

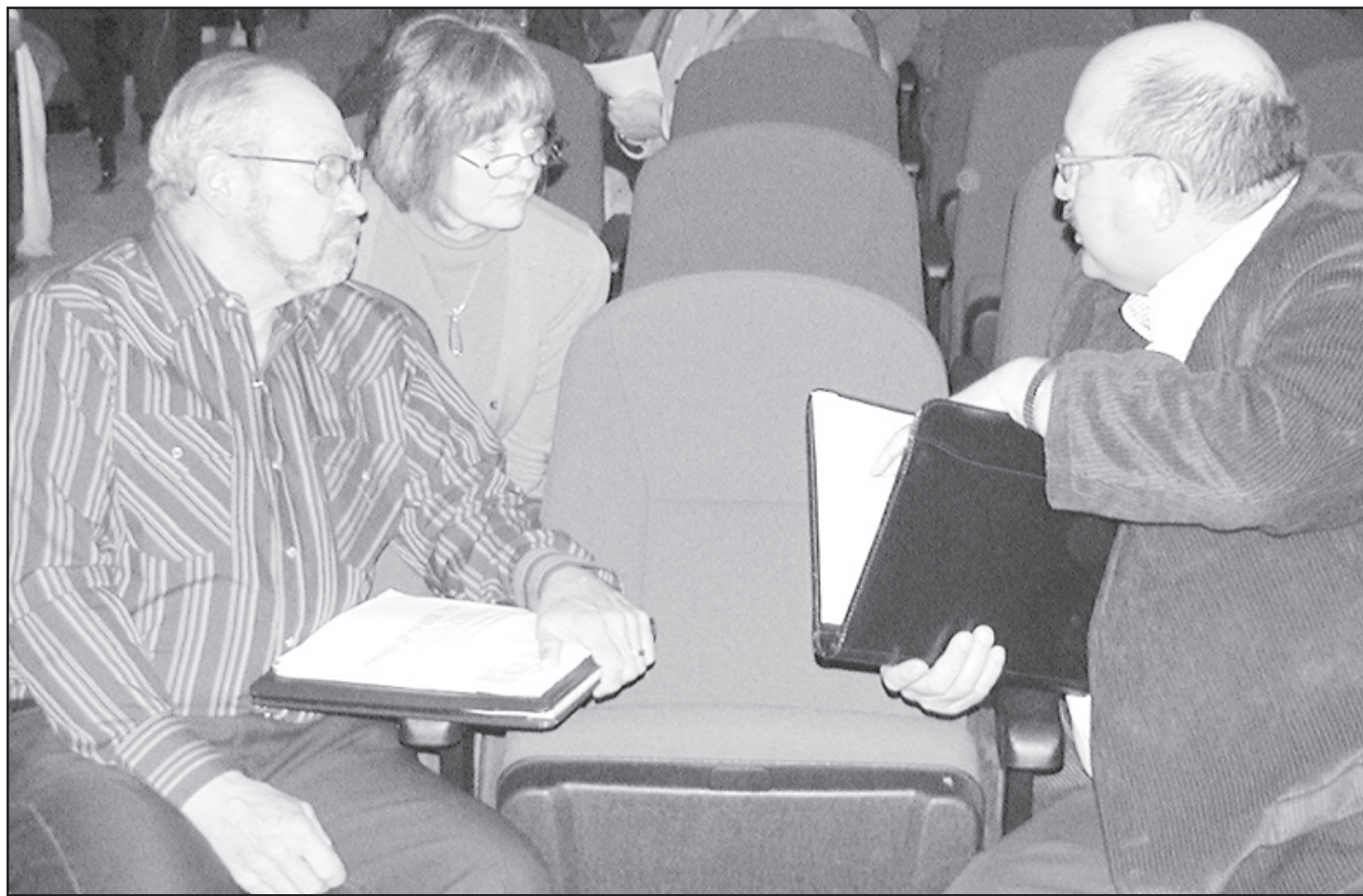
The Saint Francis Herald

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Thursday, February 11, 2010

125th Year, Number 6



SPEAKERS TALKED BEFORE the public forum began Monday evening. Pictured, left to right, are Dale Patton, county commissioner; Dr. Mary Beth Miller, representing the Good Samaritan Village; and Les Lacy, Cheyenne County Hospital administrator.

Herald staff photos by Casey McCormick

Forum draws 300 people

By Karen Krien

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It was a full house Monday evening as around 300 concerned residents and school students gathered in the St. Francis high school auditorium. Recent and continued revenue cuts in schools and health care can close schools, hospitals and nursing homes, and eventually, ruin towns. Those present were urged to be proactive — contact legislators (a list of names and addresses is at the end of this article).

If you are against the cuts, Les Lacy, hospital administrator, said, let them know specifically, that you are against the cuts in school finances, and/or that you are against the cuts in health care — that they are vital services to the county and the towns and they, as legislators, need to find a way to finance these services.

People were also urged to attend the town hall meeting on Saturday starting at 8 a.m. in Bird City at the Legion hall.

“We need to fill that Legion hall,” all of the speakers said.

The general consensus was that no one wanted to have their taxes raised but no one wanted to lose services, the schools, health care, hospital or nursing home. The fact that the governor had proposed a 1-cent sales tax in the state and a tax increase on cigarettes wasn’t even considered in the committee which, said Rob Schiltz, St. Francis schools superintendent, appears to be a signal that it will not be considered.

Upping taxes in these two

Legislators meeting
8 to 9 a.m.
Saturday
Bird City
American Legion

areas would have raised nearly \$400,000,000. Dr. Mary Beth Miller, one of the speakers, said that it is a fact that raising taxes on cigarettes cuts down on teen smoking.

The public forum, sponsored by the Community Builders, focused on the cuts the Kansas legislators are making and how they will affect schools and health care. Dale Patton, Cheyenne County Commissioner, was also one of the speakers.

The state of Kansas is broke. Schools, hospitals and nursing homes are at the top of the list for getting the cuts but those cuts will trickle down to hurt businesses and many Kansas communities such as those in Cheyenne County.

Dr. Miller said she had talked to Speaker of the House, Mike O’Neal, telling him, if a person has a toe amputated, he is still able to live his life fairly normal but, if you take off the leg above the knee, it changes his life forever. Speaker O’Neal’s comment, Dr. Miller said, was we have barely done a pedicure! In other words, she said, they haven’t began to make cuts and they don’t care about us.

Tom Keller, who heads the Community Builders, presented a power point which showed how



DR. MARY BETH MILLER is concerned about what will happen to the county in the future.

the population hit a high of 7,000 people in 1930 and has declined ever since. The school enrollment in 1979 was 492 and in 2009, it was 296. Through the years, Mr. Keller said, even with the drop in enrollment, the school has maintained excellent faculty and given students a good education.

Education, he said, is the foundation for a better life!

In 1966, the state constitution changed and mandated to provide the dollars for public schools. Consequently, 53 percent of the state’s general fund goes for kindergarten through grade 12 education.

When the state ran out of mon-

ey, they began cutting programs with education and schools receiving substantial cuts. The St. Francis schools receive \$3.26 million. Of that, approximately 63 percent (\$2,000,000) comes from state funding and 34 percent (\$1,000,000) comes from local property tax. Federal taxes pay 2 percent and 1 percent comes from interest on unencumbered money.

However, the school has \$2,610,000 in expenses in salaries, building maintenance and other expenses. They are able to keep up with the expenses because when possible funds are

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Board makes plans for fair in August

By Linda Schneider
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With the fair only six months away, the Cheyenne County Fair Board members got down to the business of getting acts lined up and scheduled events set. At the meeting was the newest fair board member, Drew Flemming. Volunteers are needed to do various duties and are welcomed by contacting Megan Douthit-Downey.

After the approval of the financial report and meeting minutes, derby rules were reviewed and accepted. A local talent show will be added to this year’s scheduled shows. Dick Bursch, president, presented a list of possible acts to be considered.

Derby rules

Clay Zimbelman, heading the Derby Committee, presented to

the members the derby rules. With only some changes in wording on the car bumpers and safety bars inside the vehicles, they are basically the same as last year’s rules.

“This year, the cars can be patched and put right back into action, something we didn’t allow last year,” Mr. Zimbelman said.

He said Syracuse wants to be a part of the derby-point system, as well as Colby and Goodland. Mr. Zimbelman said that since the Cheyenne County Fair is the last of the derby races, it will be up to the fair board to add up the points and announce the winner. Also, the points system is being reviewed and will be better than last year’s. The points rules will be separate from the derby rules.

Discussion followed on how to

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People urged to talk to legislators

By Karen Krien

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Cheyenne County residents are urged to be at the Bird City American Legion hall at 8 a.m. on Saturday to hear what Kansas State Senator Ralph Ostmeyer, and John Faber, Kansas Representative, will have to say at their town hall meeting.

While they will be seeking ideas on issues being addressed in the 2010 Kansas Legislature, there are three specific questions that have been sent to the representatives to answer.

They include:

- Kansas is facing a \$400 million shortfall. What is your plan as an elected official to address this situation?
- How do you expect local

services, schools, hospitals, nursing home to survive?

• A 1-cent sales tax increase would generate substantial revenue by many; funding the cuts locally would put the short-fall on few, especially in western Kansas. Which of these are you more likely to support?

Everyone is invited to attend. The Cheyenne County Farm Bureau will be furnishing donuts and coffee.

Later that day, they will be in Atwood from 9:45 to 10:45 at Williams Brothers Grocery Store. From 11:30 to 1 p.m., they will be at the Decatur County Courthouse in Oberlin, then on to Norton for a 1:45 to 2:45 meeting at the Town and Country Kitchen.

Valentine contest ends Friday noon



By Karen Krien

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This is the last week for people to get their ballots in for their favorite Valentine sweethearts. Ballots will be collected at noon on Friday and the winners will be notified and will receive a bouquet from either Goodell Greenhouse and Floral or Prairie Rose Floral. Look for their photos and a story about their married life in next week’s Herald.

The ballot has been printed on the Valentine’s page in *The Saint Francis Herald* for the past two weeks. The ballot will also be run in this week’s Herald.

Ballots must be submitted on a Herald ballot otherwise they will not be accepted. Ballots may be taken to any one of the participating businesses which include: Donna’s Gift Palace, Goodell Greenhouse and Floral, Hilltop General Store/Uptown Market, Krien Pharmacy, Owens True Value, Prairie Rose Floral, Sainty

Liquor, Stuart’s Jewelry, Video Kingdom and *The Saint Francis Herald*.

Last year’s sweethearts were Gus and Martha Zwegardt and Jim and Ruth Milliken. The Zwegardts had been married 70 years and the Millikens, 44 years.

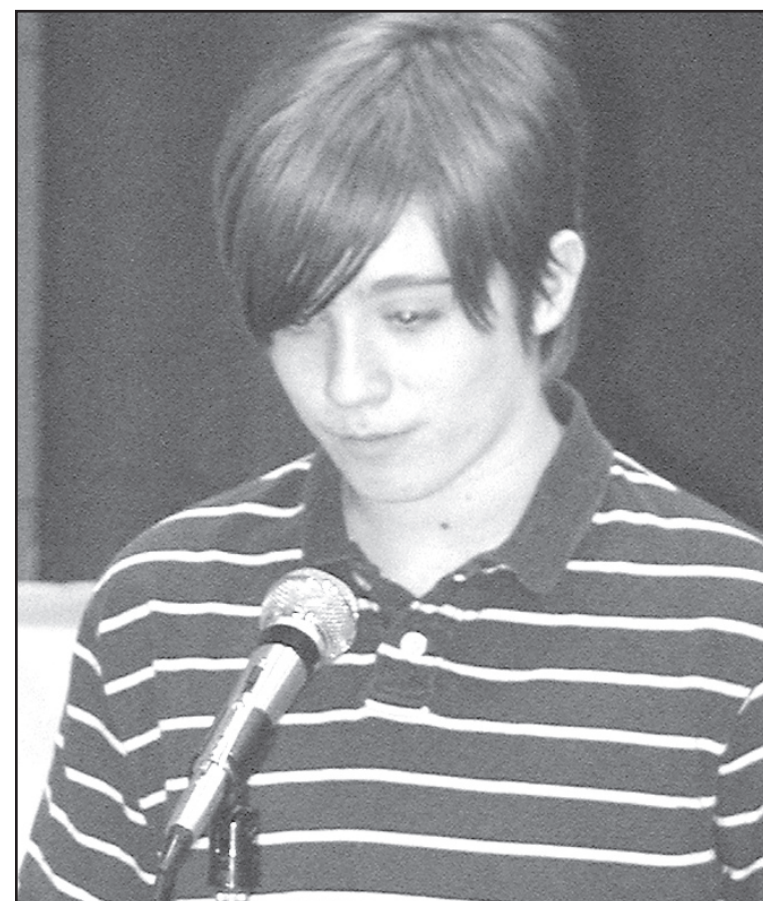
This is the second year for the contest and it has sparked lots of interest, Casey McCormick, ad manager, said.

This year, there are two age divisions: couples who have been married 50 years or less; and those couples who have been married 51 years or more.

Rules are: 1) The couple must be married and 21 years of age or older; and 2) must live in Cheyenne County; 3) no previous winners are eligible.

Do you know a couple who is special? A couple who deserves to be recognized? Someone you love?

Submit your ballots by Friday at noon to make sure the special couple is counted.



SPELLING BEE WINNER was Austin Patton, St. Francis.

Sainty student wins spelling bee

By Karen Krien

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The Cheyenne County Spelling Bee was held Wednesday, Feb. 3, with students from Cheylin and St. Francis, fourth through eighth grades, competing. After six rounds, there were two boys left.

Austin Patton, a sixth grader from St. Francis, correctly spelling “hysterically” to win the 2010 spelling bee. Coming in second place was Eric Hart, St. Francis eighth grader. Eric misspelled “apprentice.”

The rule for the final round was that, if the last contestants misspelled a word, then the final contestant must spell an additional word right.

Some of the words students were asked to spell included: significant, condemn, mildew, diamond, towel, dangerous, commentary, denominator, surround, strengthen, accurate, apologize, pharmacy, agriculture, enormous and centipede.

Students participating were:

St. Francis: fourth grade-Tate Busse, Madison Tice and Zoe Sundstrum; fifth grade-Makayla Rogers, Joel Hill and Quinton Cravens; sixth grade-Jude Faulkender, Auston Patton and Jakob Church; seventh grade-MaKayla Taylor, Aby Fernandez and Jon Hoard; eighth grade-Derek Queen, Eric Hart and Scott Warren.

Cheylin: fourth grade-Alex Hazuka, Rachel Keltz and Jordan Jan-



ERIC HART, St. Francis, was the second place winner in the spelling bee.

icke; fifth grade-Haleigh Rucker, Ariaia Castillo and Tommy Frisbie; sixth grade-Devon Janicke, Pedro Gutierrez and Elizabeth Keltz; seventh grade-Cheyenne Hewitt, Allie Frisbie and Anamarie Crespín; eighth grade-Lois Solis, Walker Janicke and Shayla Hubbard. Alternates were Amber Manners, C.J. Anholz, Kelsey Miller, Jaime Davison and Ellie Pochop.