

PROJECTS

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Commission, Hill City, about applying for a Community Building Development Grant. By the next meeting, Mr. Lacy will have the information for the applying for a Community Service Tax Credit.

The only other capital equipment improvement planned for this coming year is an infant incubator for \$10,000. Other capital equipment will use funded depreciation dollars or other sources.

Finances

Some of price changes at the hospital include raising the price of a semiprivate room from \$530 a day to \$550. Level 1 in the emergency room will go from \$105 to \$115; Level 2, \$185 to \$200; and level 3, \$450 to \$475.

However, the average CAT scan will go from \$900 down to \$500.

Heidi Tice, chief financial officer, reported that the hospital is going to a central billing system. She explained that people already owing money to the hospital and clinic will be contacted and asked to sign a note. They will then be given a coupon book and expected to make monthly payments.

The hospital had a good year in 2006 and Medicare adjusted the interim payment rate based on those figures to cover the cost of 2007. While the first half of 2007 had reasonable volume, the hospital was underpaid by over \$100,000 by the Medicare program in the first half of the year. The second half of 2007 had lower than anticipated volume, which in turn increased the amount the hospital was underpaid by the Medicare program. This has caused the cash flow situation at the hospital that required board funds to be used to meet payroll and other expenses

through the year.

Mr. Lacy pointed out that as a Critical Access Hospital, the hospital recovers 101 percent of its allowable Medicare costs in the cost report. The cost report that is expected to make up for Medicare's underpayment through the second half of 2007 is expected by the end of May 2008. Mr. Lacy indicated that the hospital may continue to have increased cash needs through that point. He also reminded the board that they had been discussing increased cash needs and potential losses associated with the start up costs of new providers for the past 3 years.

We have improved many services in the past few years including a strong nursing staff, CRNAs (certified registered nurses aides), digitalized X-ray and the electronic medical records," Mr. Lacy said. "We have also been building our own crew by educating local people and keeping them here in the county. When necessary, we have been able to recruit professionals to the county."

Mr. Lacy reported that the hospital had been fairly stable in its requests to the commissioners even though the inflation rate continues at 3.45 percent for the general population over the past 10 years and is somewhat higher for healthcare.

He indicated that the board may wish to consider a request of the commissioners to see if they would consider raising the mill levy given to the hospital each year or, at least, giving more funding to the county health department. In 2007, the county gave \$256,051 plus around \$375,306 in a 1-cent sales tax collected. The board has used this money to build reserves and to assist the

hospital in funding depreciation.

"This has made it possible for the hospital to remain stable through lean times and to better manage the reimbursement environment we find ourselves in," he added.

Administrator's report

Administrator Lacy said inpatient service at the hospital in December was very slow as was the clinic but noted that, as of the first of the month, the volume has picked up. To help the hospital, the staff has, on low volume days, been taking low census days and working at other things they can do to reduce the cash flow needs. He said that in December, the overtime hours was 54 hours.

He said that Dr. David Reed would be stopping his clinical visits to the Cheyenne County Clinic by mutual agreement that his services are no longer needed due to the presence of additional providers. Mr. Lacy noted that Dr. Reed had done a fine job and helped provide a break for Dr. Miller and other providers in the clinic.

Mr. Lacy said, "We are pleased to have had such a long standing, mutually beneficial arrangement with Dr. Reed and it will be important to maintain a positive relationship with him."

Recognition

Jackie John, Great Plains Health Alliance director, recognized the board for the time they give to the hospital as well as the community.

Swede Calnon was also recognized for eight years on the hospital board.

"You kept in touch with a part of the community who didn't believe in what we were doing," he said.

Mr. Calnon's replacement will be Jane Young, Bird City.

REVIEWS

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collecting the parts and equipment to build a sled for the tractors to pull. He said there would be little speed involved and the younger kids could still participate.

The event would be held in between heats of the demolition derby. He said he had noticed at other derbies that no the crowd gets bored when there is no entertainment to fill in.

T-shirts/hats

The board discussed having T-shirts and hats to throw to the crowd during the derby. They also talked about having them to give out during the parade on Saturday morning. It was the consensus that this would be a great idea. Dick Bursch, president, said that he will get some prices to bring to a future meeting.

Jenkins Hall

Jenkins Hall is the building where businesses and groups can rent a booth space during the fair. However, it doesn't fill up like the board would like to see.

Earlier, it was suggested that the large fan be moved to a different area. The board also talked about having music which might draw visitors as well as renters into the building. A sheet was available for members to write sign up to help in Jenkins Hall on Wednesday of the fair.

Gate office building

At a prior meeting, the board had acquired a building to put at the east gate of the fairgrounds. Electricity was a concern but, they had forgotten that, when the lights were put in by Stanton Electric, they had installed an extra breaker box not too

far from the location.

Gary Cooper, board member, said a foundation grant had been applied for and the board had received \$400 toward the building. They already had \$400 from donations at fair time so they agreed that they had most of the money needed to finish the building.

When the snow has melted, several board members will measure the distance from the box to the building location so they get the required amount of wire. While they are measuring, they will also get the exact measurements for the land which they have traded with

Butch Ewing.

In other business

In other business:
• President Bursch announced that the board needs a computer — preferably a laptop. They discussed what they thought it would cost. Mrs. Zimbelman has an older laptop that needs some repairs but would donate it to the board. The matter was tabled.

• The St. Francis Christian Church is still interested in having an ice cream stand during the fair. However, they need to locate a small building they can move and remodel.

COYOTES

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tor Sniper (formerly Predator Xtreme) Class was the Lipovsky-Tiemeyer team from Fairfield, Neb. The Leighton-Mayer team from Scott City took first in the Sportsman Warehouse Class.

Rodney Radcliff, St. Francis, was named "Sportsman of the Year."

National magazines were present and will have articles about the contest and there were also filming crews present. The event attracted a variety of people to the area.

"The St. Francis contest is the largest two-day event in the country," Mr. Rueb said.

This year the number of teams was increased to make the event even bigger.

Travis Hilt, Kansas City, was one of the callers who traveled to participate for the fourth straight year.

"It was better than ever," he said, "More teams made a better contest." "The event was well organized."

When the hunters returned Sunday afternoon a large crowd gathered at the Cheyenne County Fairgrounds

to watch the coyotes get weighed and lined up.

"We had many favorable comments on the contest," Mr. Rueb said. "The hunters liked the professionalism on how the contest was run as well as complementing on the facility and the trophies which were made by Reed Raile.

"The community came out and supported the event as well as there were many national sponsors."

About 80 more coyotes were brought in this year than last year. Snow from previous storms made it easier to spot the animals.

Results: Predator Sniper Class: Lipovsky-Tiemeyer (Fairfield, Neb), 11 coyotes, first place; Edis-Lovitt (Mullen, Neb), 11 coyotes, second place; Hughes-Johnson (Colorado Springs-Edgar, Neb) 10, third place.

Sportsman Warehouse Class: Leighton-Mayer (Scott City) six, first place; Roane-Roane (Goodland) five, second place; Scofield-Yancey (Florence, Colo-Colorado Springs, Colo) three, five place.

AUCTION

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other item which have been unique or rare such as the quilt which is one of a kind. Everyone is able to make a bid and a chance to own the item.

The St. Francis United Methodist Thrift Store gives money earned to many different projects — local as well as to Methodist Missions and projects in Kansas, across the USA and around the world.

"We also help sponsor church events like Bible school which is attended by children from the community and help pay church camp fees for youth," said Sherry Schultz, coordinator.

"However, a good portion of our giving is to local causes, especially those involving children."

Some of these causes include:
• Assistance to victims of natural disasters or when benefits are held for medical needs.

- Cheyenne County 4-H
- Cheyenne County Food Pantry

- Salvation Army
- School supplies for children in families that need assistance
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Sponsored the Summer Movies in the Park
- Northwest Kansas Shelter for Victims of Domestic Abuse
- St. Francis Library Story Hour
- ABC Preschool
- High school student music trips.
- St. Francis Senior Center.
- Ye Olde Church restoration.
- Lion's Club projects.

Recently, the Thrift Store paid for repairs to the portable phone system at the Good Samaritan Village so that the phone can be taken to resident's rooms to receive calls.

Money has also been made to make improvements to the store building including rewiring and working on the roof.

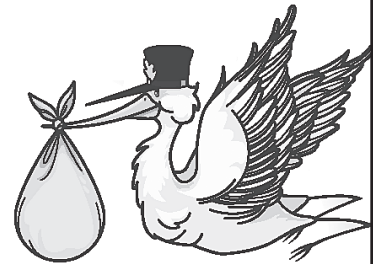
The store is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays and from 9 to noon on Saturdays.

FIRST BABY CONTEST

We're celebrating the first special delivery of the Year 2008! The winning baby and parents will receive these bundles of gifts, courtesy of these businesses.

Parents Rules:

1. The parents must have lived in Cheyenne County for at least one month.
2. The Saint Francis Herald office must be notified as quickly as possible after the birth. The Herald's number is 785-332-3162.
3. A 60-day limit following the baby's birth is required for taking advantage of these outstanding gifts & services.



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