



# The Saint Francis Herald

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## Road work expected to end by July 1

By Karen Krien

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People wanting to travel on K-27, north of U.S. 36 to Haigler have experienced a wait. The road is under construction and there is one-way traffic which requires a pilot car in the lead.

Eric Oelschlager, Kansas Department of Transportation engineer out of Atwood, said he expects the stretch of 27 to be done by Tuesday, Wednesday at the latest. The road crew will then move to the river bridge and start east going through St. Francis on the way to the Wheeler-K-27 south junction.

Mr. Oelschlager said the four-lane stretch through St. Francis will have a lot of activity. He said plans were not complete yet, but they are strongly considering using two lane traffic on one side while the other side is being worked on, then they will change to the other side.

Mr. Oelschlager cautions drivers to be especially careful while the work is being done on the four-lane road. There's going to be a lot going on, he said, and there will be lots of heavy equipment and trucks.

The work going through St. Francis should be completed by the end of the week and the road construction will be completed to Wheeler by July 1, weather permitting and there is no breakdown of equipment.

The construction, Mr. Oelschlager said, is going well and there have been few complaints. The crew is making a real effort to get done before wheat harvest arrives.



**DOWN TO U.S. 36** — The road crew has made it's way to U.S. 36, and road construction will begin this week at the river bridge and, by the end of the week, the crew plans to be in St. Francis working on the four-lane section.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

## Farm accident takes life of man

A farm-related accident took the life of a rural St. Francis man Sunday.

Ted Zielke, 67, was riding a four-wheeler all-terrain vehicle near his home 15 miles south of St. Francis when the accident took place.

Sheriff Craig Van Allen said Mr. Zielke apparently rolled the 4-wheeler about 7 p.m. on Sunday.

He said Mr. Zielke's wife, Phyllis, had found him and called 911. He was transported to the Cheyenne County Hospital by ambulance where he was pronounced dead.

The funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. mountain time on Thursday at the First United Methodist Church, 1116 Sherman, Goodland.



**MARVIN ORTH**, weather observer, shows how to put together the official instrument to measure moisture.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

## Weather observer recognized for 40 years service

By Karen Krien

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The National Weather Service in Goodland presented a 40-year length of service award to Marvin Orth on Tuesday, June 16. The award was presented prior to lunch with Marvin and his wife, Veda, at Parkhill Restaurant in St. Francis.

Mr. Orth is one of approximately 11,000 cooperative weather observers in the United States. Each year the National Weather Service presents awards to selected observers.

Mr. Orth has been observing precipitation at his farm northwest of St. Francis for the past 40 years. He recalled the years of drought, the plentiful rains, hail storms and blizzards.

The most rain he ever reported at one time was 3.8 inches in 1968. The winter of 1982-83, there was 100 inches of snow. He said one snow storm had so much snow and wind that his brother and wife, Gordon and Betty, made it to the farm to feed the livestock and just stayed there until the storm passed.

The worst time in reporting the moisture was the seven years of drought in the early 2000s. He remembered that the last good wheat crop was 1999 and then the drought set in.

"In 2002, we only had 8.98 inches of moisture — that was for the whole year," he said.

The drought, he said, took a toll on the whole community.

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## St. Francis man honored for years of support

By Karen Krien

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In 1949, the first National Intercollegiate Rodeo was held at the Cow Palace in San Francisco. And, at the national rodeo was St. Francis man, John Finley.

Over the weekend, Mr. Finley went to Casper, Wyo., for the 60th National Intercollegiate Rodeo. There, he, one of his K-State rodeo buddies and 10 others were recognized and they each received a plaque for their 60 years of support of the sport of rodeo.

Mr. Finley said one of the other original participants from K-State was supposed to attend but he ended up in a nursing home.

Mr. Finley was a student at Kansas State from 1946 to 1950. Rodeo was something students did for fun at one of the local ranches. He and five other guys learned of the national rodeo to be held in California. They piled in one car and drove to the



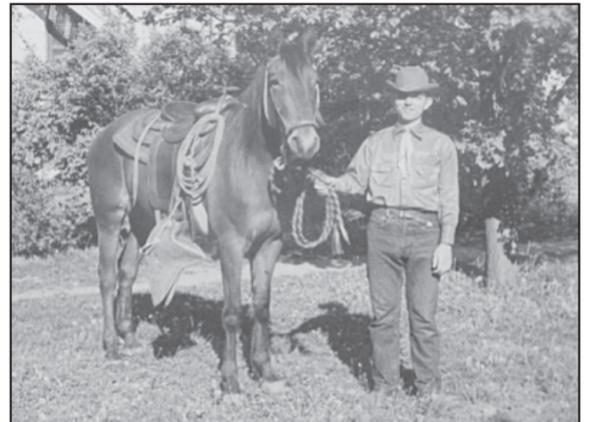
Finley

Finley farm north of St. Francis about midnight on Wednesday.

There they got a second car. With three in each car, one drove, one slept in the front seat and the other slept in the back seat.

"We arrived in San Francisco at 9 a.m. on Friday," he said.

While they all had a great time, none of them placed in any of the events. Mr. Finley had participated in calf roping and wild cow milking.



**READY TO RIDE** — John Finley was ready to saddle up. The photo was taken in the early 1950s.

Things have changed a lot since then, he said.

"We didn't have a coach and we had to foot all the expenses ourselves," he said.

In his rodeo days, Mr. Finley said he tried all the traditional rodeo sports except saddle bronc riding and bull dogging. Actually, he was ready to bull dog but, when he saw the steer which came straight from the feedlot and was almost as tall as the horse, he decided that only a fool would try that!

He had an injury when a horse fell with him and cracked his ankle. He said, even though he was on crutches, he managed to get around really good.

Back home on the farm, he,

Swede Calnon and Charles Sherlock built an arena. They went to Amarillo, Texas, and Clovis, N.M., where they bought Brahma bulls which they roped all summer, then took them to Denver to the sale in the fall.

"We generally lost money on them," he said. "But we sure had fun."

Mr. Finley has been one of the county fair's biggest supporter, serving on the fair board and in anyway that is needed. In the early years, he helped build the first rodeo arena. He would like to see rodeos being held at the county fair but, having served on the board, knows that it doesn't bring in a crowd these days and, consequently, it loses money.

## 1934 graduate attends celebration

Alice Crabtree Gregory was honored as the only member of the class of 1934 attending the St. Francis Community High School alumni celebration on Saturday.

Her daughter, Sherri Gregory, who wrote much of the following article, said her mother started school at Prairie Rose School in the northern part of Cheyenne County. She attended Prairie Rose through the eighth grade, then went to Denver Junior Academy and Enterprise Academy. She completed her education at St. Francis where she graduated from high school in 1934.

The year after Alice graduated from high school she spent in Denver working as a domestic for some wealthy people. During the summer of 1936, the school board at Hillcrest School, located in Cheyenne County, were looking for a teacher. Alice's dad went to Denver and said she should come home and see if she could "get that school."

She began teaching at Hillcrest School in the fall of 1936 and taught there for the next two years.

Her college education was obtained over several years with much determination, Sherri said. She attended Union College in



Alice Crabtree

Lincoln, Neb., then remote courses from Kearney State Teacher's College, McCook College and Colorado State College where she graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1966. But, she didn't stop there, she earned her master's degree in educational media in 1969.

Besides Hillcrest, Mrs. Gregory taught in other Cheyenne County schools including Sam Rath, Hackberry and East 10.

On April 25, 1939, she married Richard Gregory. They raised five children on the family ranch/farm 20 miles northwest of St. Francis. In 1942, she put her teaching on



**ALICE GREGORY**, class of 1934, was the only member of her class attending the alumni celebration. Shirley Zwegardt, gives Mrs. Gregory a corsage.

Left, photo courtesy of Sherri Gregory; above, Herald photo by Karen Krien

hold to raise her family.

Twenty years later in 1962, she went back to work teaching kindergarten and first and second grades in Haigler. She then began work in the library at the grade school in St. Francis where she gathered all

the books from the consolidated country schools, cataloged them and created the library.

After several years, she moved to Granada, Colo., to work in the grade school, then on to the Lamar

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