

911 system installation in December

By Karen Krien
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The Cheyenne County Commissioners and St. Francis City Council met Friday to discuss the new 911 system. Scott Schultz, St. Francis mayor, said the council was there to make sure the commissioners knew they supported the plans for the 911 system. They all agreed that communication about the project between the cities and county is important.

The new 911 system will be moved Jan. 1 from the St. Francis power plant to the old sheriff's office. The equipment is supposed to be coming sometime in October. It should be up and ready in December. This would give time for testing before the Jan. 1 starting date. The enhanced 911 system will not be implemented until March 15. The commissioners said Jim

O'Loughlin, Allied Information Solutions, the company which has been contracted to set up the equipment and make sure it is working, will be in St. Francis to attend a commissioners' meeting in September.

The St. Francis council had agreed to pay wages and benefits for those dispatchers who will be coming over to the new system until the end of December. Andy Beikman, commissioner chairman, said the county will then take over the wages and benefits.

Carla Lampe, city council member, asked about setting up a committee which would be comprised of council members from both cities, a commissioner, as well as a lawyer and the head of the 911 system. This seemed agreeable as there would be someone to report back to the different entities.

See 911 on Page 7

Two present for hearing

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The county budget hearing was held at 9 a.m. on Friday with two county employees there to express concern about their department budget. The Cheyenne County Commissioners listened to what they had to say but went ahead and closed the hearing.

The county will be raising \$1,918,364 in taxes which is \$285,765 less than last year. At an earlier meeting, the commissioners agreed to republish the budget in order to bring county employees' wages up with employees in surrounding counties. It took an additional \$20,606 to pay the 30 people hired by the county.

At the Friday meeting, Justin Barrett, county attorney, had gathered facts from other counties. The Rawlins County attorney is paid \$14,000 more than Cheyenne County and in every court hearing, the lawyer of the opposition is mak-

ing \$65 more an hour.

"You are pricing yourself out of ever being competitive," he said, adding that the figures hadn't increased in at least two terms.

Andy Beikman, commissioner, said that before Mr. Barrett had been elected, the county lawyer had been a local lawyer and had no costs for a legal secretary. He had also heard people saying that Mr. Barrett didn't make enough appearances in the attorney's office. Mr. Barrett said he was more accessible than when there was an attorney in town, pointing out that he has a cell phone, there is internet access and fax.

Mr. Barrett asked that they give the attorney assistant, Danielle Garner, a 2-percent raise and have her work 40 hours a week so she will be eligible for benefits. The commissioners later agreed to the request.

Jannelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, was concerned that the commissioners were

See HEARING on Page 7



GOVERNOR DRIVES BIG TRACTOR — Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, on the Governor's Tour of Cheyenne County, drove a tractor belonging to Roger Zwegardt. Farms on the tour were the Zwegardt farm, Melvin, Spencer and Mitch Schlepp and Steve Douthit. She and others on the tour also visited The Arickaree Breaks. Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Church hosts appreciation event

"Come to our dance, we'll come to your fire."

That slogan, seen on the back of T-shirts around town, offers a conditional promise from emergency responders.

However, what townspeople have come to discover is that the

truth is regardless of whether or not they attend their annual dance, there are those who live here who respond willingly to emergency situations in the county, when people are most in need of their help, attention, care and expertise.

As a way of showing appreciation

to the police and sheriff department, fire department, the EMTs, and the hospital staff, the entire community is invited to a cookout at the roadside park at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 9. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served, along with baked beans, chips, drinks, and dessert. There is

no charge for this event, but everyone is encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets for roadside dining.

According to the church's pastor Morita Truman, "In the days and months following 9/11, it seems

See CHURCH on Page 7

Keeping program going

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The St. Francis junior-senior high school has two new teachers who will be working part-time.

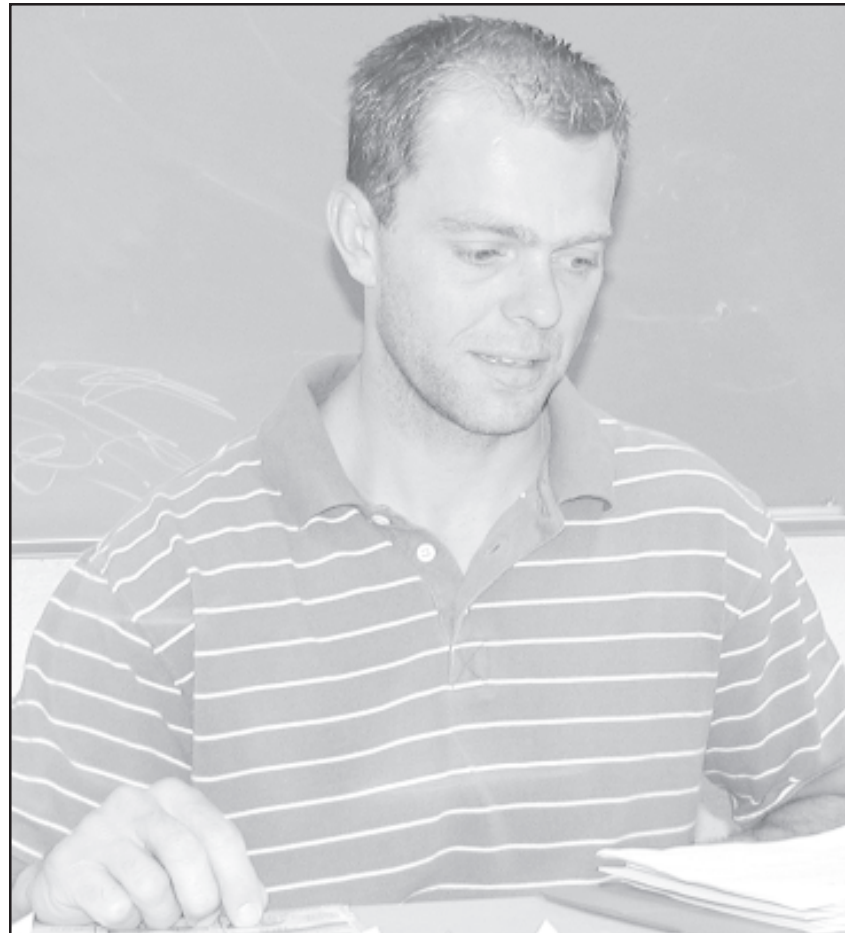
Robin Petersen will be teaching the computerized drafting class and Brad Matthies, the woodworking classes and eighth grade tech lab.

When the school was left with a position to fill shortly before school began, the administration had to act quickly or the industrial arts program would be lost this year. With a shortage of industrial arts teachers, the administration had two people step up and offer to fill the positions, both working part-time.

Rob Schiltz, superintendent, said the school was able to get emergency substitute licenses for Ms. Petersen and Mr. Matthies and they began teaching when school started.

Mr. Matthies

Mr. Matthies lived in Fort Collins, Colo., and he and his wife, Jessica, had already planned to move to Cheyenne County, having bought a home near Bird City.



Brad Matthies - Woodworking

Originally from Burlington, Mr. Matthies said they wanted to move to a place with a little acreage and be able to spend more time as a family. He owned a landscaping business in Colorado and had built a cabin and other projects.

He said that he has already enjoyed the first few weeks of teaching and sees this opportunity as a way of

knowing if he would like to pursue an industrial arts degree in the future.

The Matthies have two children, Breelyn, who is 7, and Makaila, who is 1. Mr. Matthies is a brother to Leisha Hilt, who lives in St. Francis.

Ms. Petersen

Ms. Petersen is looking forward to teaching in the new tech lab which was built over the summer in the old

home ec room. It has 14 computers with all the "bells and whistles," making it one of the better tech departments in the area.

"I stepped into this position because I wanted the students to be able to continue in the drafting program," Ms. Petersen said, who has a degree in drafting.

She went on to say that the class

is good for all students.

Ms. Petersen will be teaching Drafting I and II. Students will be learning the basics of manual and computerized drafting as well as onsite architecture, engineering and drafting industries.

Ms. Petersen is also an auctioneer and broker with Western Auction Realty, St. Francis, a business

owned and operated by her parents, Skip and Betty Petersen.

She grew up in St. Francis and graduated from St. Francis Community High School in 1999. She and her 2 (soon to be 3-) -year-old son Preston, live in St. Francis.