



PRATICE STARTS— (above) Coach, Ted Busse, works with the boys getting them ready for the season. (right) Jami Pevler prepares to serve the volleyball, Elizabeth Gienger and Andrea Holzwarth wait their turn. All three girls are returning letter winners.

Herald staff photos by Betty Jean Winston



Training will be required for those giving driver's tests

By Karen Krien

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The treasurer told the commissioners at the Monday meeting that those giving driver's license tests are going to be required to take training.

Dolores Jenik, treasurer, said changes are being made in the state which will require those giving driver's licenses tests to take training. They will also need background checks. There are three people in her office which will need to take training. The nearest training place is Hays and it will cost \$600 for the training alone.

The county office can renew regular driver's licenses. However, to renew a commercial driver's license, people must travel to Colby and then it just takes a few minutes.

Mr. Beikman said that he thought it was OK to leave the driving tests in Colby but thought the renewals should be made in the county. He suggested everyone contact their legislators and tell them as much.

Mrs. Jenik said the costs for training will go up in the future. In the past, there has been no

charge for giving the driving tests in the county — just the standard state charge. However, she said there were other counties which were charging or considering charging and she wondered if the commissioners would agree to a charge being put on testing here.

After discussion, they agreed to charge each person renewing their driver's license \$4, starting Jan. 1. The money will be kept in a separate fund and related expenses and trainings will come out of that fund.

Ambulance department
Jannelle Bowers, ambulance director, said the 7A ambulance was now back in service after having work on both the fuel pump and the aid conditioning.

Having enough emergency medical technicians was a concern. She told about a recent call in Bird City when only one technician answered. After a second call for additional Bird City technicians, another answered but, by that time, St. Francis technicians were on their way.

Mr. Beikman said he would rather have more technicians there than not have enough there.

Mrs. Bowers said when they advertised for the First Responder class, they had 10 people show interest but, when it came to attending the class, only four committed, and they were from St. Francis. She said that technicians are really needed in Bird City but, since they don't have many able to work in the summer months, she is depending upon St. Francis technicians to cover.

She said, at a government mandate, technicians will be required to wear high visibility clothing on runs. The clothing can be coveralls or vests. Since many technicians come from the job, many in the field or in greasy clothing, they preferred to wear coveralls. They will also have vests available for those who arrive without the proper clothing.

Mrs. Bowers reported that the write-off adjustments for July were \$985. She also reported that the base radio is working at the hospital.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters
Wendy Wallace and Bridgette Antholz, representing Big Brothers/Big Sisters, told they are forming a program in St. Francis. The organization is a mentoring program where youth are matched up to a big brother or sister. They meet with the kid once a week.

A program is already established in Bird City and is going well. They have had good cooperation in the Cheylin School system.

Their goal is to have 10 mentors in St. Francis. An ice cream social is scheduled in the near future.

Terry Miller, county clerk, said there is money in the Special Parks

and Recreation Fund which would probably qualify for help with the program.

Justin Barrett, county attorney, had only good things to say about how the mentoring program had helped keep troubled kids out of foster homes and jail. He said he thought diversion funds would be a good use to help with the program.

No decision was made.

In other business

In other business:

- Danielle Gardner, secretary for the county attorney, asked about using the sick-leave pool at the courthouse. The commissioners said she had not worked there as full-time for a whole year. It was something they needed to look into and tabled the matter.

- Dan Schlittenhardt, noxious

weed and prairie dog supervisor, said Kevin Burkhalter, who farms north of Bird City, was working at eliminating prairie dogs on his property. Mr. Schlittenhardt estimated there were 60 to 70 percent less dogs than there had been previously when Vernon Shrader had made a complaint.

He had also checked the progress Gary Winter had made with getting rid of bindweed on his property. There again, Mr. Schlittenhardt saw progress.

Mr. Schlittenhardt reported the department's truck had to have work done on it.

Next meeting

The next meeting will start at 8 a.m. on Friday, Aug. 29, in the commissioners' room located in the courthouse.

Hospital board addresses county

By Karen Krien

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The hospital board and administrator were present at the Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting to discuss the hospital's allocations, budget and audit when they met on Monday.

Les Lacy, hospital administrator, Joy Anderegg and Jerry Toler, board members, presented the audit results for the hospital and asked that the commissioners continue to support them, asking for \$650,000 which was a \$125,000 increase. The hospital received a \$50,000 increase.

Mr. Lacy said the hospital had a "clean audit."

In 2006, the hospital had a good year. In 2007, there were changes in the medical staff, adding Dr. Rebecca Allard to help Dr. Mary Beth Miller. Also through the year, they hired Kim Zwegardt, anesthesiologist, full time so they hospital would have full coverage in that area.

Commissioner Ernie Ketzner, looking at the figures presented by Mr. Lacy, asked why there was a \$400,000 jump from one year to the next?

Mr. Lacy said that was when they had added a second physician, the certified registered nurse anesthetist, two physician assistants and there was a 3-percent increase for the staff. There was also a contract renewal for Dr. Miller.

He said this year, the hospital will face another high loss. Right now, he said, our volume doesn't support the physician load. Our way out is to develop volume and services in our community and other areas. The hospital has a very stable practice here, he said, and we are drawing from surrounding communities.

He said the hospital did not receive the tax credits he had applied for. The credit was to help remodel the obstetrics room.

He also said the kitchen needs to be remodeled and he has

applied for a Community Block Development Grant.

The east entrance to the building didn't pass the fire marshal code. The head clearance is 2-inches too low, the concrete is crumbling and the concrete approach is needing to be replaced. When this work is done, they will be looking at additional parking on the east side.

He said the hospital has space-related issues when the specialty doctors are there. He will have an architect do a drawing on ways of gaining additional space.

We need to meet the needs of the community, he said.

In the future, he said the hospital will need to have a new CAT scanner.

We have been conservative, Mr. Lacy said, using wise spending. We are at a position right now that, with increased losses anticipated, we are training our own crew so we do not have to use locum staff. That is the reason we are asking for additional funds.

Mr. Toler said that, in the past several year, the board has been able to advance and move forward.

"We are in a pivotal position," he said. We now need to continue to look forward and not lose ground — we don't want to take things away.

"I am concerned that we won't be able to continue if there are more budget cuts."

He went on to say the hospital is very professional — our peers say so, he said. We need to be able to handle volumes as well as emergencies — anything that comes our way, he said, adding that there are a lot of hidden costs and we are constantly being challenged.

Mr. Lacy introduced Mila Bandel, registered nurse, who has agreed to take on the position as county health nurse. She will be working part time as the health nurse and part time on the floor at the hospital.

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