

ROAD

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what it would take to change the road and report at the next commissioners' meeting.

Sheriff's report

Troy Gardner, sheriff, was unable to be at the meeting but had sent some letters noting that he wanted to send Derek Morrow to two National Rifle Association certification classes. One is for a patrol rifle instructor and the other is for handgun and shotgun instructor. Each class will cost \$525 plus there are addition costs for range fees as well as room and board.

Since Officer Morrow will be training for both the county and the city of St. Francis, he suggested splitting the costs of the classes. He said that having an instructor in these area is vital. The county pick up the costs for half of the classes.

Sheriff Gardner reported Tom Raile, undersheriff, had resigned in order to go to Wyoming to work. He said his move is based on financial and career motivations.

Sheriff Gardner suggested that Craig VanAllen be appointed as the undersheriff. This was agreeable with the commissioners.

Techs and fires

Janelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, talked about the commissioners' decision to have emergency medical technicians respond to all fires. She said that the techs were volunteers and almost all fire calls did not require an ambulance nor emergency medical technicians.

"They don't want to sit four hours at a grass fire if they don't have to," Mrs. Bowers said.

St. Francis fire chief, George Harper, also did not think it was necessary for the techs to respond to fires. When the techs are needed they

will respond immediately.

The commissioners agreed to not have the emergency medical technicians at fires unless they are needed.

Courthouse steps

Greg Kite, who has written a grant for the courthouse steps, reported that some of the information in March 22. The *Herald* newspaper article was incorrect. He said the original courthouse blueprints were sent with the architect, not Mr. Kite. Also the blueprints included "shop drawing" of the exterior front staircase which confirmed not only that limestone was used for the steps but named the limestone which was used.

The actual construction of the exterior front staircase started with laying the limestone steps/landing and ended with building the brick wing walls with cap stones. The original steps were not made of concrete. Concrete was only subsequently used for a thin, protective layer over the limestone as a quick fix, make do or stop gap to slow the deterioration of the staircase.

The commissioners discussed the payment to Troy Porter, who had earlier done the cement work on the present steps and work up to the steps. After discussion, they decided to wait on any payment until they know more about the grant.

In other business

In other business:

- Commissioner Ketzner said he had heard complaints about extending and widening the handicap drive on the west side of the courthouse. The commissioners agreed that the improvements would be good but nothing will be done until they know more about the courthouse steps.
- Justin Barrett, county attorney, discussed the letter the commission-

ers had received about executive sessions called during fair board meetings. He said there were more reasons for calling executive session given in the letter but they were seldom used. He will address a letter to fair board members telling them of the executive session laws.

- Elmer Kellner, St. Francis, resigned his position as the Resource Conservation and Development representative for the commissioners and suggested that Carol Redding, St. Francis, take the position. The commissioners agreed to appoint Ms. Redding.
- Dan Schlittenhardt, noxious weed and prairie dog supervisor, and Ed Garner, landfill supervisor, were given permission to attend a household hazardous waste re-certification. The commissioners discussed having someone else besides Mr. Schlittenhardt be certified for noxious weed and prairie dog elimination in case Mr. Schlittenhardt would be sick and not able to do the job. No appointment was made.
- The clerk asked for executive session to discuss safety as directed by the Kansas Supreme Court.
- Mary Morrow, register of deeds, was given permission to attend two meetings.
- Nancy Semler, Bird City, had offered to write a grant for a Bird City ambulance but there would be a charge. There was no guarantee that she would get the grant and, for the time being, the commissioners agreed to table the matter.
- Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, gave his report. He had received a letter from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment which gave permission for the landfill supervisor to use a papier-mache slurry to cover the trash to keep it from blowing.
- The lack of back-up power at the repeater tower east of Wheeler will be corrected by having back-up batteries as soon as possible. See related article.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the commissioners will be at 8 a.m. on Monday when they count the votes from the Tuesday election.

The next regular meeting will be held at 8 a.m. on Monday, March 16, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.

POWER

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Bruce Roelfs	73
Dale Weeks	121

St. Francis Mayor

Scott Schultz	172
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Bird City City Council

Frank Serrano	62
Ray Magnani	74
Hal Sager	49
Loren White	62

St. Francis Board of Education

John Knodel	178
Mary Beth Miller	172
Sherry Weeks	173
Bonnie Zwegardt	169

Cheylin Board of Education

David Frisbie	196
Dale Hazuka	155
Lori Janicke	178
Belinda Serrano	68

Sunflower Extension District Number 6

Randy Rueb	276
John Hendricks	27

CENSUS

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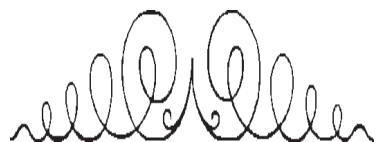
population since 1995.

- A 36-percent drop in the birth rate since 1985.
- A 26-percent drop in public school enrollment since 1994.
- A 0.52-percent long-run employment change (1995-2005).
- A 21-percent drop in the number of farms (1985-2000).
- A 31-percent drop in retail payroll since 1998.
- A 17-percent increase of population 65 and older (1980-2000).
- A 58-percent increase in population 85 and older (1970-2000).
- A 10-year increase in the median age-34 to 44 years old (1960-2000).

In 2005, the 105 Kansas counties were ranked in their wealth, growth and population.

Cheyenne County was 79 out of the 105 counties in Kansas; Rawlins County was 93; Decatur County was 101; Sherman County was 100; Thomas County was 52; and Wallace County was 58.

For more facts, go to www.ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/kcced/profiles; www.kansasinc.org or www.wikipedia.org



Choir performs at Lutheran Church

A Concert Choir from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School plans an evening of sacred music at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 19, at the Peace Lutheran Church in St. Francis.

The 48-member mixed choir from Minneapolis, Minn., tours annually and has traveled across the United States, Canada, Mexico and in areas of Europe.

The choir is under the direction of Jerry D. Nelson, the school's music director. Mr. Nelson studied conducting and voice at the

Graduate School of Music at the University of Minnesota and completed a master's of art in music education at the University of St. Thomas.

The repertoire of the choir is eclectic in style, primarily a cappella and includes sacred classics, hymn arrangements and energetic spirituals. Pastor Joel Rolf, Association Free Lutheran Bible School dean, will give a greeting at each concert. The entire family is welcome.

MEETING

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Tom Keller, chairman of the Association, had statistics about the county (see chart) but said that overall, where the county showed well except in the 2004 per capita income, the county was at the bottom of the charts with \$17,500. In other words, the county was 105th of the 105 counties in Kansas.

The statistic was the drop in population, the number of people in 1930 was 7,000 but in 2005, it had dropped to a little less than 3,000 — a total of around 4,000 people.

The people agreed that the future of Cheyenne County needed three things: 1) keep the residents who are already living here and bring more people in; 2) bring in more industry and business; and 3) maintain a positive outlook.

The option for the future is: bring to build or give up.

Some of the ideas given by people are short-termed but others will take time. The facilitators noted that it didn't take one year to get to the place where Cheyenne County is as far as businesses and population so it will probably take longer to build it up.

Those attending divided into groups of approximately 10 to 12 where each person gave five ideas of what was needed in the county; then the people at each table voted as to which ideas were the best. The top ideas were written down on posters hanging on the walls. Many of the ideas were the same as other table occupants.

Those present were each given 12 orange dots which were placed on the overall ideas they thought were best. Some had signed their dots indicating that they were willing to help get this idea up and going.

The top idea to bring industry, thus business and people to the county, was "wind energy" with 69 orange dots. Wind energy towers are located in a number of counties in Kansas and, with the wind that blows in Cheyenne

County, it seems to be a very logical idea.

Other ideas are listed in the priority order:

- Develop a market for the agriculture population.
- Maintain school population and quality.
- Develop funding for starting up businesses.
- Create a team to market St. Francis through technology.
- Develop transportation program for the elderly.
- Develop an indoor aquatic center.
- Develop education to train for practical technology.

POWER

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put in new repeaters at the tower. Mr. Moses said the batteries which had been at the tower were old and did not adapt to the new repeaters. He said back-up batteries would last from 6 to 8 hours and would cost about \$5,000. He also discussed having a generator there at all times but the commissioners decided the back-up batteries would be the best and a portable generator could be brought to the site within a few minutes.

The back-up batteries will be installed as quickly as possible. The commissioners did not want a repeat of the night of the tornado when there was no radio power.

• Entrepreneur careers — not just college

- Develop assisted living
- Maintain and promote the medical facilities.
- Develop a community foundation and health retention.
- Establish a community center for applying for grants.
- Develop leadership with regional focus on moving forward together.
- Attract and retain youth.

Look for more information on the Cheyenne Initiative Association as groups and committees continue to meet.

TORNADO

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Mr. and Mrs. Dorsch were out of town, but were shocked to hear the news. Their own home only a few miles away and was untouched by the tornado.

Many bales of feed and hay were unrolled across fields as the tornado created a trail of wreckage.

The farm of Lynn and Candy Glasco suffered incredible damage as well. The brick home was destroyed, trees ripped up and broken, a bale feeder wrapped around one tree. Several years ago, the Glascos had won the Banker's Windbreak Award. There was a twisted pile of vehicles and farm equipment where the shop used to stand.

Early the next morning, Mrs. Glasco and many volunteers searched through the rubble of her home for any salvageable items. Clutched under her arm was a Bible that her parents had given her in 1959. With a grin and tears in her eyes, she looked up and praised God that no one was hurt. She had found the Bible among the debris.

Mr. Glasco and others were working to repair corrals to keep the cattle from getting out and to make sure that they had feed and water. Everywhere

there was stuff scattered along with straw matted into the trees and shrubs.

Cheyenne County law enforcement evacuated Mr. and Mrs. Glasco when they called 911 on Wednesday night after the storm.

The Bud Mears farm was also hit. There were two barns destroyed and the house suffered severe damage. Mr. Mears was not at home when the storm hit.

Farther north near Benkelman, other farms and fields suffered extensive damage as well. Some have reported many trees uprooted and three houses with severe damage.

Weather officials have rated the tornados near Bird City as F2 with winds in excess of 170 mph. Local power and utility companies have been working feverishly to restore poles taken out by the storm. Crews from many areas have been brought in to assist.

Many different groups have come to the area to help as well. The Lions Club members from Gem came to help cleanup. A volunteer center was set up at the Bird City Emergency building and many different organizations prepared meals for the workers.

CHECKS

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thing important."

The check, along with all the other checks found, had been stored in the attic of the Jim and Peggy Kalma home. The Kalma house was completely destroyed in the tornado.

In an article written by Tom Betz, *The Goodland Star-News*, he told about the twister that "left Holly in shreds," then moved north, ripping through a feedlot, injuring and killing cattle.

The wind twisted pivot sprinklers into pretzels and dumped them on the road, growing to a high EF3 or 4 rating on the 1-5 Enhanced Fujita scale used by weather experts. That's big enough to flatten a farmstead in it's path and scatter debris more than two miles.

Jim and Peggy Kalma, who live about 11 miles north of Holly, had decided to go to town for dinner and to a church Bible study on Wednesday. When they heard about the tornado, they headed for home only to find there was nothing left.

The tornado took their home, garage, corrals, barn and vehicles. The Kalmas had a basement, but the force of the tornado had ripped the floor off and dropped pieces of the house into the exposed cellar.

Jim Kalma said Saturday afternoon he thought the tornado was about a mile wide when it hit his place based on the widespread damage.

"The weather man who talked to me said it looked like an EF4," he said.

Peggy Kalma said she was both glad and sorry they had not been at home that night. She said she might have had time to save a few things, but looking at the devastation, she said there was a good chance they would not have survived.

She said she had found her digital camera and it was not hurt. She found her purse among the many things that were destroyed.

She said they had found some of

her jewelry and old family rings with a piece of a drawer from the jewelry box her grandmother had made.

"Maybe I can mount that on the wall as a reminder," she said.

People were combing the wind-break along the north side, where some of the smaller items had been found.

Jim Kalma said his gun collection and old coin collection were in the garage, but the safe they were in was undamaged.

He said a rural electric employee found one of his belt buckles about two miles north of the house and brought it back. The wheels of his fifth-wheel trailer landed about a mile north of the house.

"When I called the insurance guy, I told him it was destroyed," he said. "He told me we could probably find someone to haul it into town so someone could determine the amount of damage."

"I told him we could find the wheels about a mile away and maybe some of the other pieces. I told him it was a tornado and that the trailer was now in splinters. He just didn't seem to understand."

Kalma said he had found three of four prized knives, but wanted to find the other because an old friend, Tom Clark, had made it for him.

The couple was not sure about rebuilding the home.

Peggy Kalma said it was getting expensive to drive into town, but then she looked out across the valley to the south and said, "but this is home."

They said all their old papers for taxes were in the attic, and they weren't surprised to hear a few of the checks had been found as far north as St. Francis.

Jim Kalma said he kept a jar of quarters and buckets of pennies that are being found scattered to the north. He said he doesn't particularly want the checks back, but would like to talk to the people who found them.

Mr. Griffin said the helpline provides access via referral to a resource network of health providers, churches, financial and legal advisers, farm and family mediation services, family educators and agricultural production and agribusiness specialists. It also provides access to local, state and federal agencies that may be able to help rural families in the state.

"For people who don't know where else to turn, we can help," Mr. Griffin said.

The Kansas Rural Family Helpline is available, toll free, at 1-866-327-6578 or by e-mail to farmksu@humecc.ksu.edu.

Helpline assists rural families hit by tornados, storms

Charlie Griffin says his phone has been ringing nonstop since damaging tornados hit parts of western Kansas. Mr. Griffin is the director of the Kansas Rural Family Helpline, a program of the School of Family Studies and Human Services at Kansas State University's College of Human Ecology.

The helpline was established in 2000 and is offering disaster response assistance through a partnership with Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services. It provides free confidential assistance, support and referrals for agricultural producers and rural families.