



WORK ON THE EMERGENCY building is very noticeable these days. Volunteers have been busy for over a week and do not plan to stop until the roof is on. When cold weather set in, work will begin on the inside and more volunteers will be needed. Everyone should stop by and see what is going on and how they can help. Herald staff photo by Casey McCormick

Editorial notes Bird City as helpful in troubled times

Editor's note: The following article was written by Jerry Reader who works with the Kansas State High School Activities Association. It was printed as a guest editorial in the Association's Journal this month. Wayne Sager, former resident of Bird City, reported the article, noting that it was nice to see something about his hometown.

My wife and I recently enjoyed a week's vacation visiting our son and daughter in Denver. Our daughter is an eighth grade science teacher in a Denver suburb and our son is in the mortgage business. After a great week with the kids, we packed up for our long drive back to our home in central Illinois.

Always conservative, I decided to pinch our gas money by traveling home on the most direct route available, that being U.S. 36. Upon checking Mapquest, I learned we would actually shave 150 miles off our trip by driving the straight and narrow rather than either Interstate 70 or 80.

We started home from Denver about 4:30 on a Friday afternoon. Just before we reached Bird City, disaster struck! A flat tire! We had borrowed my dad's car (more trunk space) for the trip and after searching the trunk, we discovered we had no jack or lug wrench (at least we had a spare).

There we were, 50 miles from nowhere, 7:30 on a Friday evening, and we had no way to change the tire. I looked at my wife and told her to get comfortable because we were going to spend the night on the Kansas prairie under the stars.

We had been stranded not more than five minutes when a van stopped. It was a family of four plus Grandpa on their way to Bird City for Friday night supper at the local cafe. No jack, no problem. Before I knew it, they had theirs out and were hoisting our car off the ground.

But another snafu: Their lug wrench wouldn't fit our lug nuts! On queue, a second family, just coming back from the Bird City cafe, stopped. Their wrench worked perfectly.

Problem solved? Not quite. When I asked our newfound friends how far it was to a place that sells tires, they chuckled in harmony. Atwood was 40 miles east, but they were shut down for the night. They weren't even sure if there was a tire store in town.

Grandpa had the solution: A

friend of his had a tire shop in St. Francis if we didn't mind backtracking the 12 miles. Grandpa had just seen the shop owner cutting wood at his son's house and would give him a call. Grandpa was right. His friend would gladly help us out and meet us at his garage.

True to his word, he and his wife were waiting and ready to go to work. He looked at the flat, surmised it couldn't be patched and said he had a used tire he would gladly sell us.

Feeling a little embarrassed for all the trouble I had caused, I told him I would like to buy a new tire if he had one. In the blink of an eye, he had the new tire mounted, balanced and back on our car. The last task was tearing my wife away from the shop owner's wife; in a matter of minutes, they had forged a friendship and were swapping pictures and stories about their grandkids.

In less than an hour, we were back on the road... to the Bird City cafe for supper. I tried to pay the families for their kindness but they wouldn't hear of it. Their reply was, "That's what neighbors are for. We just ask that the next time you see someone in trouble, stop and give

them a hand!"

The store owner charged me \$70 for the tire and he wasn't taking a dime more. If we had been on I-70, we might still be there and I can guarantee you it would have cost a lot more than 70 bucks. What a great example of good people and a great way to live!

Our unscheduled stop in western Kansas provided me with a wonderful example of people helping people and placing the needs of others ahead of one's own. It's an example that I'm now motivated to reflect in my home, at my job, and on the sidelines this fall when I'm coaching football.

It's also a sentiment that I will stress at my American Sports Education Program (ASEP) coaching clinic. The American Sports Education Program's philosophy of "Athletes first, winning second" places the developmental needs of our athletes above all else. For sport administrators and coaches, sometimes that means going out of our way to spend extra time on the practice field, lend an ear, offer advice or maybe even change a tire.

Jerry Reader
Illinois

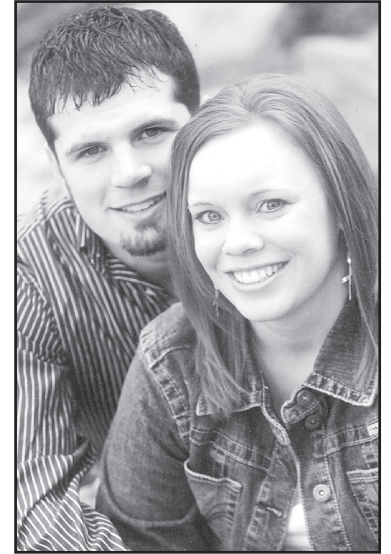
January wedding planned

Matthew Dwayne Wilson and Sara Marie Kohake are planning a 2 p.m. wedding on Jan. 26, at Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Seneca.

Parents of the couple are Troy and Cindy Burr, Bird City, Ron and Dee Wilson, St. Francis, and John and Mary Beth Kohake, Centralia.

Grandparents of the bride are Elmer and Virginia Koelzer of Baileyville, and Dan and Mary Kohake of Seneca. Grandparents of the groom are Libby Curry of Colby and the late Ronald Curry, Bonnie Burr of Bird City and the late Willis Burr, Larry and Louise Wilson of St. Francis and the late Keith and Irene Day.

Sara is a 2003 graduate of Nemaha Valley High School and will be graduating from Kansas State University in December with a degree



Wilson - Kohake

in athletic training.

Matt is a 2003 graduate of Cheylin High School and a 2004 graduate of Manhattan Area Technical College with a degree in informational networking and technology. He is currently employed with Computer Solutions in McPherson.



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