



The Federal spending is nothing short of scary

The great expansion of federal spending in the name of "Homeland Security" is nothing short of scary.

Cities and counties today get money for things they used to just assume were part of their jobs, and while money's always nice to have, you'd think some of these things never got done before.

The much-maligned Federal Emergency Management Agency has been pouring money into Kansas, as with other states, for everything from weather damage to emergency gear.

There's money for planning for "bioterrorism," whatever that means, to fire trucks and hard hats for emergency crews. Most years, there's so much money to be had, the county has to go out and look for something to spend it on.

Heaven help us if some of the money has to be sent back to the feds.

Some of these things would be done whether the feds were giving us money or not. If the old fire truck wears out, we'll probably find money to replace it. If there's a federal grant, then it might be done a little sooner.

Other things, like generators for small-town emergency shelters, well those towns got by without them for a century. They might make it for another 100 years. People don't usually stay in shelters too long here, or without power, for that matter.

It's not that these things aren't all nice to have. Everyone knows that federal money is "free money," money that commissioners and council members don't have to raise taxes to get.

It is taxpayers' money, of course, and not to be wasted, but everyone agrees, if we don't spend it, the feds will just give it to some other town or county. They never give it back to the taxpayers, that's for sure.

So for decades now, the battle cry of local government has been to "get a grant." If you

can get a grant, you don't have to pay for it.

But free money isn't always free. For one thing, "free" equipment has to be replaced. Often there's no grant for that. It's like the old police grants where the federal money paid to hire and train a new officer to hunt for drugs or drunk drivers. When the grant ran out, the city or county was expected to — gasp — pay the guy's salary.

Or take the "free" vehicle our county picked up a few years back. It was seized by the sheriff after a drug arrest. No one ever claimed it. The incumbent ambulance chief asked if he could use it as a "chase" car.

Well, it was free, wasn't it?

Until the car started to wear out. By then, it had become an essential part of the ambulance service. The county spent \$24,485 to buy another.

That's where free will get you.

So with the Federal Emergency Management Agency pumping money into the state every time a storm hits, whether it's millions to rebuild Greensburg, or a few thousand to reimburse Decatur County for plowing the roads and over several hundred thousand to townships to replace gravel on the roads, public officials line up at the trough.

Never mind that FEMA couldn't even find New Orleans when the chips were down. Today, they're our friends.

It's hard to believe that just a few years ago, the cities and counties and maybe even the state would have paid for these things themselves — or maybe we'd have gone without.

You have to wonder where this road is leading us, but we suspect it is no place good.

Even free money has strings attached. And eventually, we'll know what those are. Loss of freedom. Local decision-making power. Priorities set by "mandate," whatever that means.

Local government run just to get federal dollars. But they'll be "free." — Steve Haynes



News From the Past

10 years ago - 1997

The St. Francis junior high girls will be presenting "The Magical Land of Oz" on Dec. 16. Meaghan Jamison is playing the part of Dorothy. Toto is being played by Samantha Coates and Ana Douthit is the powerful Oz.

Paul Rainbolt will be training with Good Samaritan Village administrator Mike Flemming and following his training he will take the responsibility of administrator of one of the Good Samaritan Society nursing homes.

Around 130 attended the Madrigal Madness hosted by the high school drama and music students under the direction of Colleen Gardner and Debbie Fiala.

The Good Samaritan Village in St. Francis will be celebrating its 45th year on Dec. 16. Many people will remember the Village as it was 45 years ago.

The facility was made up of a number of Army barracks. August "Dad" Hoeger purchased the barracks and opened the nursing home in Nov. 1952.

Four St. Francis wrestlers were named champions at the St. Francis Invitational Wrestling Tournament. Earning championships for St. Francis were Gabe Jenkins at 119 pounds, Kelly Gabel at 152 pounds, Tyler Krien at 171 pounds and Jon Zwegardt at 275 pounds.

40 years ago - 1968

The newly installed Honor Queen of Job's Daughters is Linda Jo Floyd. Debbie Rieb is the Senior Princess and Colleen Thompson is the Junior Princess.

Postal rates have increased to six cents for first class mail. Air mail stamps cost 10 cents. The new prices go into effect on Jan. 7.

The Cheyenne County Commissioners met in their open-

ing session in 1968. It was reported that eight bridges were built in Cheyenne County in 1967. Bridges include: Powell Bridge, Willt Bridge, Fritz Bridge, Henderson Bridge, Zwegardt Bridge, Gilliland Bridge, Martin Bridge and Carr Bridge.

Bill Wellman was election Chairman of the County Commissioners for the new year.

Candy Childers of Bird City was named Miss Personality at the Brown Mackie Christmas Dance. She was crown Miss Northwest Kansas last fall.

Cheyenne County again took its place near the top of the state's wheat producing counties in 1967. It ranked 10th in the state with a production of 4,056,000 bushels.

The first of the concrete toadshool shelters has been completed at the state roadside park on Highway 36 in St. Francis.

Hangin' With Marge

By Margaret Bucholtz



Traveling in Time

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As many of travel through the years of our life, we are just busy looking ahead. Most of us don't even look in the mirror to see how we have aged and we certainly don't think about the age of our children. Anyway I don't!

This past week I decided to get out the old picture slides that had belonged to my parents. My goodness it was a shock to start looking

Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Dan Jones, St. Francis; Warren Cook, St. Francis; John Knodel, St. Francis; Prairie Land Electric, Bird City; Ben Andrist, St. Francis; Bonnie Henderson, St. Francis; Helen Brown, St. Francis; Clara Richers, St. Francis; Doralene Kidwell, Fullerton, Calif.; Toby Dirks, St. Francis; Rob Schiltz, St. Francis; Roger Lauer, St. Francis; Tom Roelfs, St. Francis; Lorene Youngquist, St. Francis; Ernest Amsberry, Snyder, Colo.; Beatrice Bartholma, Prescott Valley, Ariz.; Dean Knapp, Bird City; Kenneth Knitting, Hermosa, S.D.; Bill Hook, St. Francis; Stroh Farm, St. Francis; Claude Gleason, Bird City; Ed Marin, St. Francis; Otto Bandel, St. Francis

at the past. I have had a ball and I have only scraped the surface. I have a scanner that will scan the slides. At first I just thought I would scan all of them and put them on DVDs and make them part of Christmas gifts for my kids, niece and nephew.

It was a good idea but I got so excited. I started scanning and then I started e-mailing some of them to my children. My kids hate getting pictures from me about my old ancestors but when they started getting these they all came alive.

Doug called me and made the statement how funny I dressed my kids. He said, "Where did you get our clothes. They look like something out of the 60s." I told him, "They were from the 60s because you were born in the 60s." Sure did make him quiet!

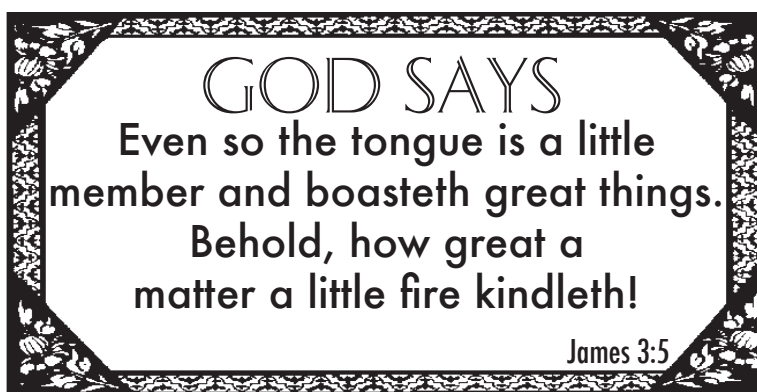
I know he really did enjoy see-

ing them as he brought me more that he had from his Dad's things and now I would say I am sitting here with over 1,000 pictures to do. Each one tells a story about each child and I can't wait to get them all done and ready for them.

My mother was very organized and she wrote on each slide and thank goodness for that because I wouldn't be able to tell one baby from the other. The only way I could do that is by counting just how many kids were in the picture.

It was good to see my parents and grandparents again and refresh my mind as to what they looked like.

I think even Kurt is enjoying it as now he can watch whatever he wants to on TV and doesn't have to hear me say, "Do we have to watch this movie again."



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Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



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Do you remember the old television commercials of the Texaco Men? A lady would drive her car into the Texaco station as four attendants rushed out.

One would check the tires' air pressure. The next would open the hood to look at the oil level. The third washed the windshield. The last man took care of filling up her fuel tank. Each looked like the other's clone, in their crisp white uniforms and caps.

These guys were so talented, they even sang on Milton Berle's and Jimmy Durante's TV shows.

Things have sure changed. I know that there are still some gas stations in this area that will

fill your tank and clean the windshield. But most of us are pretty much used to filling up ourselves.

When I first began driving I still lived at home and was a full-time student on the west side of Denver. My parents helped me out by giving me a Amoco credit card.

The station I usually went to was at the corner of West Colfax and Kipling. They had two islands in the 1970s. One was for self-service, the other full-service.

The full-service side gave you similar treatment to the Texaco Men, only one guy did all the work. Even though I knew the folks were helping me out with

the credit card and that there was a responsibility involved, I still liked going to the full-service pump.

It's not that I was lazy, but having someone fill my tank made me feel important. I guess I thought I was a "big shot."

Anyway, my trips to the full service island soon came to an end once Mom got the invoice. Obviously she knew I liked full service too.

The parents still let me use the credit card, but you can sure bet that the receipts all had the price of gas from the self-serve island from then on.

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