

DECISIONS

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Charity care is increasing and last year, the hospital was underpaid by \$350,000 from Medicare.

The hospital also provides the county health service. The commissioners give around \$10,000 for this service but it costs the hospital board around \$70,000.

The board, he said, needs to be able to carry the hospital through the year and, last year, it wasn't able to do that so reserve funds were used.

It is important for the hospital to build up the funds while taking care of projects like the kitchen. The hospital's kitchen did not pass the last Kansas Fire Marshal's inspection but, because the board was making plans to remodel, they were given an extension. However, the fire marshal will probably not make any exceptions in his next inspection if the kitchen remodel is not done.

From a strategic point of view, Mr. Lacy said, keeping the hospital keeps people in the community and makes a stronger tax base.

With the additional money, he said, we will go back to the kitchen project and plan to start it the first of the year.

The commissioners thought it would have been much easier on everybody had there been a cost-of-living raise each year rather than to be hit with a 17-percent increase. Had they gotten the cost-of-living raise each of the last four years, they would be at the 17-percent mark.

Andy Beikman, commissioner, said he would do his best to see that the hospital gets what they are asking for. Dale Patten, commissioner, agreed. They felt that the hospital and the community are benefiting from the services provided.

Mr. Lacy said he is concerned about the health care reforms. We will be, he said, facing challenges there and we will need to be flexible.

Mr. Patten pointed out that demographics are truly hurting rural America. State and federal support, he said, leans toward the urban areas.

Jack Eldridge, who figures the budget each year, will be in the county within the month and the commissioners will know more about what they will be able to do

after talking with him.

Road grader discussed

Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, had the figures for a used road grader. The cost of the grader was around \$240,000. There was only \$38,000 in the equipment reserve fund. He suggested borrowing the needed money but the commissioners did not want to borrow.

Martin Tractor, Colby, has an excavator for \$60,000. Mr. Flemming said there is another company which had one for \$45,000. He felt they were good prices.

If they were going to replace any equipment, the commissioners thought a grader was probably a good investment and the machine he was looking at was probably a good machine but there just wasn't the money for it right now.

Mr. Flemming talked about the five-year plan. He said the Runzel Bridge, west of St. Francis, was on the plan and was being completed. Also on the plan was the Hnizdil Bridge and asphaltting a road north of St. Francis. He said the government is out of money for these projects so they are slow at making sure the projects are being done.

Rain cap repair

The courthouse steps are being finished but, after the recent rains, the contractor, Cary Stupka, pointed out that the rain cap around the top part of the courthouse needs caulked and repaired as the water runs through the joints directly onto the brick walls and steps. To fix this project, the cost will be about \$6,000.

Getting new steps for the front of the courthouse has been a long process. The original cost was \$97,980 several years ago. The final bid, which the commissioners accepted, was \$138,000. The original grant was for \$78,384 and, the commissioners have been told that there will be an additional \$11,800 grant to help with the cost.

The county's share will be \$47,816 (it was originally only supposed to

be around \$28,000).

There is a grant for \$78,384 plus \$11,800 to help with the steps. With the extra expenses, it will cost \$138,000. The county's share will now include the \$6,000 for the rain cap repair.

The commissioners agreed to get the rain cap fixed while there is a contractor present to do the work.

The progress of the step project can be seen on the web at www.cheyennecounty.org

Regional recycling center

Roger Jensen, the county's representative for the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Center, said there was not enough money to keep the center open in July. See related article.

In other business

In other business:
 • Cathy Domsch, director for Century II, Bird City, said they were reapplying for a Community Development Block Grant again for the rehabilitation and demolition projects. They were not funded the first time and were trying again. The grant application was signed.

• Mrs. Domsch reported that the demolition of the old lumberyard in Bird City was on hold until the Department of Health and Environment could make some price comparisons. With the regulations, Mr. Patton said it was hard to clean up stuff in a cost-effective way.

• Sheriff Craig Van Allen asked for executive session to discuss personnel. No decision was made upon coming out of the session.

• The commissioners approved the purchase of four hand-held radios for the Bird City Fire Department. The radios cost \$828 each and the money will come from the 911 Fund.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the commissioners has been set for 8 a.m. on Tuesday, June 30, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.

Club Clip

St. Francis Lions Club

The St. Francis Lions Club met for their monthly meeting at the Church of Christ fellowship hall at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, June 8.

President Norman Morrow called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the invocation given by Elmer Kellner.

President Morrow introduced guests, Past District Governor Don Kehl and Zone Chairman, Wally Hansen of Goodland, who later installed the new officers.

Thank you notes were read from Jami and Joni Pevler for the \$500 scholarship, and Logan Whitmore and Ross Nicklos, who attended the Lions Band Camp and played in the Kansas Lions State Band at the state convention in Wichita on May 30.

Elmer and Dorothy Kellner were also at the convention as delegates for the club.

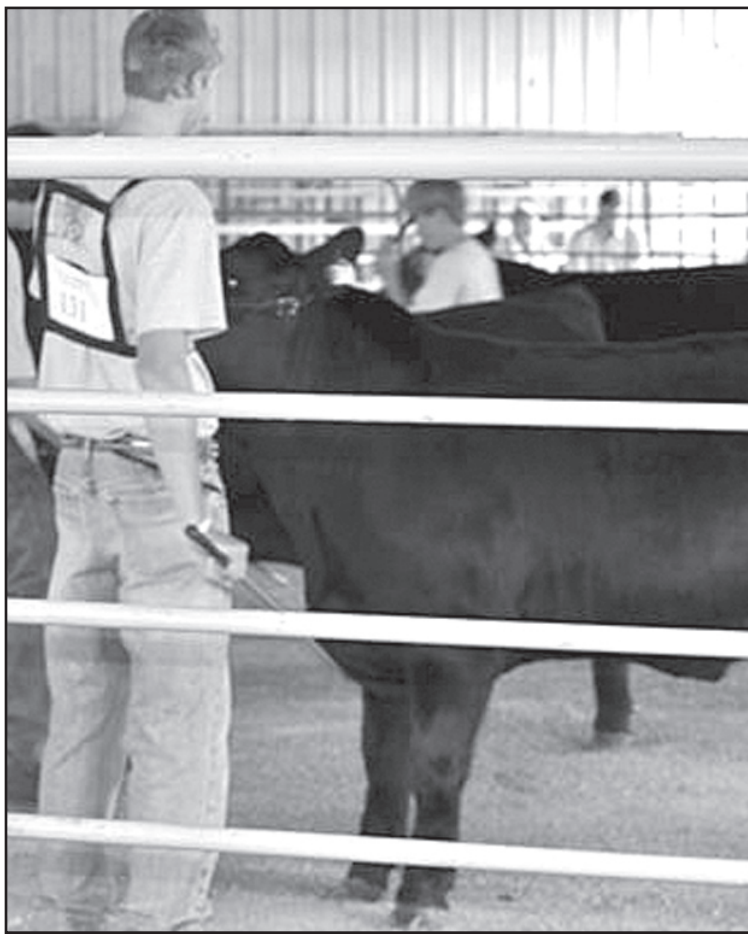
Deb Patton reported and handed out material for the Lions Birthday calendars, which members will soon be canvassing for.

The club gave a \$100 donation to the Relay for Life, and served a hamburger meal at the 75th anniversary in the park.

It was approved and seconded to build a shade shelter at the fairgrounds next year.

Installation of officers for the year beginning July 1 included: Francis O'Leary, president; Dale Patton, first vice president; Norman Morrow, secretary; Dorothy Kellner, treasurer; Carl Jenkins, tail-twister and Carl Williams, Lion tamer.

The club members remind people



MATT RAILE shows his steer at Tonganoxie.

St. Francis youth, steers place at show

Matt Raile attended the Midwest Gelbvieh State show held in Tonganoxie on June 6 and 7. Both his heifer and his steer placed at the show.

Matt's heifer RHRG Miss Leg-

end 8118U was the reserve champion balancer heifer in the spring yearling division.

Matt's steer, Legend, placed third in his class.

PROJECTS

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ing the program. Scott Carmichael, principal, will also supervise, receiving \$1,542.

Mr. Schiltz said the St. Francis Recreation Commission Board has agreed to pay one-half of the cost.

Mr. Carmichael said the program is going very well. Mr. Smith, he said, has the kids doing weights a little different but that is OK. There are 50 to 60 kids lifting weights this summer.

Shirley Swihart and Tammy Grice will be teaching summer school again during June. Mostly elementary students are expected but there

could be a few junior high kids also attending. The money to pay these salaries is taken out of the At-Risk Fund.

Finances

Mr. Schiltz had been to a meeting the day of the board meeting. He said that the economy for the school looks bleak for the next couple of years. Next year, he said, he estimates the enrollment to be down 12 kids. The school will be using the Local Option Budget to help with expenses without cutting jobs or programs.

"We are probably OK for the next two years," he said.

The school has never qualified for the state supplemental fund because the school is considered to be in a "rich" district. However, this year, the St. Francis school will be receiving around \$20,000, which, Mr. Schiltz said, will certain help.

In other business

In other business:
 • Mr. Schiltz said all the licensed personnel contracts have been turned in and all but seven of the non-licensed personnel contracts have been turned in. Mr. Schiltz expected all contracts to be turned in.

• Myra Douthit, former board member, has been serving on the Northwest Kansas Technical College Board in Goodland. She agreed to serve another term.

Next meetings

The final meeting of the fiscal year has been set for 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday, June 30. At that time, the board will approve the final business transactions of this fiscal year.

to still give used eye glasses, hearing aids, bicycles, wheelchairs and handicapped equipment to the club to be used by people in need.

The next meeting will be July 13.

Harvest countdown coming to a close

By Karen Krien

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The Harvest Countdown Contest is coming to an end! There are five St. Francis businesses sponsoring the contest this year. They have entry tickets for anyone wanting to register their guess of the minute, hour and day of the first load of wheat brought into one of the St. Francis or Wheeler elevators.

There will be three people winning a total of \$100 in scrip money (\$50 first prize, \$35 second prize, and \$15 third prize).

Rules are:

• Guess the day, hour and minute of the arrival of the first load that has moisture content of 14 percent or less.

The contest allows anyone over

18 years who is not employed at the newspaper or related to someone who is, to try to guess when the first load of wheat will be brought into one of the elevators in St. Francis and Wheeler.

• New this year, the winners of last year's contest are not eligible to win this year.

• The scrip money won will need to be spent in participating businesses.

The Herald is sponsoring the contest but it would not be possible if it were not for the participating businesses: Pizza Hut, Hilltop Market, St. Francis Equity, St. Francis Super's and The Saint Francis Herald. Boxes and entry blanks along with the contest rules are located in these businesses.

Reunion takes place

The sixth reunion of the family of Edwin (deceased) and LaVera Beringer was held at the senior center of St. Francis on Sunday, May 24, with the following in attendance: LaVera Beringer of St. Francis; Elaine and Jim Wiseman, Carol Wiseman and Jon, Jennifer and Garrett Wiseman, Fremont, Neb.; Joe Kinning of Pender, Neb.; Alice Raile, Becky, Lee, Samantha, Zackary and Morgan Long of Oxford, Neb.; Barb Whitehead and Ridge of Oberlin; Larry and Brenda Beringer of Sharon Springs; Lisa, James, Clay, Micah and Avrianna Burk of La Crosse; and Allen Wright of Kingman; John Ham and Daytona and Buddy Ham of North Platte, Neb.; and Tammy Ham of Lexington, Neb.

Special guests in attendance were Darlene and Victor Zwegardt of St. Francis, Amelia Meyer, Jerry Meyer, Clara Meyer and Dorothy Meyer, all of Bethune, Colo.

Unable to attend were Brett, Jill, Zekke, Titus and Maddix Beringer of Goodland, Matt Beringer of San Diego, Calif.; Rob, Andrea, Daphanie, Aadon and Landon Ham of North Platte and Alma Beringer of Bethune.

Cost-Share Funds Available

The Cheyenne County Conservation District will be accepting cost-share applications for conservation practices, June 8 - June 30, 2009 at the Conservation Office in St. Francis.

Conservation practices include: Terraces, Terrace Rebuilds, Diversions, Livestock Tanks, Wells and Pipelines, Cross-Fencing, Pumping Plant for Water Supply, Rangeland Seeding, Spring Developments, Windbreaks, (i.e. Trees, Fabric Weed Barrier, Drip Irrigation Systems), and Failing Septic System Replacement.

All applications will be reviewed and ranked by the Conservation District Board of Supervisors and funded according to priorities recommended by the Kansas Water Plan. Cost-share assistance rates are 50%-70%. Deadline to complete work is December 31, 2009.

Funding for the cost-share programs is provided by the State Conservation Commission through appropriations from the Kansas Water Plan and administered by the Cheyenne County Conservation District.

If you are interested, please contact our office located in the USDA Service Center on West Highway 36 in St. Francis or call 785-332-2341, ext. 101.

WHEAT

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the variety Turkey Red. This variety came to the United States with Russian immigrants and revolutionized wheat production in Kansas. Ms. Falk said she included this older variety to show the advances in wheat breeding with semi-dwarf varieties that can stand better.

The two white wheat varieties planted were Aspen and Danby. Mr. Olson asked if there were any farmers present who had planted white wheat this year. None of them had and only a couple had planted white wheat the year before. Many had not continued to plant white wheat because of lack of available market and sprouting potential.

Mr. Olson, at the end of the test plot tour, said his recommendation for varieties to be planted in the county were either of the TAMs, the Colorado State varieties (Hatcher, Ripper, Bill Brown) specifically Bill Brown; and PostRock or Fuller.

They also talked about green bugs feeding in the wheat. Right now, there is lady beetles and lady bug larva found on the leaves and Ms. Falk said to not destroy it.

"Lady bugs eat greenbugs," she said. "They are good to have around."

The seed treatment study showed Fuller seeds planted in three strips. One had no treatment; one had Divident Extreme; and the other had JumpStart.

Divident Extreme is a fungicide seed treatment that provides control of several diseases. These diseases include loose smut and some root and crown rot.

JumpStart is a seed treatment that K-State is looking at, in several county wheat plots. Literature on this product says it is a phosphate fertility management tool that provides crops with better access to soil and fertilizer phosphate. This is the first year that K-State is researching this product to see if it increases wheat yields.

Farmers were urged to stop by the plot to see the difference as the wheat matures. Ms. Falk said she will have the yield results available as soon as wheat is harvested.

Dan O'Brien, K-State extension agricultural economist, talked about the markets, noting that in August 2008, the wheat market was \$9.50 to \$10 a bushel. However, today, it is right around \$6.50 per bushel. With weather delays and poor wheat in other areas, this year might be a good opportunity for Cheyenne County farmers, he said.

Following the meeting at the test plots, everyone went to Goodland Greenline in Wheeler where they enjoyed supper provided by the county grain dealers.

When the wheat test plot is harvested, the results of yields will be printed in The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times.



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