

Rural America needs to fight for their towns

The state office of the U.S. Farm Service Agency, after suffering a bloody nose last year with a proposal to close more than half its county offices, has come back with a plan to close 11 in some of the state's smallest counties.

In northwest Kansas, only the office in Gove, the state's smallest county seat with a population of 103, would close. It would merge with the Logan County office in Oakley. Farmers could choose to do business with the government at any office, with many expected to gravitate to nearby Hoxie, in Sheridan County.

The agency's Agriculture Department twin, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, announced that it will close offices in the same 11 counties.

Under the first plan, offices in Oberlin, St. Francis and Sharon Springs in the northwest would have closed, but for the present, all those are safe.

So, with our offices to remain open, we should go on about our business and ignore this little government reorganization?

Only if we want to be next.

Eleven offices is just a foot in the door. Given their way, eventually the bureaucrats will return for another bite. And another.

Today, Farm Service and Conservation offices typically are small, three or four workers in a county, all "co-located" in the same building.

If you want to see the future, though, look to the largest agency in the Agriculture Department, the Forest Service. Once run by district rangers stationed out in the woods, in small towns and mining camps, the service averaged three to four em-

ployees per district well into the 1950s.

In the last 25 years, though, the service closed most of its rural offices, concentrating employees at ranger stations with 20-25 employees.

Few, if any, lost their jobs, mind you. Employee numbers stayed fairly constant. But the layers of bureaucracy thickened as workers began to specialize in one area or another, grazing, timber, recreation, law enforcement. Little money was saved on payroll, but expenses for vehicles and travel soared.

The management model is a lot like the one adopted a couple of years ago by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, which closed many of its county offices in favor of new regional offices serving several counties.

The result, as usual, was no little or no savings, but a big disconnect between clients and those supposed to serve them.

These consolidations aren't about saving money. They're not about good management or specialization. They're about gathering the troops in one place and creating a warm nest for them.

They represent the state and federal governments abandoning towns that get too small, too dull for officials to want to work in.

In rural America, we shouldn't tolerate that, not from the Department of Agriculture, the state or any other government agency designed to serve us.

If the agency is going to have the same employees and the same expenses, why not spend some money in towns like Gove?

In Rural America, we need to fight this kind of thinking, whenever it appears.

— Steve Haynes

Hangin' with Marge

Just another day

By Margaret Bucholtz



I usually know what kind of a day it will be just by what happens before I really get into it. Today isn't going to go well!

Yesterday while Kurt went to the museum to put in some new lights, I stayed home to work in the yard. He told me he would leave his cell phone here just in case he needed to call me.

Of course he never called and I had the phone in my jacket pocket. I forgot I had it and he must have

forgot also.

This morning as I was doing some writing for the newspaper I heard a cell phone ring and remember I had put his in my pocket and was sure he was calling for it.

Before I could get to the phone it had quite ringing so I hurried up and tried to see who had been calling. Because I know so little about a cell phone, I soon figured out I didn't know how to check messages. I didn't want to mess up his phone so

I grabbed our phone (while still holding his) and dialed his number.

Much to my surprise his phone started ringing again and I dropped my phone to answer his. It was then I realized I was trying to talk to me myself.

Of course he couldn't answer his phone, I had it.

What a day this one is going to be!!!

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



During these strange times it seems anything goes. A good example came from an e-mail a friend sent me. I'm sure he received it from a well intentioned soul.

The e-mail called for a boycott of the newly minted United States one \$ piece. Looking at the front and back of the coin something is missing.

There is no "In God We Trust" and "E Pluribus Unum." Also the date and mint location is not on the front nor the back.

As I say, these are strange times, but how could the government do this? I had to see for myself so I crossed the street to my local bank.

The always-friendly teller pulled out an envelope that contained the shiny new dollars. I mentioned my concern to her and she said, "Look at the edge."

To my relief, though I had trouble reading due to a lack of spectacles, were indeed the missing imprints. It is a beautiful coin, with the impression of "the father of our country," George Washington, on the front and the Statue of Liberty on the reverse. And it reinforces our need for God's guidance.

The United States Mint is scheduled to release four presidential coins each year, from now until 2016. The next three dollars will be

John Adams (1797-1801), Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809) and James Madison (1809-1817). For coin collectors, this set will provide a good history lesson.

Oh, as for the "E Pluribus Unum," the founding fathers chose the motto to describe the colonist from different European countries coming together in a new union. The Latin translates to "Out of many, one."

At least for now, things are as they should be on the new dollar coin.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Chad and Jennifer Niebels, Hopewell, Va.; Goodland Greeline, Wheeler; Margie Patton, Golden, Colo.; Wade Krien, St. Francis; Bob Ogden, St. Francis; Hazel Douthit, St. Francis; Julie Brunk, St. Francis; Sylvia Daniels, Goodland; Ron Popp, Albany, Ore.; Leo Walz, Miami, Fla.

GOD SAYS
Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.
Romans 12:9, 10

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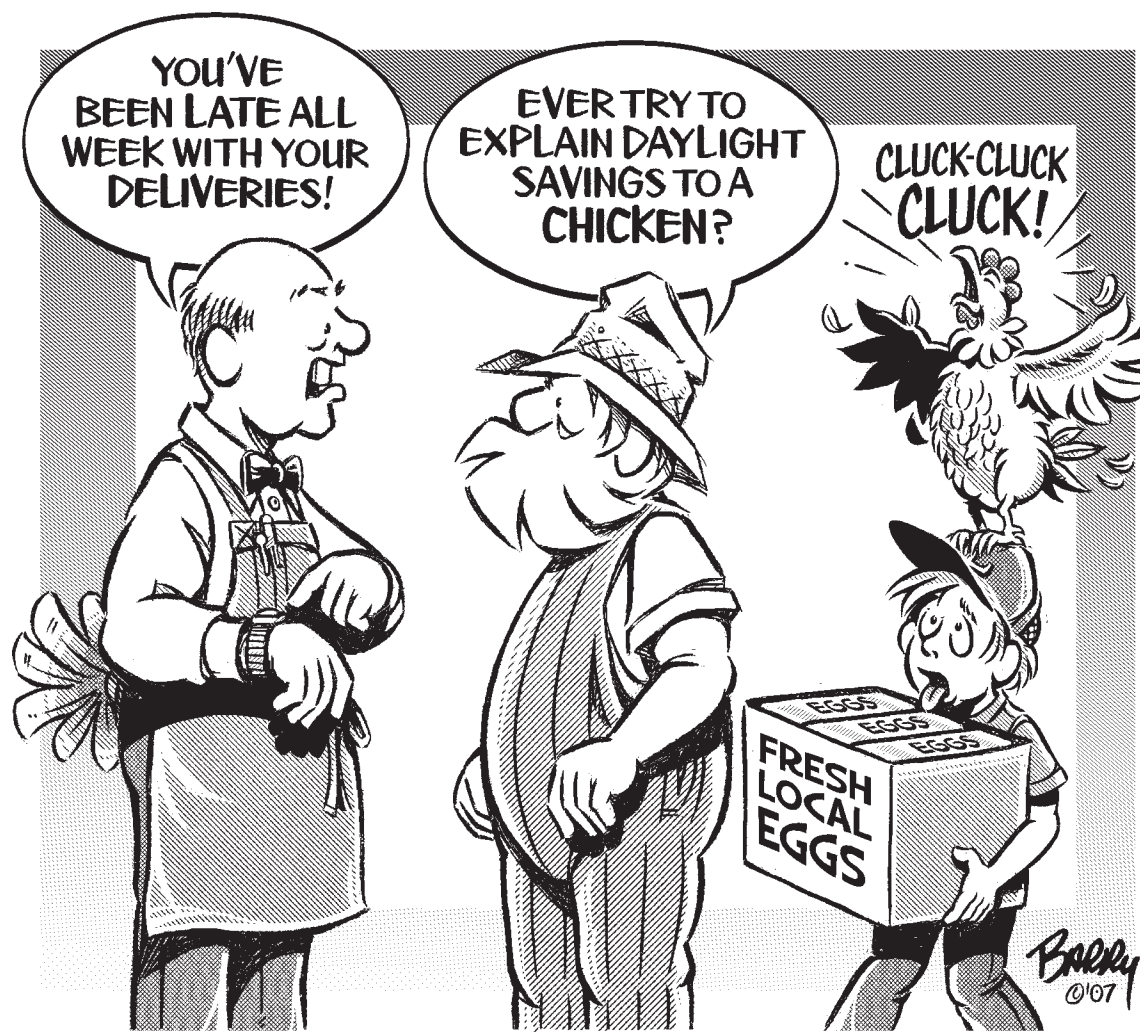
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News From the Past

15 years ago - 1992

Dallas Rogers earned first place in the 3-2-1A photography division at the Regional Journalism contest held in Hays.

Rob Lawson, city electrician, reports that the St. Francis City Council has approved the rebuilding of wiring in several of the alleys in St. Francis. They will be getting rid of loose connections and replacing transformers.

The city council voted to sign a contact with a company in Salina for a new fire truck priced at \$98,931.

Mindy Porter, 1992 Cheyenne County Young Woman of the Year, was second runner-up in the State Young Woman of the Year Scholarship Program held in Belleville. Mindy earned first in the fitness category and was in the top 10 with her talent num-

ber which was tap dancing and singing to "Let Me Dance For You."

Kathy Rainbolt is the new St. Francis Recreation Director. Connie Jenkins is the outgoing director. Mrs. Jenkins is entering a career in nursing.

Candi Stramel received the Best of Show and Award of Excellence at the Northwest Kansas League Art Show held in Atwood. Her picture was created in black, gray and white charcoal.

40 years ago - 1967

The Style Shoppe in St. Francis this week announced a change in ownership. Mrs. Ida Mae Morris has sold the store to Mrs. Bernice Evans. Mrs. Evans has been associated with the store since its opening in 1958 and has managed the store when Mrs. Morris was away.

Roma and Don Jensen are the new owners of the Montgomery Ward Store in St. Francis.

Mr. and Mrs. Dewey Starr have taken over the ownership and management of the Elm Hotel in St. Francis. Laura E. Mell, who owned the hotel for the past 13 years, has moved to Scott City.

Mrs. Frances Strange and son Johnny will open the donut shop in St. Francis in the Aaron Angel building on Main Street.

A meeting will be held to discuss the possibility of forming a St. Francis Indian Booster Club.

Susan Schlepp will represent the American Legion Auxiliary of St. Francis at Girls State.

Patrick Stuart of St. Francis was a participant in the Kansas Youth International Affairs Seminar in Washington DC.

Riverside Recreation Association is advertising for bids for the construction of the family recreation center west of St. Francis.

Lines from the Library

The following new books have arrived at the public library: *The Learning Tree* by Gordon Parks; *Sweet Revenge* by Fern Michaels; *Trouble* by Jesse Kellerman; *White Lies* by Jayne Krentz; *Sisters* by Danielle Steel; *Family Tree* by Barbara Delinsky; *The Edge Of Winter* by Luanne Rice; *When the Light Goes* by Larry McMurtry; *Whitehorn Woods* by Mauve Binchy; *Free Fall* by Fern Michaels; *Innocent In Death* by J.D. Robb; *High Profile* by Robert Parker; *Key Lime Pie Murder* by Joanne Fluke; *Make The Connection* by Bob Greene; *Buyers, Renters And Freeloaders* by Willard

Harley; *For the Rest Of My Life* by Harry Kraus; *Could I Have This Dance* by Harry Kraus; *Hannibal Rising* by Thomas Harris; *Dr. Henry Lee's Forensic Files* by Henry Lee.

The library has the following new DVDs: *The Notebook*; *Holes*; *Pride And Prejudice*; *Ever After*; *Radio*; *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*; *Cars*; *Charlotte's Web*; and *Love Comes Softly: A Walk To Remember*.

The following books on CD are new in the library: *Innocent In Death* by J.D. Robb; *Rain On The Mountain/A Ranger Rides To Town* by Louis L'Amour; *The Best of Bill*

Cosby; *Hello Darkness* by Sandra Brown; *The Firm* by John Grisham; *A Right To Die* by Rex Stout; *An Accidental Woman* by Barbara Delinsky; *Sisters* by Danielle Steel; *Finding Noel* by Richard Evans; *Get Out Of That Pit* by Beth Moore.

The following new books are in the children's department: *A Very Special Secret* by Katharine Hilabird; *Mission To Mars* by Wendy Wax; *The Secret Of Snow* by Alison Inches; *Say "Please!"* by Catherine Lukas; *Bug Your Mom Day* by David Kirk; *Ant-Tuition* by David Kirk; *The Bridesmaid Ballet* by Katharine Holabird.

Church of Christ
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424
502 W. Spencer
Norman Morrow - Minister
Bible Class 11 a.m.
Morning Worship 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

United Methodist
Church Office 332-2292,
Church 332-2254,
512 S. Scott
Pastor Morita Truman
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church
332-3002
Pastor Chris Farmer
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Morning Worship 11 a.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
625 S. River • 332-2680
Fr. Roger Meitl
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.
Weekday Mass 8 a.m.
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

First Christian Church
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster
Sunday School 9:20 a.m.
Church Service 10:30 a.m.
Wed. night Bible Study 7 p.m.

Grace Assembly of God
332-2925, Pars. 332-2899
208 E. 2nd
Rev. Rob Meyer
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30
Sunday Eve. Service 6 p.m.

St. Francis Community Church
332-3150
204 N. Quincy Street
Pastor: David Butler
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
332-2888 • 3rd & Adams
Pastor Mike Larson
Sabbath School 9:30
Morning Worship 10:45

First Baptist Church
2nd & Scott • 332-3921
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,
Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church
202 N. College
Pastor Ken Hart
332-2928 Pars. 332-2312
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Clough Valley Church of Hope
12 m. west, 6 m. north of SF
Pastor Jason Howard
332-3152
Saturdays 8 p.m. CT or 7 p.m. MT



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