

Organizations ask county for budget consideration



SUPPORT FOR WEIGHT LOSS. Weight Watchers of St. Francis recently held an open house to get their message out. Dana Murray (left) and Debbie Grace prepare food samples for guests.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Local group hosts open house

Weight Watchers of St. Francis hosted an open house June 24 at the United Methodist Church with 30 people attending.

Booths were set up for members and guests to sample recipes and to learn more about weight control and exercise. Sara Houtman with the hospital physical therapy department, handed out information on the availability of their equipment to the public. Sherry Beeson, Hair Nest, Bird City, had information on manicures and pedicures.

Four new members were enrolled that night.

The St Francis group started on June 8, 2006.

Althea Lebow, coordinator, said the Weight Watchers Momentum™ program provides the very best of nutrition research. The program has over 45 years of experience helping millions of members around the world to lose weight.

With strategies to conquer hunger and the ability to tailor the plan to fit into one's own life, the program provides people with the skills to achieve their weight loss goals and live healthier.

Mrs. Lebow leads the Weight Watchers meetings at the United Methodist Church in St. Francis. She, like all of the leaders, lost weight following the program. Her weight loss, she said, allows her to truly understand the challenges and celebrations involved in making the commitment to lose weight.

"The Momentum Plan is designed to teach you the fundamentals of weight loss and habits to help you attain a healthy lifestyle," Mrs. Lebow said. "The program and the support you will find at

Weight Watchers will help you stick to your weight loss efforts, all the way to goal, then to maintain a healthy weight throughout your lifetime."

Robin Burr, Dara Carmichael and Jennifer Krien are receptionists. Weight Watchers suggests starting with a basic goal of losing just 5-10 percent of the person's starting weight. This number can help the person:

- Lower blood pressure and reduce risk for having a stroke.
- Reduce the risk of developing diabetes; or for those already affected, losing weight helps to improve insulin function and lower blood sugar levels.
- Reduce cholesterol count.

"When area residents come to Weight Watchers they will see that the program is not a diet, it's a lifestyle change that offers tools, group support, food and activity plans that are livable, sustainable and effective", explained Sara Hornecker, territory manager for Weight Watchers. "At Weight Watchers meetings, people come together with a common goal - to learn how to successfully lose weight."

Meetings are an important part of how Weight Watchers helps members reach their goals; in fact, people who attend meetings lose three times more weight than those who try to lose weight on their own.

The St Francis meeting is held at the United Methodist Church, 512 S Scott, St Francis, on Thursdays. Weigh-in is at 5:30 p.m., and the meeting is at 6. Meetings last approximately 30 minutes.

All guest are welcome to attend for free. To learn more about

Weight Watchers services, products and publications, visit www.weightwatchers.com to find the nearest meeting location, or call 1-800-651-6000 or click on the "Find a Meeting" link at the top of the home page.

Preparations for fair continue

By Karen Krien
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The Cheyenne County Fair Board July meeting was held at the fairgrounds Thursday evening. With harvest and busy schedules, there was not a quorum but there were only a few matters to act on.

The meeting had been scheduled at the fairgrounds in hopes there would be enough board members to do some work. Linda Elfers, Extension agent assistant, said the 4-H'ers and leaders would be at the grounds on July 27 for a work night so the board agreed to also plan to work then.

Nick Ketzner, board member, asked that Mrs. Elfers have a "to do" list for 4-H'ers. He said that it would help board members work with the kids and be more productive.

Mrs. Elfers thanked the board for having the grounds mowed and the rest rooms stocked for the Spring Horse Show.

New agent
Mrs. Elfers said the Sunflower Council had hired a livestock agent for Cheyenne County. He will take the place of Joe Leibbrandt who resigned in the spring. He will not take over until after the fair but will be on the grounds seeing how the fair is run.

By Karen Krien
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It is budget time for the county and the Cheyenne County Commissioners, at the June 30 meeting, had several organizations requesting that they be remembered in the next year's budget.

However, Roger Jensen, with the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Center, said the center may not need to request additional money. On the other hand, Les Lacy, Cheyenne County Hospital administrator, requested \$650,000, up from the \$610,000 they received last year. Jeanne Dunn, Cheyenne County District Conservation, said the district had taken a 7-percent cut from the state. She said she had no health insurance and the raise in the proposed budget reflected compensation for the benefits she will receive. The budget increased from \$15,500 to \$20,500.

Values drop
Cheyenne County Appraiser Bruce Webb reported the county valuation decreased by nearly 20 percent. The vast majority of the valuation was lost in natural gas wells.

The drop was due to the price of natural gas and production of natural gas. The natural gas valuation decreased by \$8,458,224.

Ag land values are dropping. The commissioners commented that it is now to the point that farmers are almost laughing. However, Mr. Webb said that while the farmers are getting a pretty good deal now, the pendulum will swing and the taxes on this land will eventually be back where they should be.

The commissioners grimly looked at the fact that there was

still almost \$9 million of valuation gone. They will need to decide if they should drastically cut back spending or have a mill levy increase. The county, they said, is basically funded by ad valorem taxes...priorities will need to be set in next year's budget.

Hospital's budget
Mr. Lacy said he and the board came to the commissioners asking for additional funds only when they are needed. Kari Gilliland, county attorney and member of the hospital board, reported that the hospital employees 53 people and that is big for a town the size of St. Francis.

Losing a major entity like the hospital would affect many. There is also the tax valuation to consider with or without a hospital.

Andy Beikman, commissioner, said he would like to see the hospital where it is funded as it needs to be, then they can consider a 3-percent raise each year.

He also noted that he found a problem with the billing system of the clinic and hospital. Mr. Lacy made a note of his complaint and will check into it.

Sheriff's report
Sheriff Craig Van Allen said he had talked to the St. Francis Chief of Police, Shane Guggenmos about helping with law coverage for the city of St. Francis. He said they had asked that the officers cover weekends. Sheriff Van Allen said he had told him the officers would cover the Fourth of July weekend but had concerns because there are several city ordinances that the sheriff's officers are not authorized to enforce.

The commissioners asked what kind of ordinances? Some of the

ordinances, he said included picking up loose dogs and illegal fire-works. They can stop someone for making U-turns because that is a state law but not J-turns as that it is a city law.

If they are to cover the town every weekend, then that could incur additional expense. However, if they were covering just when they needed help, he wasn't sure if that would add that much expense.

The commissioners discussed the fact that the people in the city are paying city taxes as well as county taxes for law coverage.

The commissioners agreed they needed more information before they made any decisions.

Sheriff Van Allen was given permission to purchase new radar check equipment.

Road and bridge department report

Dave Flemming, road and bridge department superintendent, had a bid for a new road grader. He discussed trading in either a 2009 or a 2008 grader. He asked that the commissioners look hard at purchasing one, maybe two graders. Mr. Flemming will look into possible financing.

He noted that the Cheyenne County Wildlife organization had paid \$5,084 for the labor and fuel to help clean up Keller Pond. The total cost was \$10,000.

A road closing near the Rawlins-Cheyenne county line was discussed. Mr. Flemming said there are still two people who use it.

In other business:

• The matter of a controlled burn violation was mentioned.

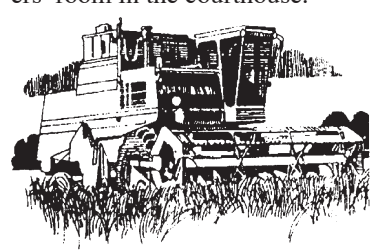
• Attorney Kari Gilliland said that Mark Jamison, as part of his sentence, will be paying for his medical bills accumulated while in jail. He will not be released from parole until the bills are paid.

• The commissioners agreed that county residents can bring a deer carcass to the county landfill. Because of the Chronic Wasting Disease carried by deer, there will be a fee for those out-of-county people bringing deer to the landfill. The fee will be determined at a later date.

• The handicap door on the west side of the courthouse will be looked at and possibly adjusted by Dependable Glass, Goodland.

• The "no smoking" law comes into effect on July 1. Signs will be posted that there will be no smoking within 10 feet of the courthouse doors.

Next meeting
The next commissioners' meeting will be held at 8 a.m. on Thursday, July 15, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.



have done in the past and how much it will cost, noting that the cost is the same as last year. The proposed advertising will cost \$1,237 which, because they are advertising in both pre- and after-fair issues, is over a \$200 savings to the board.

• The 4-H'ers are wanting to build new platforms for the display building. They will do the labor; the board agreed to pay for the materials.

Work to be done
The board discussed several different areas that needed repairs, cement and a better working sliding door in the livestock barn before the fair. Mr. Bursch said he has some bridge planks which will work for one area.

They dismissed the meeting to walk around the grounds so they will have the projects lined up for the work day on July 27. If needed, they might do some of the work before then.

The next regular meeting will be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 2, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.

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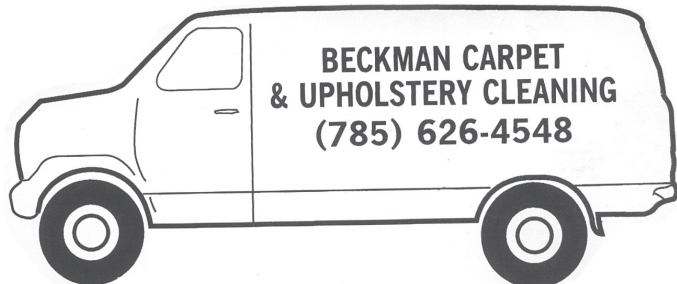


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