

The Saint Francis Herald

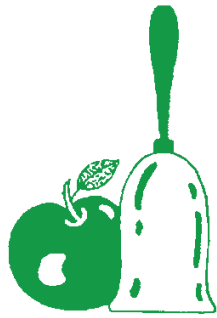
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8 Pages

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School begins



By Karen Krien

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The school bell rang and doors to the St. Francis schools were open to students on Wednesday, Aug. 26, a little later than in year's past. There are a few changes including 10 less students. At the beginning of school, there were 297 students compared to 307 at the official Sept. 20 enrollment last year.

This year, there are 21 kindergarten students attending the first day of school. Their teacher, Shirley Swihart will be teaching all-day kindergarten for the first time this year. The change was due partly to cutting expenses. With all-day kindergarten, the administration will save on the expense of a noon bus and driver.

First graders are taught by Joyce Faulkender; second grade, Ramona Raile; and third grade, Cindy Wiley. Assisting in those grades are Gloria Cassidy, Jennifer Krien and Sandy Smull.

"We are so fortunate to be able to bring in this experience and expertise to the students,"

Scott Carmichael, principal, said.

Mrs. Cassidy, Mrs. Krien and Mrs. Smull assist children in the lower grades with reading and math.

The fourth, fifth and sixth grades are departmentalized. Each of the three teachers have strengths in certain areas and Rob Schiltz, superintendent, said it worked out extremely well.

Mrs. McAtee, fourth grade instructor, will be teaching reading to the students in the top three grades. Lynnette Nolan, fifth, will be teaching science; and Julie Wolters, sixth grade, will be teaching math.

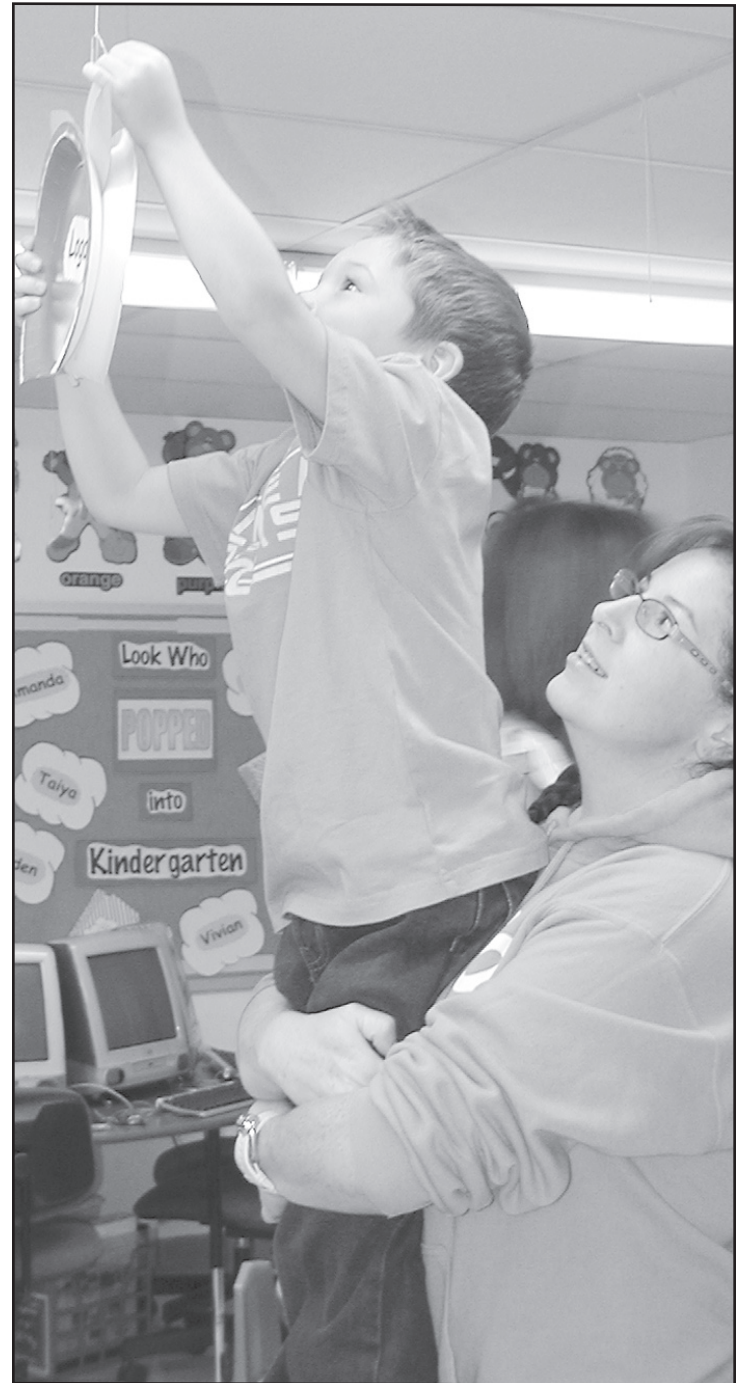
This is the third year Susan Dinkel, who has taught business in the junior-senior high school, is spending the mornings at the grade school teaching computer classes to the fourth, fifth and sixth graders. She is still teaching business in the junior-senior high school.

Mr. Schiltz said the goal is to have all students know computer basics including power point by the time they leave See **SCHOOL** on Page 5



KINDERGARTNERS were excited about the first day of school on Wednesday, Aug. 26. Above, Amanda Neitzel is working on a project. Right, Tiffany Hamilton lifts Logan up to hang his apple.

Herald staff photos by Karen Krien



Bats fly into grade school

By Karen Krien

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Several weeks ago, a bat was seen at the grade school. Upon looking around the building, Rob Schiltz, superintendent, spotted some guano (bat feces) on the ground outside the gym and by the southwest corner of the elementary school building.

The company which eliminated the bats last year was called to see how many bats were present and how they entered as the building had been sealed last fall. The man inspecting for bats found two places where birds had picked at the seal and made a large enough opening for the bats to get back in the building (1/4 inch by 1 inch is a large enough gap for bats to enter).

Traps were set which allow the bats to leave the building but not to get back in. Those that do not

leave the building die in a few days due to lack of food and water.

In an effort to make sure there was nothing that could make students or teachers sick, Mr. Schiltz, Scott Carmichael, principal, and others removed the ceiling in Lynnette Nolan's fifth grade classroom on Saturday.

There was one adult bat, and a three young bats which had been dead long enough to be brittle, and some guano above the ceiling, Mr. Schiltz said. And, everything has been cleaned up.

Mr. Schiltz said the steel beams have been exposed. A protective paint will be applied to the cement blocks above the ceiling before new ceiling tiles are put back up. Two "Purifans" have been ordered. The fans have HEPA and activated charcoal filters which filter the air 40 times per hour.

"I hope they make a difference,"

Mr. Schiltz said. "And, if the board wants to put one in every room of the school, I would be for it."

Last year, the administration spent almost \$20,000 to remove the bats. Both Mr. Schiltz and Mr. Carmichael spent many hours fighting bats and cleaning up after them. The company officials came back this year when a bat was spotted but there was no cost.

A group of concerned parents had met with Mr. Schiltz and Mr. Carmichael Friday morning. They included: Derrick Tice, school board member; Andy Beikman, Mike and Jo Rogers, Dr. Judy Baxter, Tenille Lee and Shane Wurm. Mr. Schiltz said he had shown the group the area they were concerned with and told them what their plans were for the classroom.

Andy Beikman, one of the concerned members of the group,

is the husband of the art teacher who became ill last year. Once the classroom was moved to the high school, she improved. However, after coming back to the former grade school art room last spring, it caused another set back.

Mr. Schiltz said he has been involved with a lot of the cleanup of the guano and has never been sick because of it. However, he said, if someone is susceptible, they obviously could have a reaction.

Mr. Beikman is satisfied that there are efforts being made to take care of the bat problem, because, he said, there definitely is a problem.

Mr. Schiltz said that he anticipates a problem with bats next year and probably for years to come. We are making every effort possible to keep the bats out and keep our students and teachers safe, he said.

Fall health fair set for next week

The fall health fair has been set for Monday through Friday, Sept. 14-18.

Sponsored by the Cheyenne County Hospital, clinic and health department, the lab-draw dates will be Monday through Wednesday, Sept. 14-16, from 7 to 10 a.m. in the basement of the clinic in St. Francis.

"You do not need to make an appointment for the blood lab draws," said Mila Bandel, county health nurse.

However, she said, those having blood draws should fast — not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before.

"You can drink water and take your meds prior to the lab

draws," she said, "In fact, you are encouraged to drink plenty of water prior to your lab draws."

Wednesday through Friday, Sept. 16-18, breast and cervical cancer exams will be held for women and prostate for men.

Appointments at the clinic must be made for these exams. Call 785-332-2682 for an appointment.

The health fair lab draws and exams are conducted at a reduced price and payment is expected at that time. Medical providers will be available to discuss lab and exams results. For more information, contact the clinic or health department, 332-2381.

Alliance ready to educate

The St. Francis Ministerial Association and area residents met with representatives from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) Tobacco Use Prevention Program and a national leader in faith-based tobacco prevention on Thursday.

During the meeting Vincent DeMarco, national coordinator of Faith United Against Tobacco, spoke with the group about working on community-based initiatives. Mr. DeMarco is a long-time advocate for public health causes including reducing teen smoking, reducing gun violence and expanding health care access. As national coordinator of Faith United Against Tobacco, he is working to mobilize faith leaders across the country to reduce smoking.

After DeMarco's presentation, the St. Francis Ministerial Association reviewed and discussed the materials for a secondhand smoke education toolkit the department staff is creating. This toolkit titled "Respect Thy Neighbor, Take It Outside," will be distributed to faith-based groups statewide. The Association has been involved with the toolkit project since the



SHOWING POSTERS was Travis Rickford, who works with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Tobacco Use Prevention.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

beginning and has provided input and insight to create materials relevant to rural Kansans.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention secondhand smoke causes premature death and disease in non-smoking adults and children. Sec-

ondhand smoke exposure causes heart disease and lung cancer in nonsmoking adults and sudden infant death syndrome, respiratory problems, ear infections and asthma attacks in infants and children. Secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard that can be avoided.

Commissioners agree to not hand out keys

By Karen Krien

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At the Aug. 15 meeting, the Cheyenne County Commissioners discussed giving a key to the St. Francis city policemen so they could come and talk to the dispatchers after the courthouse closed. They also talked about exchanging keys so the sheriff's officers could use the city's hold-

ing facility for keeping prisoners overnight.

However, at the Monday meeting, the commissioners agreed that, because of liability and security reasons, no keys would be exchanged.

"What it boils down to is the question, does this key have anything to do with keeping the law?" said Andy Beikman, commis-

sioner. "Common sense is the key word."

There were several reasons for no keys but the main discussion was around the issue of security.

First of all, no one but dispatchers and the sheriff are allowed in the 911 dispatch office. That is not a rule made by the county dispatcher or sheriff, but is a federal

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GAS ARRIVES — After months of waiting, Majestic Service, U.S. 36, received 8,000 gallons of gas on Monday.

Herald staff photo by Casey McCormick