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New courthouse steps in by July 1

By Karen Krien

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Finally! After several years of discussing, bidding and, in short, going to the west side of the courthouse to enter, the public will be able to use the courthouse steps by July 1.

The Cheyenne County Commissioners discussed the steps at the Friday meeting and called the low bidder, Cary Stupka, Concordia, to meet them Monday afternoon.

Mr. Stupka traveled from Norton where he was completing a job on the prison. He talked about his plans for the replacement of the steps. He is the general contractor and has hired Kansas Concrete, Salina, to take out the cement, noting that the center will be taken out in bigger pieces and the cement near the step side wall will be carefully be taken out in smaller pieces so as not to damage the brickwork.

The dirt will then be removed and hauled off. He said when the dirt is removed, he will have a better idea about the pillars which originally held up the floating granite steps. There are two there but he will put in a third pillar. Beneath the steps will be an open space, giving the needed air for the stone steps. He estimates this work will take approximately two weeks.

Mid-Continental Restoration, Concordia, will be putting in the

stone steps. Mr. Stupka said the stones will be cut to size before arriving in St. Francis. There was a question about the middle handrail as it wasn't included in the drawings. Mr. Stupka said he didn't think that would be a problem and Eric Johnson, engineer, will probably put that into the drawings.

He said he will plan to move his equipment from Norton to St. Francis so it will be ready when the construction begins. At the

time of construction, a fence will be put around the area including the construction equipment trailer.

The courthouse doors will need some work and there is a \$2,200 (not \$22,000 as stated in a previous story) alternate bid which will take care of that expense.

As plans stand, barring a great deal of rain, the steps should be ready for use at the end of June or first of July.

Funding

Funding the steps project has been a concern for commissioners as well as the courthouse staff and patrons. In December 2007, the steps were closed on orders of the county's insurance company as they were determined "unsafe."

Greg Kite, former resident now serving on the Sedwick Historical Society, heard about the steps and said that there were grants available. See STEPS on Page 10A

Health fair set for next week in both cities

The Cheyenne County Hospital Spring Health Fair for men and women will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, March 23 through 25.

During these three days, the health fair will offer female and male exams for the patients as well as lab draws at a much reduced price for going through the health fair. Participants must remember to fast after midnight the night before labs are drawn.

"We encouraged to drink lots of water prior to lab draws and to take your prescribed medication as well," said Mila Bandel, county health nurse. "No other foods or beverages should be consumed prior to lab draws."

The county health department is coordinating the educational exhibit booth fair that will end the annual health/safety fair on Thursday, March 26. Several exhibitors from various services and organizations have already reserved a booth space for the annual event St. Francis Grade School gymnasium.

Those planning to have booths include: the fire department, emergency medical services,

hospital's diabetes program, laboratory department; physical therapy, hospital nursing, Early Detection Works-Cancer program, Farm Works program, county health, Healthy Start Home Visitors program, Parents as Teachers, Unicare/Healthwave, Social Rehabilitation Services, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Cheyenne County, Regional Prevention Center, Farm Bureau, Ministerial Alliance, Hospice Care, car seat distribution check station, nutritional services at the hospital and the Masonic Lodge with the child identification program.

There is still booth space available, Mrs. Bandel said.

The educational healthy/safety fair is a hands-on learning event for all ages and everyone is encouraged to attend.

The result of the lab draws that week, said Mrs. Bandel, will be available with one-on-one consultation from the Cheyenne County Medical providers for your lab consultant report.

For more information, contact Mrs. Bandel at the county health department, 332-2381.



GOOD COOKIE — Mahra Padgett, 19-month-old daughter of Jason and Jennifer Padgett, was enjoying a cookie at the Candidate's Forum last Thursday evening.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

School to have 43 new windows

By Karen Krien

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The high school will have a new look when students return for school in the fall.

The St. Francis Board of Education voted to have new windows put in on the west side of the high school at the March 9 meeting.

Improvements in the school buildings has been on the board's agenda for several months. Mr. Schiltz had received two bids for replacing the 43 windows in the front of the high school and three curtain windows on the gym. The first bid was from Colby Glass with a base bid of \$239,479 and the addition of LowE, \$4,500, for a total of 243,979. The second sealed bid was from Norton Glass for a base bid of \$130,543 plus \$3,258 for LowE. LowE resists the heat and cold, giving insulation to the inside of the building.

The bids also included the removal and disposal of the old windows.

With the interest rate down, Mr. Schiltz pointed out that the Capital Outlay Fund was not making money. Dr. Miller pointed out that the new windows

See WINDOWS on Page 10A

Booth open for voters

By Karen Krien

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The voting booth in the county clerk's office at the courthouse is now ready to take those voters who prefer to cast their ballots early.

Deb Lindsten, deputy clerk, said the booth opened Wednesday morning and will be open until noon on Monday, April 6, the day before the general election (April 7).

The general election will include seats on the St. Francis and Cheylin school boards as well as the St. Francis City and Bird City city council and Bird City mayor. Also to be on the ballot will be place where people can vote for members on the Sunflower Extension District Number 6.

The election will be held from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. In St. Francis, the voting will be at the Peace Lutheran Church, College Street; in Bird City, at the American Legion Hall, West Fourth Street.

There are seven people running for a seat on the St. Francis City Council but only three seats are vacant. Those running are incumbent Carla Lampe, along with Jennifer Dankenbring-Padgett, Justin Gardner, Michael Hanson, Daniel Hoard, Paula Keller and Bruce Swihart.

There is one race for a seat on the St. Francis Board of Education. Incumbent is Kelly Gienger, District 2, position 5. Derrick Tice is the only candidate running for District 1, position 4. There are



READY TO GO — Advanced voting can now be done in the courthouse clerk's office. Deb Lindsten, deputy clerk, has the equipment ready to go.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

three vying for the position of District 3, position 6: Mike Antholz, Bob Holzwarth and Ed Marin.

Bird City

In Bird City, there are two seats up for election on the city council and only one person, Wade Carmichael, incumbent, running. Troy Burr is running again for the seat of mayor.

Cheylin Board of Education has four open positions. There is a race in District 1, position 1 where both Jim Cahoj and George Louderbaugh have filed. The other race is in District 2, position 6 with three candidates running: Jan

Busse, Kerby Krien and Belinda Serrano. Others running for seats on the Cheylin school board are Anita Pochop, District 1, position 3; and Hal Antholz, member at large.

Extension board

The Sunflower Extension District Number 6 needs two people from Cheyenne County to fill seats on the board. Cindy Burr, Bird City, has served on the board since Cheyenne County joined the Sunflower Extension District. Also running for the second position is Tammy Grice, St. Francis.

Construction on airport runway set for Aug. 17

Widening the airport runway was at the top of the agenda when the Cheyenne County Airport Authority met on March 12.

President Dave Yost gave a summation of the financial situation. He said that sufficient county funds were available for the matching funds required for the upcoming runway widening project. The best estimate for the cost of widening and installation of new runway lights is \$1.956 million dollars, and the local match will total \$97,800 (5 percent). It was noted that federal matching funds are raised from aviation fuel taxes and taxes on airline tickets, not local tax dollars.

The project will be bid on May 1 and construction could begin as soon as Aug. 17.

In the project, the present runway will be widened from 50 feet to 75 feet with 6 inches of concrete, which will mean that aircraft weighing up to 30,000 pounds will be accommodated. In the future, the runway will be lengthened to 5,200 feet, from the present 3,150 feet.

Mr. Yost reported that the land acquisition purchase agreement has been signed for the land south of the airport which will be used for the future runway lengthening project.

The Authority discussed param-

eters for new hangar construction on the airport. Several guidelines were determined. The Airport Authority's engineering firm will be contacted to determine exact sizing and building heights to conform with Federal Aviation Administration's airspace restrictions concerning hangar locations.

Insurance coverage for the airport was discussed, and a committee was established to follow up on questions raised at the meeting.

Those attending the meeting held at Yost Farm Supply were Rick Rogers, Rodney Bracelin, Kody Krien, Mr. Yost, Dave Fleming, Richard Grace and Robert Grace.

This is Agricultural Week!

This week has been declared as Kansas Agricultural Week by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

Kansas has a strong agricultural tradition that predates our statehood, said Gov. Sebelius. But, she said, agriculture represents more than our history, it represents our future and our continuing commitment to the farmers and ranchers of Kansas.

Kansas farmers and ranchers produced and sold \$14.4 billion in agricultural products. Typically, Kansas farmers produce more wheat, grain sorghum and beef than any other state in the nation.

Kansas ranks third in sunflower production; eighth in corn production; ninth in hog production; 11th in soybean production and 18th in milk production.

Kansas ranks sixth in farm product exports, which were valued at

\$3.8 billion in 2007;

One out of every five Kansans is employed in a job related to farming or food production.

Kansas-grown foods contribute to the health and well-being of people worldwide. However, agriculture also provides ingredients for products used in transportation, energy, health care, construction, manufacturing, personal care, education and sports.

Gov. Sebelius noted that agriculture also provides renewable fuels that decrease our nation's dependence on foreign oil. Its ethanol plants turn corn and grain sorghum into ethanol used to fuel our vehicles, and those plants have created some 600 permanent jobs for Kansans.

On the horizon, she said, is commercial-scale production of ethanol from cellulosic sources



like switch grass and plant matter left over at harvest. The midwest is home to the greatest biomass resource in the United States. The region has 50 percent of the nation's biomass supply, including 74 percent of the crop residues and 77 percent of the switchgrass.

Agriculture provides the food we eat, the clothes on our backs and the fuel in our cars, Gov. Sebelius said. That's why I urge all Kansans to join me in celebrating all that agriculture has given to our health, our way of life and our future prosperity.