

One special couple will win the Valentine contest

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansas.com

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

Well, people will be able to clip the ballot in this week's issue of *The Herald* on Page 10A, fill it out and take it back to one of the participating businesses. Ballots will be printed in *The Herald* this week and for two more weeks.

On Friday, Feb. 11, the ballots will be counted and the winner will be announced in the next week's *Herald*. The winning couple will be awarded a bouquet from Prairie Rose Floral, St. Francis and will be featured in *The Herald*.

Last year was the second year for the Valentine contest.

This should be an exciting contest, said Allen Edgington, new ad manager for *The Herald*.

Last year's winners were Robert and Gertie Zwegardt and Mark and Gwen Keller.

Rules are: 1) The couple must be married 50 or more years (this year there is only one category); 2) must live in Cheyenne County; and 3) no previous winners are eligible. The ballot must be an official ballot cut from the newspaper.

This is an easy contest. There are no essays to write, no mush notes to print and it doesn't cost a thing. The participating merchants are taking care of that.

When taking the ballot into one of the stores, be sure and thank them.

Participating merchants are:



Donna's Gift Palace, Hilltop General Store/Uptown Market, Krien Pharmacy, Prairie Rose Floral, Sainty Liquor Store, Owens True Value, St. Francis Super's, Stuart's Jewelry, Video Kingdom and *The Saint Francis Herald*.



CHAMBER PRESIDENT, Carol Ross, tells those present about the projects completed in 2010. Left, Gloria Bracelin, secretary, and to the right, Sharissa Andrist, board member, follow along. The annual Chamber meeting was held Monday evening at Riverside Recreation.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Legislative News



By Ward Cassidy

Representative of 120 Dist.

If you are following the political happenings in Kansas, here is a brief breakdown of Gov. Sam Brownback's recommendations:

Increase private sector jobs, cut 2,000 unfilled state jobs, eliminate corporate tax subsidies, allow Kansas businesses to deduct a higher percentage of investment costs, waive state income taxes for individuals relocating to counties with a double-digit percentage population decline in the last 10 years (this includes almost all of the northwest Kansas counties), build the Holcomb power plant, expand wind energy projects, update policies that govern wireless and broadband access, reform the school finance formula, and establish an Office of the Repealer.

Gov. Brownback has the daunting task of dealing with a \$570 million budget shortfall this year, and if everything works this year, we will still be working on cutting \$400 million the following two years.

It is one thing to say state government needs to be smaller, but it is quite another to identify the specific reductions and push for their enactment. The governor's budget calls for another \$750 million in budget cuts. That translates into a 6 percent reduction in state spending.

For public schools, the impact is sizable. Because federal stimulus dollars were used to keep school spending up the past two years, school budgets were not hit as hard as other

state programs. This year, the stimulus money is gone, and it won't be made up.

The governor is quick to point out that while base aid to students falls under their plan, rising costs associated with teacher pensions and building projects make the overall state spending going into education larger.

A task given to the Legislature is to define the word "suitability" in education finance. We will get input from many sources, and I would love to hear from the people of northwest Kansas as to their definition.

Areas directly affected by the budget proposal include:

- Community Mental Health Centers - All remaining state aid (\$10.2 million) is eliminated. That money is used to provide services to poor people who have no private insurance or Medicaid.

- Early Head Start - Gone, all funding (\$11.3 million). This money is provided for our poorest young children.

- Kansas Art Commission - eliminated July, 2012 (\$800,000). The governor feels that private groups will pick up these programs outside the state budget.

- Public broadcasting, all state funding eliminated (\$1.7 million).

Several entities will come out OK. In our area, that includes the Department of Corrections. All \$40 million of lost stimulus money will be replaced with state general funds.

The Department of Transportation can handle a \$200 million sweep of highway funds into the state general fund for next year. The overall 10-year plan stays in place.

House Bill 2035 dealing with abortion will be one of the first to hit the floor. I cosigned with several other representatives and feel that it would be beneficial if passed. You can read the full material on the Kansas Legislature website when it gets up and running this year.

The second bill in my Corrections Committee is to make the drug Sudafed available by prescription only. Meth making is still a problem, and law enforcement has requested this law.

As of today, Thursday, Jan. 20, there are 45 new bills started. I find it challenging to stay abreast of all the legislation. I really want to make decisions based on what is best for northwest Kansas and our state.

Ward Cassidy, a St. Francis Republican, is the state representative for the 120th District. Reach him at ward.cassidy@house.ks.gov. The phone number is (785) 296-7696.

Chamber sponsors events

By Karen Krien
karen.k@nwkansas.com

The annual St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce meeting was held Monday evening at Riverside Recreation. Those attending enjoyed a choice of soups, relish and cinnamon rolls.

Carol Ross, president, called the meeting to order then talked about the different promotions sponsored by Chamber last year. The first event was the Easter Egg Hunt which was held in April.

Mrs. Ross encouraged everyone to watch the children as they scramble for candy and plastic eggs which earns the child a toy. While it is Chamber sponsored, the candy and toys are donated by Ross Manufacturing and Kenny Bracelin Farm and the Milliken Law Office pays for the advertising.

The car show, held in May, is co-sponsored by the Chamber and the Cheyenne County Cruisers Club. The weather was great this year and it was one of the bigger shows.

During the car show, the Chamber sponsors the Kids Pedal Pull contest. There were between 40 and 50 kids participating. The Cheyenne County Farm Bureau Young Farmers provided T-shirts for all the participants and the Chamber had ribbons for the winners and all the kids were given treats from the Candy Wagon.

In November, the Craft Show is held the first Saturday. Booths fill the gym and line the hallway and cafeteria. It is one of the more successful events sponsored by the Chamber.

The Christmas Opening includes the Light Parade and the Treasure Hunt. It is a fun way to start the holiday season and Mrs. Ross reminded people to start planning their float for the parade held the Friday after Thanksgiving.

The Christmas Drawing was held at the grade school. There were three prizes of \$100 scrip, two Lighting Contest winners and coloring contest winners announced.

The Chamber also is responsible for the scrip money given as Christmas bonus by the county, hospital and city. This year, over \$2,000 was given to Village employees. Gloria Bracelin, Chamber secretary, explained that the scrip, bought by the different entities, can only be spent in St. Francis, thus supporting the businesses in town.

Some of the other events the Chamber helped with was the Teacher Appreciation where members serve ice cream sundaes; Relay for Life (Chamber donated \$300 to the American Cancer Society); the Cheyenne County Fair Parade; the Stearman Fly-In and, when the residents were

forced out of the Good Samaritan Village because of the fire, the Chamber provided snacks and drinks to the residents and staff.

A fund raiser was held by auctioning homecoming candidates. The money raised was used to purchase two benches for the swimming pool and a donation was made to the Amusement Authority to repair rides.

Each year, Chamber representatives attend the Kansas Sampler Festival where they work in the Northwest Kansas Tent. This year, Eddy and Sherry Schultz and Gloria and Kenny Bracelin took charge of the "popcorn corner." Ken Bracelin Farm and Eddy Schultz Farm donated the popcorn. The Chamber furnished the popcorn oil and salt while Bankwest furnished the popcorn machine. They represented St. Francis and Northwest Kansas well.

Crissy Cooks, board member, was replaced by Kody Krien. Mrs. Cooks has moved from St. Francis.

Door prizes were won by Dorothy Kellner, Mike Grover and Shirley Zwegardt.

To be a member of the St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce, call the office at 785-332-2961. If there is no one in the office, leave a message and Mrs. Bracelin will return the call.

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