



THE DAY AFTER THE FIRE, much of the damage on the south side of the Good Samaritan Village could be seen.

Herald staff photos by Casey McCormick

## Nursing home future still unsure after fire

By Karen Krien

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It has been about a week since the fire at the Good Samaritan Village, St. Francis, started but no decisions have been made on the future of the nursing home.

Rumors have ranged anywhere from razing the burned area and rebuilding, to not reopening.

Jeff Paulsen, Village administrator, told the Village Advisory Board on Thursday that he had not heard of any plans for the Good Samaritan Society, located in Sioux Falls, S.D., to leave the county. The insurance carrier organized the cleanup of the facility and equipment. A local contractor, Travis Milne, had been hired to wall off the burned area on both the east and west sides. The Society was also sending a staff construction engineer to assess the damage.

The St. Francis nursing home was almost full with 48 resi-

dents before the fire. Residents were located in other nursing homes. The Roberts twins, Royce and Russell, residents at the Village for over 36 years, were moved to Sharon Springs where they celebrated their 80th birthday. One of their caretakers, Gloria Bracelin, said they were adjusting well to their new surroundings.

Cheryl Lee, Home Health director, had arrived at the high school gymnasium shortly after residents had been moved there. She reported that each resident was carefully checked and despite their fragile bodies, not one resident had a skin tear.

Shane Guggemus, chief of police, said he had gone to the high school expecting chaos but was happy to find the residents doing well and everything was under control.

Mr. Paulsen said the state fire marshal, who was on the scene when the fire occurred, commended Jannelle Bow-

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## Forum time set

By Casey McCormick

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Community members from the county gathered Monday morning to discuss bringing people together with information about the status of the Good Samaritan Village in the aftermath of last week's fire.

The group will host a forum on Wednesday, Nov. 3, from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the St. Francis high school auditorium.

The head offices of the Good Samaritan Village, in Sioux Falls, S.D., have been contacted and will have a representative present.

Members of the Good Samaritan Village Advisory Board and employees, Community Builders and individuals from Bird City and St. Francis were at the Monday meeting.

Several of the employees held back their emotions when it came to speaking about how they are

copied and what their concerns are for the future.

"We've lost a family of 64 members," said Janet Siegfried in reference to the number of workers from the facility.

"We are not doing well and the longer we wait (to reopen) there will not be the same residents or employees coming back."

The forum is hoped to better educate the public on the status of the Village. It should also provide answers to the many questions being asked.

A suggestion that came from the meeting was to have county residents sign a petition of support to rebuild the structure and keep the operation here.

One of the Advisory Board members present was Troy Hilt.

"We don't know what is going to happen, but we can show our community support."



AFTER THE FIRE, this photo showed some of the damage to the hallway at the Village.



CONGRESSMAN JERRY MORAN talks with Village employees, Darla Walz, 1 to r, Deb Gohl, Paula Austin and Cathy Loop.

Herald staff photo by Casey McCormick

## Candidate talks with victims

By Karen Krien

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Congressman Jerry Moran was in St. Francis Monday morning to observe the damage done by fire at the Good Samaritan Village. He met briefly with Jeff Paulsen, administrator, as well as some staff.

He had heard reports on the fire and how the staff had responded. He reassured employees that he will look into what can be done to help them.

Darla Walz, employee, referred to the employees' situation as a "small Katrina."

He commended the way the St. Francis community had come together in a difficult situation.

It is good, he said, to live our lives in special places we call home and see people helping people.

Congressman Moran, along with Mr. Paulsen and Ward Cassidy, can-

didate for representative of the 120 district, met with Sandy Sandoval, federal fire investigator for the Village's insurance company. Wearing hard hats, the three men followed Mr. Sandoval into the burned area of the facility where they looked at the damage.

When the fire started, a sub contractor's crew was spraying insulation, a product called SoyTherm. The two part component that is mixed and sprayed on, forming a foam that expands in seconds. Mr. Sandoval said the insulation forms a vapor which could be volatile.

Mr. Sandoval said he was there for the preliminary walk around and it would be one to two weeks before all interested parties including two other insurance company representatives would meet. He said electrical engineers will also be called in to help determine the origin and

cause of the fire. George Harper, St. Francis fire chief, said he was proud of the work the firemen did. There was no way, he said, that firemen could have gone up into the attic so they were forced to put holes in the roof to get rid of the heat and stop the fire.

Backup water supplies had been called for but were not used, he said. It had taken the firemen about four hours to contain the fire. Their Scott Pak bottles used for oxygen were depleted and needed to be filled several times.

There was little wind which helped the situation, he said. Had the wind had been blowing from the south, it would have been necessary to remove people living in the apartments to the north of the facility.

No one was hurt, Chief Harper said, and that was the main concern.

## Meet the candidates —

### Man runs because he cares



Cassidy

By Karen Krien

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Republican Ward Cassidy, St. Francis, is running for a seat in the House of Representative of the 120th District in the Nov. 2 general election. His opponent is Democrat, Robert "Bob" Strevey, Norcatour.

Mr. Cassidy is concerned about schools, highways/transportation, ethanol development and agriculture, just to name a few.

"The bottom line is," he said, "I care about what affects Northwest Kansas and it's people."

"If we don't stand up to protect our Northwest Kansas way of life, we will have to take what is dished out and I don't plan to stand by and let that happen."

"Everyone needs to work together to solve problems. We need to preserve our lifestyle."

He uses the acronym "CAVE," which he said stands for communication, availability, visibility and

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### Man runs so people can choose



Strevey

By Kimberly Davis

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A Norcatour Democrat seeks to serve the 120th District in the Kansas House of Representatives.

Robert "Bob" Strevey has run for the post in three previous elections, with this one being his fourth race.

In each of those, he's run unopposed in the primary, and then met the Republican candidate in the general election. This year, Mr. Strevey will meet Ward Cassidy from St. Francis, who beat long-time Rep. John Faber in the GOP primary.

Mr. Strevey said part of the reason he runs is because he feels people have a right to have a choice when they go to the polls. Without a name on the ballot for the Democrat party, he said, there's not a choice.

The environment in Topeka right now, said Mr. Strevey, makes it difficult for anyone to get anything

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## Get out and vote on Tuesday

Kansas voters get the chance Tuesday to decide who will serve as senator, governor, attorney general and more when they cast their ballots in the general election.

In Cheyenne County, all of the polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., allowing registered voters the chance to help decide who will serve.

Those polling places include Bird City Township-Bird City American Legion Hall. Benkel-

man, Calhoun, Cleveland Run, Jaqua, Orlando, Wano I, and Wano II Townships will vote at Peace Lutheran Church.

Clerk Terry Miller, county election officer, said as of Tuesday morning, 106 walk-in ballots had been cast and 86 ballots had been sent out. The advanced voting ends at noon on Monday, Nov. 1.

Incumbent Ernie Ketzner, Democrat, is seeking re-election for county commissioner in District

No. 1. Mr. Ketzner. Bird City, is finishing up his first term.

Others on the ballot include:

• Jerry Moran, Republican; Lisa Johnston, Democrat; Joseph K. Bellis, Reform Party; and Michael Wm. Dann, Libertarian, for the U.S. Senate.

• Tim Huelskamp, Republican, Fowler; Alan Jilka, Democrat, Salina; and Jack Warner, Libertarian, for US. representative for the

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