



STUDENTS WERE BACK to school on Thursday morning after a long holiday breaks. Katie Marin was working on a water color which may be one of the entries in the art show in a couple of months. Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

911 system on agenda once more

By Karen Krien

karenk@nwkansas.com

Carol Gamblin, the county communication director, told the Cheyenne County Commissioners on Monday, that the new 911 system was going well.

She said that they had started on Wednesday, Dec. 19, and the four dispatchers, Jim Rarick, Steve Nolan, Jennifer Padgett and Sam Beeson were doing very well.

They had found that there will need to be something put on the ceiling to help with the acoustics because of the echoing in the room and there is some more electrical work to be done. Additional equipment for monitoring weather and training will be purchased in the near future.

Andy Beikman, chairman, asked where people should call if they are going to have a controlled burn. Mrs. Gamblin said they can call 785-332-8880 or 911. People planning a burn should not only call before they start but when it is finished.

Craig Van Allen, sheriff, had also come with Mrs. Gamblin for the report. He said that, if there is money left in the department's equipment budget, he would like to purchase a shotgun. He will check on the amount before it is purchased.

Emergency medical service report

Janelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, said there were 28 ambulance runs in November but so far, there were less runs in December. The adjustment (write-offs) for November was \$1,099.

Mrs. Bowers said the microphone/speaker system in the back of the ambulance isn't working. She and the commissioners talked about what could be done to correct it. They suggested she call Prairie States, Imperial, to see if the equipment can be repaired and, if not, see what it will cost to replace it. They said to go with whatever is the cheapest but to get it fixed.

Mrs. Bowers said she had been contacted to see if the county would be interested in sending people to an emergency medical technician class in Idalia. If there was enough interest, a class may be held.

She said there were two St. Francis people and one from Rawlins County. Of course, Rawlins County would pay the cost for its trainee.

Mrs. Bowers said she had enough money left in her budget at the end of the year to order a laptop computer. She also wanted to order a full-body mannequin. The commissioners said she needed to order the laptop that day and Terry Miller, clerk, said he would give her the necessary

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Coyote callers arriving on Friday

On Friday, the hunters will be coming into St. Francis for the rules and regulation meeting for the 11th Midwest Coyote Calling contest. These hunters will be looking to place in the top coyote calling contest in the nation, said Brent Rueb, coordinator. Some of the top coyote callers from 13 states around the Midwest have entered.

Mr. Rueb expects over 300 people will be crammed into the 4-H building at the Cheyenne County Fairgrounds. Once the teams have had a good meal and are given the rules and regulation of the event, they will be turned loose to travel to where they will begin the hunt on Saturday morning.

After a hard hunt, the teams will again converge on St. Francis and bring back their harvested animals. Teams will hunt in Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska.

After all the coyotes have been checked in and the final statistics have been tallied, there will be champions named in two classes the Sportsman's Warehouse and the

Midwest classes.

Callers will receive guns, calls, optics and a host of other door prizes that will be given away. Prize money and prizes totaling \$35,000 will be awarded, making this the largest purse in the coyote calling circuit.

Last year the callers battled over 2 feet of snow but, this year, the weather forecasters are predicting warmer weather than the area has seen for several weeks. Even with the high price of fuel, Mr. Rueb reported the classes have filled up and there will be 130 teams.

Of special interest this year, the American Outdoorsman Television show will be covering this event. The American Outdoorsman show televises big game hunts during the first half of the year and predator hunts the second half. They have five teams entered in the event and will be filming as well.

Predator calling is the largest growing sport in the shooting industry and the attendance at this event proves it!



MIKE ANTHOLZ, center, will be the new foreman on the county road and bridge crew. He is discussing the job with Andy Beikman, commissioners, and Dave Flemming, supervisor.

Operator is new foreman

By Karen Krien

karenk@nwkansas.com

County employee, Mike Antholz, was recently recognized at a commissioners' meeting for working 24 years with the Cheyenne County Road and Bridge crew. Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, said Mr. Antholz had done a very good job and was now transferring from grader operator to road foreman.

Mr. Antholz began working in March 1983 driving a gravel truck and the spare grader when needed. He said the county equipment has come a long way since 1983. Radio communication has greatly improved. The newer graders are computerized and easier to drive and the crew has gone from driving a dump truck that holds 10 yards to a 20-yard semi truck. There are now only 11 or 12 employees in the department compared to 18 employees 24 years ago.

"We get a whole lot more work done with less manpower," he said.

Mr. Antholz was grading roads in a territory south-west of St. Francis before transferring. He said he enjoyed the work as he saw the changes of the seasons, from watching the trees leaf out to seeing the beautiful autumn colors along the river bottom. He saw all

sorts of wildlife including bald eagles, antelope, deer and turkey.

He also saw all sorts of weather. "I grew to hate snow," he said.

When he first started, the county had five or six weeks of snowy weather. He said they would get the roads cleared and the next weekend, it would snow and blow the roads shut again.

During a storm in the early 90s, he and one of the other crew, started out in their graders to help some people who were stranded. Mr. Antholz ended up stuck and it was 11:30 that night before he was able to get out.

He has been among the crew using county equipment to fight fires and he has helped clear the way for ambulances to get through to a sick people.

His new position as road foreman will find him checking road conditions, keeping employees busy and training new employees. He will also fill in when Supervisor Flemming is not available.

Moving to the new position will not take him away from one of the more enjoyable parts of the job and that is continuing to work with a super crew and supervisor.

Hospital board member selected

By Karen Krien

karenk@nwkansas.com

The Cheyenne County Commissioners appointed a new hospital board member when they met on Monday, the last day of the year.

Jane Young, Bird City, was the only person who had applied for the position. She replaces Swede Calnon, St. Francis, who had served for the last eight years. Her term will start with the January hospital board meeting.

Mrs. Young said, about a year ago, that, if there was ever a board she would like to serve on, it would be the hospital board.

"I know there is controversy and decisions to make," she said.

She said that she thought the hospital facility was a wonderful facility and she would like to learn more about it. Mrs. Young brings to the board 25 years of banking experience to the board.

The commissioners asked if there

would be a problem with her employer in getting off to attend the meetings. She said she had cleared the issue with them, noting that the board only meets once a month and occasionally for a special meeting.

Andy Beikman, chairman, said he knew that she was new board member but hoped that the administrator and board would come to a couple of meetings a year to bring them up to date on what is happening at the hospital.

The county gives \$256,051 in ad valorem tax to the hospital plus a number of years ago, the voters agreed to raise the sales tax 1 cent per dollar which is also given to the hospital. The sales tax varies from year to year but in 2007, they collected \$375,306.

Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, said, looking into the future, who knows what it will take to keep it updated and what it will cost. He also noted that the hospital was important to the county.

Energy assistance now available

By Karen Krien

karenk@nwkansas.com

Qualifying families in the county will be able to get help with their heat bills this winter.

Priority Oil and Gas LLC announced the company will once again be helping some families in Cheyenne County to meet their

winter heating costs.

President/owner Robbie Gries said she realized that, with the rising energy costs, there are people who are having trouble paying their heating bills. She decided to begin the Cheyenne County Energy Assistance Program in the winter of 2005. Every year since then,

Priority has continued to assist Cheyenne County residents with their escalating heating bills.

"The program is a direct relationship between the oil and gas company and low income families who need help with their heating bills because of the increase in energy

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First baby contest begins

By Karen Krien

karenk@nwkansas.com

The first of the year is here and the contest for the First Baby of the Year 2008 has begun. The contest began Tuesday and will end when the first phone call comes in and the baby/parents meet the rules of the contest.

Actually, there is only one requirement and that is the baby must be born to parents living in Cheyenne County for one month or more. These parents and their new-born infant will be awarded gifts from sponsors.

The Saint Francis Herald office must be notified as soon as possible following the birth. The Herald's number is 785-332-3162 or call 785-332-3246.

The parents of this year's first baby will receive a \$25 gift certificate from St. Francis Super's, a \$50 bond from Western State Bank, a \$50 bond from First National Bank, Bird City/St. Francis, a baby photo album or frame from Schultz's, a baby gift from Owens True Value, a baby gift from Krien Pharmacy, two bottles of champagne from Burr Liquor, and a year's subscription to The Saint Francis Herald or Bird City Times.

The first baby of the year will also receive a special quilt from the Prairie Piecemaker Quilt Guild, Goodland. Bonnie McQuillen, member, said the quilt may be picked up at The St. Francis Herald office.

The parents of the new baby will need to claim their gifts within 60 days after the birth.

Since most babies are not on schedule, it's hard telling when the first baby of 2008 will be born.

2007 First Baby of the Year

Josh and Sara Sowers and their daughter were the winners of the First Baby of the Year. Adrianna Joy was born at 1:25 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 10, in their home 15 miles northeast of Bird City. Adrianna weighed 6 pounds and was 18 3/4-inches long. She has a sister, Eliana.