office and getting to know the people.

I wouldn't know 90 percent of the people if they didn't come through this office, she said. And, after I retire, I will probably not see the majority of them, which I will miss.

What she won't miss is the pressure of deadlines. She said that many of the deadlines through the years are known in advance but there are always some that spring up. Some programs have changed and then there are always new programs.

When she started, there were no computers. There was lots of memography and multi-part carbon papers to complete.

She was in charge of making sure farmers were in compliance with their crops and acres. Her

job was to do spot checks on 15 percent of all acreage reports in the county. She used slides to do the measuring which took a lot of time. When the slides didn't tell the whole story, Harvey Zwegygart was sent out to measure. They started in July with the wheat acreages, then followed up in September and October with the fall crops.

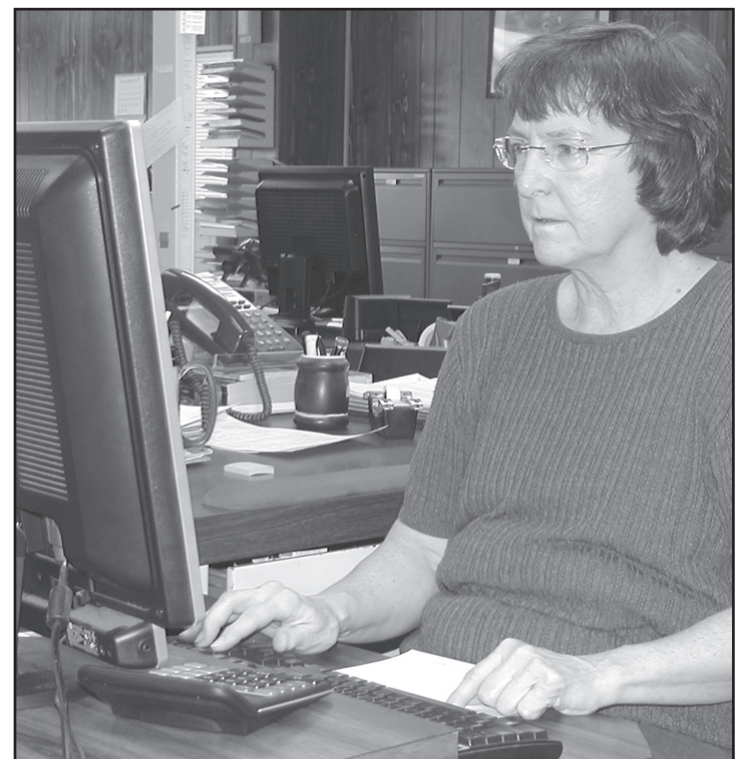
As she took the measurements and figures, she then started typing them on long forms which were sent to the Kansas City management office. She later learned that there were rooms full of these forms, most of which were never looked at.

In the last five years, Washington officials have made the selections for spot checking. Strangely enough, she said, only one farm was selected the first year and the same for this year — a long way from 15 percent of the county farms.

"It sure made my job easier," she said.

For several years, she was in charge of payment eligibility. Again, these forms changed and today, there are new forms. Dennon Flemming now has the responsibility of payment eligibility.

The office handles non-insurable crop assistance because this insurance can't be bought locally. When farmers were



VERA KELLER finishes up some work on her computer at the Natural Resource Conservation Office.

required to purchase catastrophic crop insurance to receive benefits, they could purchase a 50-percent coverage at the office. Mrs. Keller said this was a poor insurance but it only cost \$100 and it insured the farmer's crops whether he had a few acres or many acres. This insurance lasted only a few years through the Farm Service Agency, she said.

Mrs. Keller said she is looking forward to retirement but she doesn't just plan to sit around. I have a lot of "stuff" to go through at home and get it organized, she said.

Then, she said she would like to raise a garden. Being retired will also give her time to spend more time with her grandchildren.

## County field reporter officially retires

By Karen Krien

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Harvey Zwegygart has been the field reporter at the Farm Service Agency for 27 years. He is officially retiring although he said he retired a year ago and has been filling in when needed and helping train Kyle Buffington.

Mr. Zwegygart said when he and his wife, Phyllis, quit the dairy, he decided that he needed an outside job. At the time, Eddy Lauer, director, hired him. Besides Mr. Lauer, he has worked for Dennis Mote, Kevin Ochs and is now working for Angie Berens. Between the directors and the staff working in the office, he has enjoyed his work.

His job got much easier when

GPS was implemented. With his backpack on, he rode his four-wheeler along the fields. The backpack contains equipment including a dome which was above his head. The equipment includes a receiver that takes information from the satellite and sends information to the office. Vera Keller then takes the information to establish the acres of the field.

He said that driving down the field with the backpack and dome makes him look like an alien from another country. People going by, he said, slow down to check him out.

There have been several times when he thought he might have been fortunate he didn't have an accident. Riding on the four-

wheeler, he is often in the middle of weeds where he can't see the terrain. There were several close calls when he missed gullies or holes.

His work was part-time but there were many times when the days and weeks were long because there was a new program or there was new ground going into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). But, he said the hours always worked out and he had time to do his own farming.

He has been farming for all his life and he hasn't slowed down, not only farming his own land but also renting other farmland. Retiring from the Farm Service Agency, he will have more time to devote to his own work.



Harvey Zwegygart