



## Hospital insurance increases

The Cheyenne County Hospital Board, when they met on June 29, spent time discussing health insurance costs. This year, the health insurance went up 7.6 percent.

Last year, the hospital supplemented a total of \$500 to the employees' insurance. This, Les Lacy, hospital administrator said, was \$100 more than recommended by Great Plains Health Alliance, the company which leases the hospital. This year, Great Plains is recommending \$450 as the hospital's portion.

As the administrator, he said, it is his position to stay at the recommended amount because of the financial position of the hospital. Jackie John, area director for Great Plains, said that the insurance was put out for bid and no bids were received. She said she thought this

is due to the uncertainty with the healthcare reform.

Kari Gilliland, board member, asked if the hospital was going to reduce the amount covered on insurance if the employees do receive a cost of living increase? Mr. Lacy pointed out that employees have continued to receive annual increases.

Jane Young, board member, asked how many employees were on the insurance and what the amount would be for the extra \$50? However, those numbers were not available.

The out-of-pocket expense for the family plan with the \$1500/\$3000 deductible is \$745 and the single plan is \$89. For the \$3000/\$6000 deductible, the family plan is \$629 and the single plan is \$36.

See **INSURANCE** on Page 7

## School board elects officers

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansas.com

The Thursday St. Francis Board of Education meeting was spent making designations, appointing people to boards and other such business that takes place at the beginning of the school's fiscal year. However, one of the first matters of business was the election of officers.

Ed Marin was elected president, replacing Mary Beth Miller. Bonnie Zweggardt was elected vice president, replacing Kelly Gienger.

Among the business was setting a date for the board meetings. Last year, as in the past, the board meetings are set on the second Thursday of the month. The proposed new

school calendar was reviewed and, for the most part, the meetings will not conflict with school activities during the year. Instead of changing the time during the year, the time will be 7 p.m. throughout the year.

That brought up the subject of when the calendar will be available to the public. Rob Schiltz, superintendent, said the calendars should be ready by the first of August.

### Contracts signed

At the last meeting, the board determined there was enough money to offer contracts to five teachers whose contracts were not renewed at the end of the school year. Those contracts were signed and the board

See **ELECTS** on Page 7

## Harvest fire burns 100 acres wheat

St. Francis firemen rushed to a wheat and wheat-stubble fire north of St. Francis. Chief George Harper reported that about 100 acres were burned between the backyard of Tom and Donna Stevens to the front yard of Shawn and Shawna Blanka.

The wheat was dry, said Chief Harper, and hard to put out. Farmers had their equipment out helping to make barriers and the hous-

es suffered no fire damage.

Chief Harper said the ground is wet from the recent rains, however, the hot winds have dried out the wheat, making it more susceptible to fire.

It is supposed to be hot and dry this week and the chief expects the possibility of fires to be high. Farmers and residents are urged to be cautious with fire.



**COMBINES COULD BE SEEN in all directions of St. Francis over the weekend as farmers and custom cutters rushed to get the wheat in the bins and elevators before rain and hail put a stop to the work.**

## Wheat harvest winds down

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansas.com

As of Friday, the Kansas Agriculture Statistics estimated this year's Kansas wheat crop to total some 369 million bushels from 8.2 million acres. That is an average of 43 bushels per acre but, in Cheyenne County, the average is anywhere from 55 to 75 bushels per acre. The Agriculture Statistics said it was most likely the fifth highest Kansas state yield on record.

Kansas harvest, on Sunday, was 92-percent complete with most of the remaining wheat to be cut in Sherman, Cheyenne and Thomas counties. After three days of harvest, farmers in these counties, said Brad Cowan, president and chief executive officer of Frontier Ag, reported dryland yields ranging from 65 to 80 bushels per acre and irrigated yields in the 80-bushel per acre range. Test weights averaged 61.5 pounds and protein is 11.4 to 11.8 bushels.

In Cheyenne County, Tim Burr, manager of Frontier Ag, Bird City, as of Monday night, said they had taken over 1.1 million bushels. The elevator, by the time this paper comes out, will be full.

Farmers are getting good yields, he said. We expected a big harvest and we are getting it. The quality is very good, he added.

At the St. Francis Equity on Tuesday, the elevators were al-



**THESE HARVEST PHOTOS were taken in a field belonging to Roger Zweggardt.**

Herald staff photos by Karen Krien

most full. The only wheat taken now is contract grain.

They have cars sitting on the tracks waiting to go out and they are full. More cars are expected in a week but, said Shirley Zweggardt, grain manager, harvest will be over by then.

This is a excellent crop, she said. And to top it, the price for wheat has rallied in the last 10 days. She added that protein is also excellent at 11.5.

Dale Weeks, Wheeler Equity manager, said they filled up Tuesday and it will be a week before the

train brings more cars back. The elevator holds 1.1 million bushels and they have sent 100,000 bushels out by rail.

Some of the farmers have had to deal with muddy fields – so muddy that combines had to quit cutting when they were in mud up to the axles. However, the wheat kernels are dry. Dale said it is so dry that some is coming in a 9-percent moisture.

The Kansas Wheat report had Doug Ross, manager of Bartlett Grain, St. Francis, saying that farmers aren't saying much about

the wheat except the yields are very good. Test weights average about 62 pounds per bushel.

The corn crop is looking to be as good as the wheat crop has been this year. Thunderstorms, rain and hail have managed to skirt around the county but the dryland corn, with the 90- to 100-degree temperatures, is going to need a drink. Unfortunately, as of Tuesday, the National Weather Service was predicting only a slight chance of rain/thunderstorms on Thursday and Saturday.

## St. Francis woman celebrates 100th

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansas.com

Bertha Hilt celebrated her 100th birthday on May 8.

Bertha's parents, John and Matilda Keller, were living in a dug-out soddy in Cheyenne County when she was born on May 8, 1910. A younger brother, Albert, was also born in the soddy.

The house had one room and there was a spring nearby which furnished water for the family and livestock.

Mrs. Hilt said she and Albert, since they were the two oldest, were only able to go to country school up to the eighth grade. Then, we had to stay at home and work she said.

However, there was pride in her voice as she told about how the other five siblings were able to go on with their education.

As farmers, she said, they

worked in the fields, shocked feed, milked and fed cattle. During harvest, she and her sisters helped their mother with the cooking and cleaning as there were harvesters who lived with them.

She met her husband in the 1930s and they courted until he went to war in 1941. He spoke German fluently, he was a translator. When he returned, they were married in 1946.

Bill, she said, wanted to be married in Salem Lutheran Church. Bertha said they had a big wedding.

They were supposed to live on the Hilt home place but that didn't work out so he worked for the Kellers and at the St. Francis Equity before going to help Bertha's brother, Ed, on a ranch he had bought in Colorado. Later, Bill bought a farm near Kanorado. He and Bertha were farmers



**Bertha Hilt - 1940**

all their lives.

Bill died in 2009. He and Bertha had been married for 63 years. They had four children, Martin, Alfred, Ruth and Ruby.

Mrs. Hilt said she always raised a big garden and liked to can. That



**Bertha Hilt - 2010**

was when the pressure cooker had been introduced and she liked cooking with a pressure cooker. The farm southwest of St. Francis had lime in the water. Consequently, she said,

See **100TH** on Page 7

## Nurse encourages vaccinating now

Don't wait until the end of summer to get your preteen or teenager vaccinated, reminds Mila Bandel, Cheyenne County Health Nurse.

"We're committed to your child's health and we believe in the importance of helping prevent diseases that can impact their future," she said.

These include disease for which the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends vaccination for 11 to 18-year-olds. Some of the vaccines children might need caught up on may include; tetanus; hepatitis A and/or B; meningitis; Varicella (chickenpox) just to name a few of the vaccines the health department offers.

To make it easy to get 11- to 18-year-olds caught up with the vaccines they need, the health department is hosting a "Summer Vaccination Event" on Wednesday, July 28, through Friday,

July 30, at the Cheyenne County Health Department. They can come to the health department between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. without an appointment to get their vaccines.

Recommended vaccines are also available free for children up to 18 who are eligible under the Vaccines For Children program from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The program includes, among others, children who are eligible for Medicaid and children who have no health insurance.

Don't let the summer get away from you, Mrs. Bandel said. Take advantage of this opportunity to help protect your child – get them vaccinated!

Remember, she said, no appointment is necessary. For more information contact Mila Bandel, county health nurse at 785-332-2381.