

## Tower has no power

By Karen Krien

Getting back-up batteries to the repeater tower was a priority when the Cheyenne County Commissioners met on Friday.

Janelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, reported that during the March 28 tornado that took out homes near Bird City, the emergency medical technicians and firemen had no radios to communicate with each other.

She was also concerned as to why no one had let them know that a tornado was coming at them. She said that the firemen and emergency medical technicians had gone through town and stopped at businesses to let people know about the tornado. However, she said it was a helpless feeling to not be able to talk to each other on their radios.

The commissioners were puzzled as they thought there were back-up batteries at the repeater tower which is located east of Wheeler. When the power went off at the tower, Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, said his radio "beeped" to let him know so he could get the generator to the tower. He said there was no indication that the tower was without power.

A call was made to Rick Moses with Prairie States. He had recently

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KEN AND MARGARET Quigley were among those coming to vote Tuesday. Sherry Schultz, front, was one of the election helpers. Also helping are Carolyn Culwell and Dawn Frye.

## Poor turnout at polls

By Karen Krien

The school and city election was held Tuesday with only 19 percent of the registered voters going to the polls to cast their ballots. Terry Miller, county election officer, reported 486 people voted in the election.

The only races in the St. Francis election was for city council where incumbents Roger Jensen and Dale

Weeks won the St. Francis City Council seats over Bruce Roelfs and Bud Erskin.

In Bird City, there was a race for the District 2, position 4 on the Cheylin School Board. Dale Hazuka won over Belinda Serrano.

Four people were running for Bird City City Council and only three seats were vacant. Incumbents Ray Magnani, Frank Serrano and

Loren White won over Hal Sager. Also on the ballot was the Sunflower Extension District Number 6. Two people were needed to sit on this board. Randy Rueb's name was on the ballot and John Hendricks was a write-in with 27 votes.

St. Francis City Council

Bud Erskin 38

Roger Jensen 106

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## Land offered to change curve in road

By Karen Krien

Raymond Armknecht, St. Francis, offered the land to change the lay of a curve on a county road. Mr. Armknecht owns land in southwest Cheyenne County next to the Colorado-Kansas line. The first of November, 24-year-old Brett Files was killed on the curve while driving a four-wheeler.

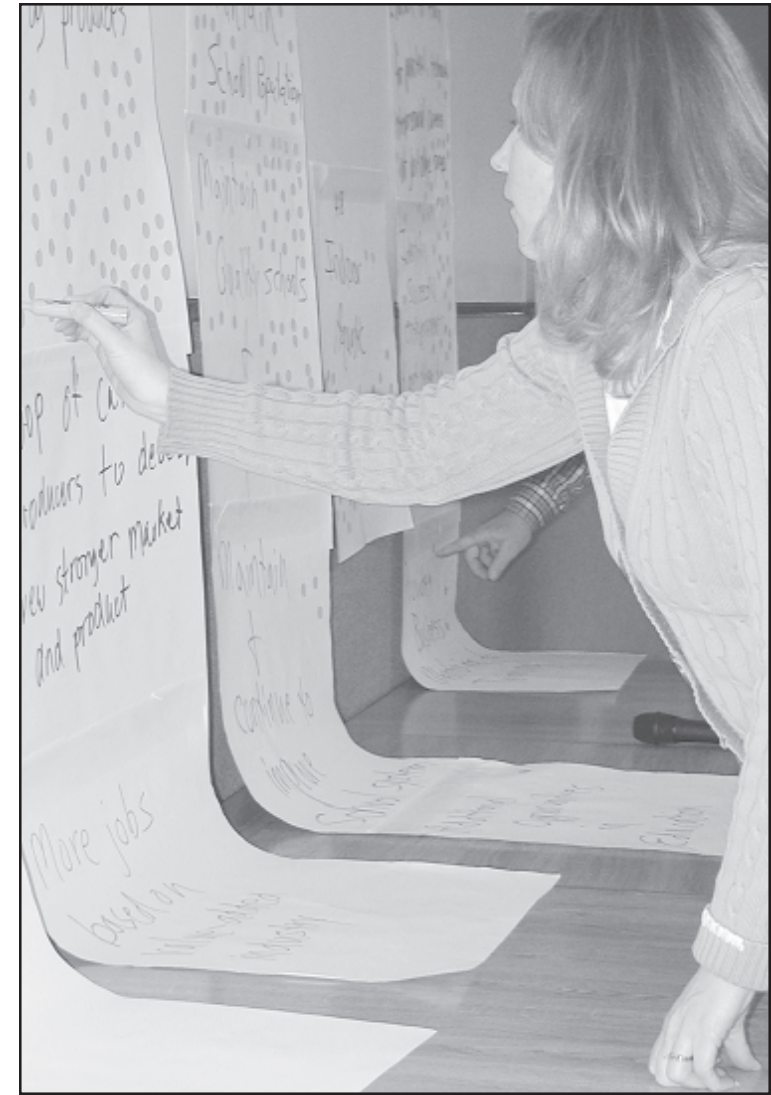
Mr. Armknecht said there had

been several wrecks but no one had been killed before.

"I don't want to come out there someday and find someone who has been killed or seriously injured," Mr. Armknecht said. "That why I am donating the land to have that curve changed."

Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, said he would check into

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COUNTING THE DOTS — Dara Carmichael counts the dots on the posters at the Cheyenne Initiative meeting Friday evening.

## Over 100 people attend meeting

By Karen Krien

Friday evening, approximately 110 people from Cheyenne and Rawlins counties met with the facilitators to help plan the future of Cheyenne County and explore the options of "hometown competitiveness."

The meeting was the first public forum held for the Cheyenne Initiative Association, a diverse group of people from St. Francis and Bird City in business, education, the medical field, and ministry, as well as other areas. The association, along with Rawlins and Norton counties, is participating in the High Plains Regional Cluster. The Cluster is facilitated by Ogallala Commons, a resource development network.

Opening the meeting were Dr. Darryl Birkenfeld and Remelle Farrar, both from Texas and both from small communities like St. Francis and Bird City.

Ms. Farrar pointed out that there are assets in Cheyenne County, noting that some of the assets such as wildlife, water, health and a sense of

## Census figures

Cheyenne County was founded on March 20, 1873. It consists of 1,021 square miles and historically, its main industry has been cattle ranching and farming.

The 2005 census showed there were 2,946 people living in the county and besides farming and ranching, business, natural gas and oil and manufacturing had been added.

Some of the changes which have occurred in Cheyenne County include:

- A 6.7-percent drop in

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place, along with pride and love, will attract people to come and live in the county.

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## Candy and bunny at Easter Egg hunt

Kids are urged to check out the candy, prizes and the Easter Bunny at the Easter Egg Hunt at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday in the St. Francis Grade School gym. Children should bring their baskets to collect the candy and prizes.

Be sure to bring a camera as there will be opportunities for parents to take their child's picture with the Easter Bunny.

There will be five age divisions: 1-year-olds; 2-year-olds; 3-year-olds; 4- and 5-year-olds; and 6-, 7- and 8-year-olds.



## Tornado sweeps through county

By Melinda Basnett

No one was hurt in Wednesday night's tornados that hit eight farms in the Bird City area. As the tornados entered the county from the south, they traveled in almost a direct northerly path through the eastern part of the county. It was already dark, making it hard to tell what was developing.

The first farm hit belonged to John and Maria Kamla 7 miles south of Bird City. Mr. and Mrs. Kamla were watching television when neighbors Phyllis and Gerald Wright called to warn them of the approaching storm. This allowed them time to get to the basement.

On the Kamla farm it removed the east half of the barn roof, left the other outbuildings alone, but destroyed their house. The car was left sitting on a concrete pad attached to the house with a 3-inch piece of wood driven into the top of the windshield. The garage around it was gone as well as a great deal of the house.

Debris was scattered in a path north into the tree row. The horse trailer that had been parked next to the house was left about a half mile north.

From there the next victim was a barn belonging to Elaine Johnson. The twister ripped through the center of the barn, but left the house untouched.

The storm then continued its path north destroying sprinklers belonging to John Deeds, Joe Kramer and others, and utility poles across the countryside. As it neared Bird City it claimed outbuildings on the unoccupied Neil Carsten farm, before hitting the Ed and Phyllis Carson farm along U.S. 36 less than one half mile from the east edge of Bird City.

Mr. and Mrs. Carson had heard the warnings and had taken refuge in their basement. They heard the high winds but did not realize until later what had really happened. Their barn was gone, and their shop a collapsed mess. The house suffered damage to the siding and had many shingles gone from the west side, but there were no broken windows or major damage.

After crossing U.S. 36, the storm followed Road 31 north and seemed to grow more powerful as it tore apart the farm of Nick and Heidi Ketzner 2 miles



NOPE, IT'S NOT A TREE HOUSE — The mattress landed in the top of the tree at the Nick Ketzner residence when the tornado destroyed their house Wednesday, March 28.

Herald staff photo by Casey McCormick

north and two east of Bird City. The Ketzner family was in the storm cellar as the storm ripped up trees, took the barn, destroyed their house and scattered the remains for miles. The framework entrance to the cellar door suffered damage and an iron wagon wheel that had been in the yard came down the stairs toward the family hiding there.

"I'm just glad it didn't hit the town," Mr. Ketzner said. "It could have been so much worse."

Numbers of volunteers arrived early the next morning to help salvage any belongings left and to round up the sheep. Mr. Ketzner raises show sheep and is the owner of High Noon Feeds. He feels lucky to have only lost around a dozen out of a little over a 100 sheep.

An American flag, torn and tattered from the tornado was found in the rubble and placed on what was left of the fence along the road. It showed a sense of the community spirit and kindness as so many came to help clean up and prepare to rebuild.

Farther north the unoccupied farm belonging to Keith and Hulda Dorsch was ripped apart next. The outbuildings are gone and the house imploded and fell into the basement.

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Jeremiah Neitzel holds the check he found which had blown in from Holly, Colo.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

## Holly checks found

By Karen Krien

Jeremiah Neitzel, 8-year-old son of Ron and Roxie Neitzel, had just finished jumping on the trampoline when he looked down on the ground. He had found one of a number of checks from Holly, Colo., fol-

lowing the tornado which ripped the town apart on Wednesday, March 28. Holly is 120 miles "as the crow flies."

He took it to his parents, telling them it looked "like someone

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