

## Bring back DDT to fight West Nile? Not likely

A friend gave me a copy of a column in the Wall Street Journal advocating the rehabilitation of the long-banned insecticide DDT to combat West Nile virus.

The article, by Dr. Henry I. Miller, a fellow at the conservative Hoover Institution and former federal health official, sounds a drumbeat for DDT. The drum is hollow, though.

Lots of noise, little substance.

Dr. Miller makes much of the threat of West Nile — 4,300 “serious” cases and “almost” 200 deaths last year. That might rank the virus right up there with ingrown toenail as a cause of death in America.

He does give some interesting information on the apparent mutation of a relatively mild virus once found only in Africa to a potential killer, but the truth is that West Nile has never lived up to its billing.

Nevertheless, the article advocates a massive program of spraying for mosquito control without any indication that success is possible. Could we spray every swamp and old tire in backwoods America? Would that prevent any significant number of West Nile cases? And at what cost, in money and wildlife?

Dr. Miller seems to think it would be justified if spraying saved even one human life. He completely ignores the fact that the ban on DDT is working as intended to restore wildlife, especially birds of prey.

Many raptors, especially the iconic bald eagle, became endangered when DDT spraying was common. The persistent chemical was thought to weaken the shell of their eggs, among other things.

Today, the eagle is no longer threatened, but it's only a symbol of the harm once caused by unre-

strained spraying. Today, you can see eagles along many Kansas rivers and at reservoirs where once they were unknown.

Balancing questions of cost and benefit is never easy, but the numbers given for West Nile — versus the cost in dollars and possible environmental damages for massive spraying — do not add up.

Granted, Dr. Miller does not advocate a return to widespread industrial use of DDT by farmers. Even he sees the danger there.

But he gives no evidence on the practicality or the effectiveness of spraying for mosquito control. To prevent an unknown portion of 200 deaths a year, though, the cost could be hard to justify.

A vaccine against West Nile might be more cost effective, but given the small number of deaths, that research seems to have taken a back seat to bigger killers. And that is as it should be.

He makes a more interesting case for using DDT to control mosquitoes in places where tropical diseases such as malaria and dengue fever thrive. He claims, without giving any figures, that these diseases are on the rise since the demise of DDT. Still, he's talking about 1 million deaths a year out of a world population 6.7 billion. That's a minuscule percentage, like one death in a town of 6,700 people in a year.

How much DDT can you spray? And how many mosquitoes are there in Africa? Could we kill them all? Or even have an impact. I don't know, and Dr. Miller doesn't say.

To save half a million lives, I'd be willing to try. But I suspect as killers go, even malaria pales in Africa.

I don't think DDT is coming back anytime soon. — Steve Haynes



News Item: STEROID USE AMONG KIDS IN SPORTS ON RISE...

## Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



The winds of change are sweeping across Cheyenne County. This week the Bird City Dairy, located along U.S. 36, east of Bird City, begins production.

After years of planning and preparation, the facility is finally ready to start milking cows. Stainless steel harnesses wait to hold the bovines.

Some folks around here are happy and others are not. On one side of the fence are people who believe progress is needed to keep this county afloat. On the other stands locals who don't want change. Hopefully the two will live in peace.

The fact is the dairy is here and change is inevitable.

Even before the dairy opened new students appeared at the Cheylin schools. After years of

declining enrollment, empty desks were filled.

On the first day of school an air of change filled the halls. Instead of worrying about how long the shrinking classrooms could avoid being combined or worse, consolidated with another school, a sense of hope prevailed.

There have also been skeptics who fear that the dairy will not succeed, leaving Bird City in a desperate situation. I doubt this will happen.

On several visits to the dairy during its construction I've met with two of the McCarty family who will own and operate the business: father, Tom, and his son, Mike.

Each time I saw them they were either moving silage with

a massive front-end loader, working directly with building crews or up to their elbows in dirt and grease fixing equipment. Coming from several generations of laboring with dairy cows in Pennsylvania and Kansas, this is what the McCarty clan knows.

While waiting for a part on a tractor Tom was repairing, I got a rare moment to visit with the elder McCarty.

"We're finicky about our cows and how they're treated," said Mr. McCarty.

I imagine the McCarty's are finicky about more than just their cows. I think they care about their new community and the changes that are coming.

## Hangin' With Marge

Vacation

By Margaret Bucholtz



Kurt and I went on a vacation a couple of weeks ago. This was a vacation that included a little business and pleasure.

I needed to see an eye specialist in Hastings, Neb., and he needed to do something that was a chance of a lifetime for him. The grandkids had given him a ride in a NASCAR in Kansas City.

We went to Kearney first and visited with Derek, our grandson, then on to Hastings. I got through with my eye appointment and we took off for Kansas City. As usual I thought we would be close to Kansas City, but about five hours later we finally arrived.

We stayed with our son Ryan and his family until Sunday and that was the big day for Kurt. When we got to the Kansas Speedway, I was amazed at everything there. Kurt got his ride over and we all left happy and tired.

Monday we came home and when we got here I told him I would help unload the car and then I was going to just sit until tomorrow. I will deal with all the cleanup in the morning.

The next morning Kurt left for work and finally I got the suitcases unpacked and the wash started, then I went outside to survey how bad the yard was.

As I stepped out on the front porch I noticed that our dog "Butch" had re-

ally had a good time. He had learned how to jump the fence and get inside the yard.

I probably wouldn't have felt too bad if he had only dug one hole in the grass, but he chose to sleep in a different spot each night. There were four patches of holes and grass torn up.

Upset about my grass, I decided to look over the fence and see how bad the weeds had grown. (Not that I couldn't see they were about a foot high). I walked toward the fence and under the flower that grew beside the patio it looked funny. As I leaned over to check out what was there, I got a shock!

A tail flew up in the air and the rattles started shaking. Someone told me once that if you will throw a shirt or sometime down the snake will not leave and you have time to go get something to kill it with.

Since all I had on was a nightgown, I stripped it off and threw it down as I ran in the house to get the gun.

When I got the first gun out it didn't have any bullets in it, so I reached for the second one that was a shotgun. I figured that would give me a better chance anyway so I checked for shells and, of course, there weren't any.

As I pulled the next rifle off the wall I hoped the nightgown trick was still working. I went back out and sure enough he was still there rattling away.

I took my first shot and nothing, the second shot he quit rattling, but still was moving, so I shot three more times. I heard nothing and he seemed to be laying still.

I retrieved my nightgown and came in and called Kurt. He told me not to move it and he would when he came home.

About then Trey came to see me and I told him so we went out to look. The stupid snake was still moving. Trey got the gun and shot it a couple more times, and then we got a hoe and started to pull it out from under the flower.

The snake was dead, but the rattles were missing. Which means I had shot them off with that second shot.

Once again, I felt a little like Annie Oakley, but I am not sure about leaving the farm again. Seems like, between the dog and the snakes, they just take over when the farmer and his wife leave.

## Taxpayer questions bus use

### Letters to the Editor

To the editor:

I recently had the privilege of touring Cheyenne County with Governor Kathleen Sebelius and several state Senators and state Representatives, both Republican and Democrat.

What an honor it was to have the highest-ranking elected officials of our state to be here and show them what Cheyenne County is all about.

Guess What !? The bus I was riding in said "Goodland Cow-

boys," in big bold letters across the top. It was like a giant billboard going across the county and through our town. How much nicer it would have been to show county unity by having a Cheyenne County bus. I understand that a request was made to the "castle on the hill" to use their good bus, the very one that my local tax dollars and funds allocated

from the state has bought, the request was denied.

It seems rather ironic that the very system that wants and requires community support would deny such a simple request. I think we owe the Farm Bureau - local, district and state a big vote of gratitude for putting together such a great tribute to our county.

I especially want to thank the Goodland School system and Sherman County for having the vision and generosity for this occasion and for allowing Cheyenne County dirt to accumulate on their good bus.

Walter Douthett  
St. Francis



**GOD SAYS**  
Bless them which  
persecute you: bless,  
and curse them not.

Romans 12:17

## The Saint Francis Herald

(USPS 475-960)

A Century of Service to Cheyenne County

P.O. Box 1050, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050

Published each Thursday by Haynes Publishing Co., 310 W. Washington, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050. Entered as periodicals matter at the post office at St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050, and at additional offices.

Official newspaper of Cheyenne County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, Colorado Press Association and Inland Press Association.

Subscriptions: One year \$33 (tax included) in Cheyenne and adjacent counties; \$38 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$42 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$25 extra per year (except APO/FPO). POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Box 1050, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050



### Nor'West Newspapers

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Mon.-Fri.  
(785) 332-3162 Fax - (785) 332-3001  
E-mail - sfherald@nwkansas.com

#### STAFF

Karen Krien.....Editor/Publisher  
Betty Winston.....Sports Editor  
Casey McCormick.....Advertising Manager  
Lee Nichols.....Production  
Lezlie McCormick.....Office Manager  
Margaret Bucholtz.....Office/Production

**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.

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

**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

**Salem Lutheran Church**  
332-3002  
Pastor Chris Farmer  
Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

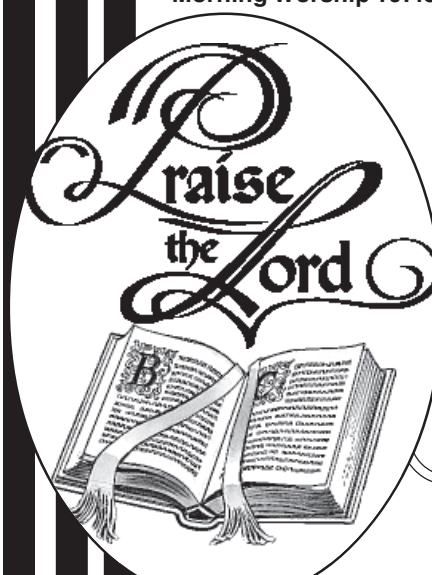
**Solid Rock Baptist Church**  
412 S. Denison  
Welcomes You!  
Pastor Allen Coon  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30  
Prayer Meeting, Wed 7:30 p.m.

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

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

**St. Francis Community Church**  
332-3150  
204 N. Quincy Street  
www.sfccfamily.com  
Pastor: David Butler  
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.  
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.  
Potluck & Communion -  
Every 2nd Sunday  
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

**Peace Lutheran Church,**  
AFLC  
202 N. College  
Pastor Ken Hart  
332-2928 Pars. 332-2312  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday eve Bible Study 7 p.m.



St. Francis Equity

First National Bank  
Member FDIC

nwkansas.com  
P.O. Box 1050 • St. Francis  
785-332-3162  
sfherald@nwkansas.com