

# Meet the Candidates

The school board and city council candidates will be on the ballot at the general election on Tuesday. To help voters be more informed on the candidates, the following is a brief bio on each. People with further questions should talk to the candidates.

## John Knodel

John Knodel has been serving on the St. Francis Board of Education for the last 10 years as the representative for District 3, Position 3.



Knodel

He was appointed to fill the seat after the death of Dean O'Brien in August 1997. He said he may have never considered being on the board of education before then but, today, he is glad he has had the opportunity. "We have such a good school system — one of the best in the tri-state area — and, I am happy I have been involved," he said.

Mr. Knodel said the school has excellent administrators who have made sure the level of technology and the facility are constantly kept up. He does think that more students in the school would be good, however, he thinks that the "kids are outstanding" and there is a positive attitude seen in both the students and the teachers.

Mr. Knodel and his wife Natalie are the owners of Knodel Funeral Home. Mrs. Knodel is also a member of the St. Francis City Council.

They have three daughters, Mallory, Meredith and Mattie.

## Dr. MaryBeth Miller

Dr. Mary Beth Miller is running unopposed for a seat on the St. Francis Board of Education.

She will be representing District 1, position 1.

Dr. Miller and her family moved to St. Francis in 1999 where she began her family practice at the Cheyenne County Hospital.



Miller

"One of the reasons I moved to St. Francis was so the children would have a chance to be a part of a good school system," she said.

Since then, her daughter Sheryl has graduated and gone on to college; and Sara and Marvin are still attending the St. Francis schools.

Dr. Miller said being on the board will be "new territory" for her. She is not going onto the board to change anything but to learn. She does want to be a part of the transition from superintendent Carl Werner to Rob Schiltz, who has been the assistant superintendent. She would also like to know more about the funding for schools.

She is very optimistic about the

future of the St. Francis schools, noting that the trend is changing toward smaller classes, and that is what St. Francis already has.

"My goal is to keep the St. Francis schools as very good schools," she said.

When asked about the proposed gymnasium, she said she understood it was a controversial matter. However, she thinks that to go forward, that the school administration needs to be constantly bettering the facilities.

With good schools, it will help attract new families with children to live in St. Francis.

Dr. Miller is married to Terry Miller, the Cheyenne County Clerk. constantly

## Sherry Weeks

Sherry Weeks is serving her 10th year as Member At Large on the St. Francis Board of Education.

She is running unopposed on the ballot.

Mrs. Weeks said the future of the school could depend upon the population but even with fewer students, she wants to see the school to continue providing an excellent education for students.

"We have a great school with the staff and administration working together," she said. "We need to be proud of our schools."

When asked her opinion of the proposed new gymnasium, Mrs. Weeks said she thinks that in many ways the gym is needed and can be used. She noted that the people she has talked to are saying that a new gym will be a good thing because of the scheduling problems with sports practices. She also pointed out that the gym in the grade school is too small.

"The new gym will offer a walking track for the public which will be good deal for many," she said.

Mrs. Weeks is an insurance clerk at the Cheyenne County Hospital. She and her husband Dale, who is a manager of the Wheeler Equity, have five children and eight grandchildren. Mr. Weeks is a member of the St. Francis City Council.

## Bonnie Zwegardt

As a representative for District 2, Position 2, Bonnie Zwegardt is running for her fourth term on the St. Francis Board of Education, having already served 12 years.

"I am interested in and enjoy being on the school board," Mrs. Zwegardt said. "I also think that having an experienced board will make the transition of the new superintendent smoother."



Zwegardt

She added that she is looking forward to working with Rob Schiltz when he assumes the duties of superintendent.

"I have really enjoyed working with Carl (Werner-superintendent) and we probably don't know how lucky we are to have had him all these years," she said. "He is an outstanding superintendent and he has had a positive influence on the rest of the faculty."

Mrs. Zwegardt sees the school as being in very good shape.

"We have kept up with technology including supplying the students and staff with adequate computers," she said. "We have a great staff that interact with the students."

More students would be ideal for the school system, she said. And, in the future, she hopes that the administration and board will continue to improve the technology.

Mrs. Zwegardt is a clerk in the appraiser's office. She and her husband Ron, who is a farmer, have two daughters, Lisa and Pam, and a younger son, Zack, who is in junior high. They also have one grandchild.

## Bud Erskin

Bud Erskin is running for a seat on the St. Francis City Council because he thinks it is important to be involved and he is concerned about St. Francis.

"I think it is important that young people come back to the community but that means finding jobs to bring them here," he said. "We need to be looking at outside businesses who are willing to come to St. Francis and then give them tax breaks."

"We have a lot of empty buildings and, if someone is willing to put in the inventory to open the doors, then we need to offer an incentive."

"If we don't, we will continue to lose residents until we don't have a town. We need to act now."

Mr. Erskin sees St. Francis as becoming a retirement community and says there is nothing wrong with that but employment is still needed.

"Right now, it is 'MYOJ' or 'make your own job,'" he said.

"I also think we need to forget about competing with Wal-Mart. I did and I have won," he said.

"We have great people and we need to look at those resources and use them."

Mr. Erskin has spent many years as a director on the U.S. 36 Association.

"I was very involved in the Association and, if elected, I would like to bring this involvement to the city council."

Mr. Erskin is the owner of Majestic Service and a dealer for U-Haul trailers. His daughter Kari and husband Troy Meyer have a daughter Audrey.

## Roger Jensen

Roger Jensen has been a member of the St. Francis City Council for eight years and, during those years, has been the council president, and board member of the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Organization.



Jensen

While he has been on the board, he has seen the Recycling Organization established, the city hall relocated to a larger building that now has room for the police department, high speed internet installed and the rehabilitation of the water tower and a new meeting room.

The recycling building has been one of the projects he has continued to encourage people to use. The recycling center will save space in the Cheyenne County Landfill.

Recycled items collected at the facility are taken to Colby where they go to different outlets. He noted that the recycling effort is not a moneymaker but is a service to the county as it keeps over 100,000 pounds out of the solid waste site each year.

He has seen a number of projects completed including the remodeling of the city hall for offices and a meeting room, and the recycling center. The building of the new firehouse and emergency medical service facility are already underway.

"The last eight years the council has been very progressive and we have accomplished a lot for the good in the community," he said.

## Bruce Roelfs

Bruce Roelfs is running for a seat on the St. Francis City Council and wants to become involved in the changes concerning community management.



Roelfs

"I take an interest in the community's future — we need to think outside the box," Mr. Roelfs said.

"I would like to propose new ways of looking at things and a new way of doing things for the community."

Mr. Roelfs pointed to the senior center, which is an excellent activity for the older generation but also he sees the need to promote jobs and entertainment for the younger generation.

"We need fresh ideas with common sense," he said.

He thinks the new ambulance and firehouse facility is great progress and would like to be involved in future planning by the city council.

"Hindsight is always 20-20 but sometimes, is the spending really necessary or is it routine money management?" he said. "That statement may

rattle some cages but I only want the best for St. Francis's future.

"This has always been my home even during my 21-years in the U.S. Coast Guard.

"Our future will depend on attracting the younger people to the community and keep our young generation employed here.

Mr. Roelfs, a certified massage therapist, is the owner of Massage Therapy and Bodyworks. He is married to Susan, the county health nurse.

## Dale Weeks

Dale Weeks has served on the St. Francis City Council for four years.

During that time, he has served on several committees including the KAN STEP Committee. Through the Department of Commerce and Housing, the city received a KAN STEP grant for \$400,000 to build an emergency building south of U.S. 36. The building will house the fire trucks, ambulances, offices and a meeting room for firemen and emergency medical technicians.

Mr. Weeks has been on hand for each of the steps from the planning to the pouring of the cement, to the erection of the structure. The side of the buildings went up last week but the forecast of wind and rain halted the work on Saturday. He said the building, which will be built with volunteer laborers, will need to be up and finished in a year.

He said that he wanted to serve another term to see the emergency building put up as well as help with decisions on street repairs and the water issue in the southeast part of town.

"There are just a lot of unfinished projects I would like to see through," he said.

He sees the future of St. Francis turning around, especially with the moisture that was received this winter.

Mr. Weeks is the manager of the



Weeks

Wheeler Equity Co-op. He and his wife Sherry, who is an insurance clerk at the Cheyenne County Hospital, have five children and eight grandchildren. Mrs. Weeks is a member of the St. Francis Board of Education.

## Scott Schultz

Scott Schultz is running unopposed for the position as St. Francis Mayor.

He has served the council for eight years.

Mr. Schultz said he considered not running but said he has a fantastic council, and some are running again this year.

"They (council members) are a positive group and everything is running smoothly," he said.

The council is continually looking forward and making progress, he added.

Some of the projects recently finished are the recycling center, the new city offices and meeting room and now, the city is working toward the completion of the new firehouse and emergency medical service building.

"The council is trying to be progressive and I think the community is standing behind us," Mr. Schultz said.

"Some people disagree and say that we are spending too much (money), instead of looking at what the board has done over all."

He went on to say that the new city council meeting room is so much better, looks more professional, for having people attend meetings.

In the future, Mr. Schultz thinks there will need to be some new ideas for bringing businesses in to town.

"We are an ag-dependent community but I think that some more small manufacturing businesses would be great for our town," he said. "We need to use technology to our advantage."

Mr. Schultz and his wife Nancy own Schultz's, a furniture, carpet and gift store. He also runs a small remodeling business. They have three children, Jennifer, Josh and Jessica.



Schultz

## Club Clip

The Classy Classic Red Hatters met Thursday, March 22. The following poem was written by member Helene Landenberger in honor of the meeting.

### Classy Classic Red Hat Event

At the Heritage Corner Cafe, in the town of Bird City,  
The tables were decorated with shamrock ditties.

March 22, at six was the date and time,  
The musicians that came were mighty fine.

The high schoolers came with songs of the season.  
There was Keadra Dixon, Nikki Johnson and Samantha Beeson.

Max Hengen and Lincoln Pochup sang songs of fun,  
Then the piano was played by Emily Erickson.

The Classy Classics had an interesting evening  
The pork chops had just the right seasoning.

St. Patrick's day was remembered in the songs and the food.  
Twenty-four brightly dressed ladies set the mood.

Liz Weber, Helene Landenberger and Mary Lou Munn,  
Were the hostesses for March, and all this fun.

It was announced that in April, Atwood is the location,  
At the Aberdeen Steak house, for another evenings' mini-vacation.

# Donlay Heart 6x8 In Goodland