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HAVING SALAD FUN — First graders were among those planting a 'salad garden' under the instruction of Lea Keller. Onions, lettuce, and radishes were planted in containers. Planting one of the salad gardens were (l to r) Lindsey Johnson, Maddie Faylor, Abbie Miller, Lauren Johnson, Joslyn Ketzner and Jessica Confer. Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

No rain; burn ban is likely

By Karen Krien
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Clouds come and go, leaving little moisture in Cheyenne County. It is now time for farmers to burn Conservation Reserve Program land.

"It is dry," said George Harper, St. Francis fire chief. "I have been concerned about grass fires for several weeks."

At the Monday morning commissioners' meeting, they seriously discussed enforcing a burn ban in the county. They noted that there are several surrounding counties that are under a burn ban including Rawlins and Thomas counties.

Carol Gamblin, 911 dispatcher, said she had been recommending that people not burn, especially if there is any wind.

This brought Mrs. Gamblin to the subject of calling 911 for burns.

"We had 15 911 calls in one day last week," she said.

"If there is a fire out then, then call 911 but, if it is a controlled burn, people need to call 332-8880."

The commissioners stressed that a farmer having a controlled burn had to call it in. If the farmer's fire becomes out of control and the fire department needs to put it out, the farmer will be charged if he hasn't called it in. A call also needs to be made after the fire is put out.

Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, said he didn't think a burn ban was necessary at this time.

If people will use common sense, I don't think there is a need for a burn ban," he said.

Commissioner Ernie Ketzner said fire scared him and he thought a burn ban should be established. However, he said he would go along with whatever the other commissioners decided.

After discussing the matter with Chief Harper, they decided to wait a week.

"There is a good chance that we will get moisture this weekend and then we will see about a burn ban," Chief Harper said.

Board asks for increase in allotment

By Karen Krien
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The hospital administrator, as well as three members of the hospital board, asked the commissioners to consider raising the amount of money allotted to the board. The commissioners listened to the request, then asked that the administrator list exactly what the board was asking for and then the amount will be considered when the budget is set.

Les Lacy, Cheyenne County Hospital administrator, and board members, Traci Neitzel, Joy Anderegg and Jerry Toler, met with the commissioners Monday morning. The board has been receiving \$525,000 a year for the last 12 years. Now, considering the inflation rate over that time, they figured that they could be receiving \$750,000. However, all they are asking for is \$650,000, which is \$125,000 more than they are now getting.

He said that the board has been sensitive to the ag condition through the years and that was one reason why they hadn't asked for additional money.

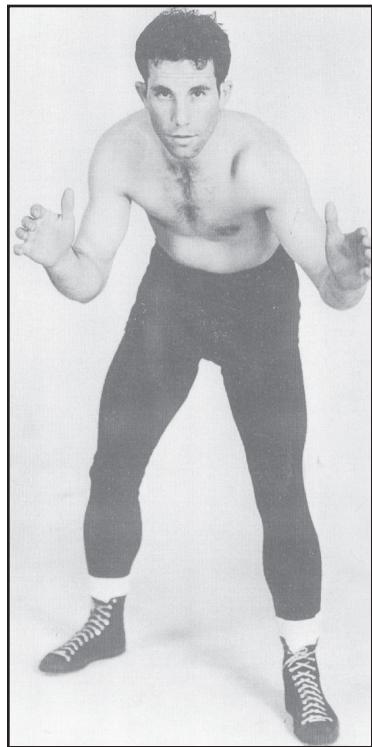
Mr. Lacy said the money received from the county is considered "board funds" and is used as needed. He said that the hospital and board has been able to weather shortfalls in reimbursements such as when the hospital was underpaid by the medicare program but noted that

the board has control of the money.

He talked about establishing a limit for the funded depreciation, noting that it is a useful fund and could help the board to never be in a position that they ask for general obligation bonds.

Mr. Lacy said that the board is seeking grant funding to remodel the kitchen and tax credits to finish the labor/deliver room. He said that the fire marshal sited

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Dale Duncan
1932 Wrestling Champion

School receives \$1,000 award

Pat Duncan, Manhattan, has again donated \$1,000 for the wrestling scholarship in honor of his father, Dale Duncan.

In 1932, Mr. Duncan was the first state wrestling champion from St. Francis. In an earlier article which appeared in *The Saint Francis Herald*, Pat said that, while reading through his father's notes, he found that Mr. Duncan had appreciated the encouragement and financial support he received from St. Francis residents. Mr. Duncan died in 1999.

This is the fourth year there has been \$1,000 given by Pat in honor of his father. The scholarship is given to a graduating athlete.

Commissioners drag feet on plan

By Karen Krien
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The commissioners, at the Monday meeting, were given the opportunity to join with the other 12 counties along U.S. 36 in supporting an economic impact study to improve the highway.

Steve Haynes, Oberlin and U.S. 36 Association president, and Elmer Keller, St. Francis, U.S. 36 representative, asked the commissioners to give \$2,000 to "nail down" the \$26,000 grant. The grant will pay for a study done by the Docking Institute at Fort Hays State University.

Mr. Haynes pointed out that the association cannot go to the Kansas State Highway Department without facts and figures. He said that with the traffic projected to reach all-time highs over the next 20 years, states will need alternate routes around congested cities such as St. Louis, Kansas City and Omaha — That's U.S. 36, he said.

Right now, he said, the Kansas department doesn't have plans made. The department has brought U.S. 36 up to the current standard and it is a good road, they have got rid of narrow bridges and have widened the shoulders, Mr. Haynes said.

"We want to show Kansas people that this is a project that is important economically but, without a study, we won't have a plan," he said.

Missouri and Illinois will have this road rebuilt to four lanes from I-55 at Springfield to St. Joseph by 2010. Kansas has 8 miles of freeway from St. Joseph to Wathena. Members of the association would like to see the counties work together in seeing that the highway is widened to four lanes and bringing traffic west.

The commissioners had reservations. Andy Beikman, chairman, was concerned that

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NEW EQUIPMENT for the John Deere Real Time Kinetics system is shown by Goodland Greenline employees Gary Cooper (left) and Matt Breininger. Mr. Breininger, an agriculture management solutions consultant, gave a presentation to describe the new technology to area farmers at Captain Hook's restaurant in Wheeler. Herald staff photo by Casey McCormick

Implement dealer offers equipment, satellite system

By Casey McCormick
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Agriculture technology continues to advance. One example is the development of a new satellite system being operated by the area John Deere implement dealer.

Goodland Greenline of Goodland and Wheeler has already positioned three base stations in northwest Kansas and has two more on the way. This will make their Real Time Kinetics (RTK) system available for farmers.

Matt Breininger, Greenline's agriculture management solutions consultant, has spent the last two months getting the network up and going. He sees advantages of the system over the typical global positioning system (GPS) signal.

"RTK sends a differential correction to the tractor eliminating global drift, where as your traditional signal does not," Mr. Breininger said.

With the current technology, a farmer sets his A-B line, which gives the auto tracking a base to go off of. But, as the earth rotates, this line will change/drift since satellites move faster than earth.

With the RTK, the differential allows for 1-inch or less accuracy.

"It doesn't matter if it's two hours, two days or two years later, those lines don't change," Mr. Breininger said.

A farmer can leave the field he is working on, then return and the lines will not move.

The three towers in place now are at Ruleton, Goodland and Brewster, all in Sherman County. The next two base stations will be placed in McDonald (Rawlins County) and in southern Cheyenne County. These will be operational by mid-April. Each tower will send out signals up to 12 miles.

"These towers will cover the majority of ag land See OFFERS on Page 7

Ladies luncheon set for April 16

Spring is here and it's time for the Chamber's Ladies Salad Luncheon. Serving will begin at 11:30 a.m. and end at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, in the First Christian Church fellowship hall.

"We want to invite all women to attend," said Gloria Bracelin, Chamber secretary. "This is not just a 'working women' luncheon."

A variety of salads, along with rolls and drink will be served. Throughout the luncheon, door prizes will be given away.

Tickets can be purchased at First National Bank, Bankwest



and Western State Bank.

"It really helps that everyone purchase their tickets or make reservations as early as possible as that lets us know how many salads to prepare," Secretary Bracelin said.