

Auxiliary group has interesting meeting Friday

The Bird City American Legion Auxiliary 352 ladies held an appreciation luncheon at the American Legion Hall in Bird City last Friday afternoon.

This appreciation luncheon was for those who had supported them in the Auxiliary Support Our Soldiers (SOS) program. Of the 24 women in attendance, many of these ladies are not in the American Legion Auxiliary, but were very supportive of this project.

Hulda Dorsch introduced Karen Starks, from Oklahoma City, Okla., as the guest speaker. Karen is the originator, and coordinator for the Support Our Soldiers (Hugs Program). Mrs. Starks, started off by telling where her love of the military came from.

As a young girl Karen had two uncles that had served in the World War II and they told stories about the war, so she grew to love the military. After a car accident that took her first husband's life and left her with two teenage girls to finish raising, she felt she needed to do something with her life.

One Sunday at her church, a serviceman stood up and told the congregation what it was like serving and fighting in the wars. He told them that many of the soldiers in his unit never heard from anyone in the United States, and encouraged the people of this church to just write notes to them and let them know how much they loved their freedom and how thankful they were that they were fighting for us.

Mrs. Starks went into Desert Seal for more information. The news talked about how these soldiers needed lots of support, and some of them had no one to offer that support. The Desert Seal talked about how anyone who was interested could write to these soldiers. She decided to adopt a soldier to write to, sent out 30 copies of her letter, and received 45 replies. She reached into the middle of this pile and selected one. It was from a lonely sailor aboard the USS Independence Ship. They continued to correspond, fell in love, and have been married for 14 years.

After her marriage, she continued writing to other lonely soldiers, and sending care packages to her husband Ted, who shared all the goodies with his shipmates. She could cook, but didn't have a sewing machine, or know how to sew, so she sent cookies and all sorts of goodies. She even tried sending cakes by

inserting them in plastic bags, and with a straw sucking out all the air. It wasn't until much later she learned that sometimes those cakes turned green before they got to the destination.

This is when she realized how many things citizens, in this country could do for those serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, so she started asking for help in putting together care packages, and writing to soldiers who did not get any mail. Since June of 2004, this project has expanded to become a nation-wide project, with even some foreign countries helping out.

Through her contact with soldiers in Afghanistan and other countries that do not have any means of shopping, she found out there was a great need for care packages in these areas of the war. Because there is no way of them being able to shop, they wear their socks until they rot and fall off their feet. In the mountains it can get as low as minus 40 degrees. Some days they have to go for 3-4 weeks without a shower. One soldier told her he put his uniform on in October, and took it off in February.

One of the officers wrote her and said, "I have 800 soldiers on my base and more coming, we need as many care packages as you can send".

A simple rock with a cross on it can become significant to a soldier in knowing someone they don't even know cares for them, and will carry it in his pocket.

One of the newest items volunteer groups make can be a means of survival if needed. It is simply a long cord that is woven into a bracelet, and if needed it can be pulled out to produce a long cord, that can be used to choke the enemy if needed as a method of escape.

The main sewing project adopted by the Bird City Auxiliary is the cooling ties that are sent to the soldiers in any extremely hot place. The scarves are 22-inches long, and two to three inches wide, and sewn to form a tube and filled with tiny grain like beads that expand when soaked. They lower body core temperatures by 5+degrees. A main goal of the hugs project is to place a "Hug" (neck cooler) around the neck of every American military member serving in the Middle East.

Mrs. Stark passed several photos of soldiers in Afghanistan around to see how they have to live. One of these was titled, "The heart of America saved us".



GUEST SPEAKER Karen Starks had an interesting presentation about the Support Our Soldiers project.

Herald staff photo by Norma Martinez

It contained a tear jerking story from a group of soldiers who were marching to a certain area, and they come upon a very small girl sitting in the middle of the road with her arms crossed on her chest clutching a bunch of Beanie Babies. They ordered her to move, and she refused. After their leaders command to move on, they drove the equipment off the road and went around her. When the next group came one of the soldiers remembered handing out these Beanie Babies to a group of children days earlier. They took time to talk to her through an interpreter, and she warned them of danger ahead. As they approached the bridge farther down the road, they found it had been blown to pieces and if they would not have stopped, they too would have been blown up with the bridge.

The HUGS project sends 4,000 special Christmas boxes every year, between June 2004 and the present they've sent over 850,000 "Hugs", approximately 150,000 books and more than 365 tons of care packages to Americans serving in harm's way.

Anyone can join the Support Our Soldiers Hugs program and if anyone is interested in helping out they can contact; Hulda Dorsch, Joy Anderegg, Wanda Dowdy, or Christie Wurm for more information. Or go into the website: www.TheHugsProject.net, and www.TheHugsProject.com

also: If you have someone serving "over there" please submit their address online at the same address and they will receive a care package from the Oklahoma City group to thank them for their service.

The Gardner

By Kay Melia
vkmelia@yahoo.com

This is sure to be a busy week and weekend for gardeners all around the area as we dive headlong into the early planting season. I would remind you that there is still lots of time to plant those early season, early maturing cool weather vegetables, such as spinach, peas, onions, radishes, lettuce, potatoes, broccoli, and cabbage. However, I wouldn't wait much longer, because maturity dates will come when the weather turns hot in mid-June. Don't even think about planting tomatoes yet, or beans, cucumbers, sweet corn, squash, cantaloupe, or watermelon. Wait until about the first of May to be reasonably assured that they will avoid the late frosts or freezes.

Cabbage family plants should be quite safe to set out into the garden now. I'm talking broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, and kale, among a short list of others. And when you do, the time for extreme vigilance begins. There is a bitter enemy of these types of plants lurking out there, and it generally strikes immediately. The day you plant your broccoli or cabbage, watch for those small white cute little butterflies with the black-tipped wings. You'll likely see them flitting around your new plantings. Watch them closely. You'll likely see the butterfly land on a plant and deposit several eggs there, usually on the underside of the leaves, out of your normal sight. When that happens, it's usually

only a few days before those tiny green worms emerge, and within a week mature into ravenously hungry inch-long worms that will soon riddle the leaves and greatly stunt the growth of the plant.

If you have a small number of plants, you might try picking the worms off by hand, but that's a lot like time-consuming, all-day work. The best way to control cabbage worms is not to let them start. You can prevent the butterflies from laying eggs by covering the plants with nylon netting spread over a framework, commonly called a row cover, which are usually available at your garden center. But don't wait too long because these little green babies work quickly! You can spray the plants with a biological material called "bacillus thuringiensis," commonly known as "bt." There are different bts for different insects so read the label carefully. These materials are sold under the commercial names of Dipel and Thuricide. Be sure to spray the underside of the leaves or your effort will be in vain. These materials are harmless to children, pets, and beneficial insects. Spray regularly until you no longer see those darling little butterflies hanging around.

Cabbage worms are by far the worst bug in my garden, causing much more damage than flea beetles or Colorado potato beetles. If you see the white butterflies or the green worms, declare war on them, or forget about any sauerkraut this year.

SPRING CELEBRATIONS

Show set for Oakley April 16

The fourth annual High Plains Horseman's Day on April 16 is taking place at the Logan County Fairgrounds in Oakley beginning with registration at 8:30 am.

A special program is designed for the horse-crazy kid in the area. Youth ages 7-12 can participate in the "Cowpokes" session from 9 to 10:45 a.m. "Cowpokes" will be led by the Colby Community College Equestrian Team. The

equestrian team is looking forward to teaching the cowpoke all about the horse, what it eats, and what it likes. "Cowpokes" do not need to bring their horse; the equestrian team will have several available for hands on activities. A pre-registration was required by April 8 for "Cowpokes" at the High Plains Horseman's Day.

For more information contact the Thomas County Extension

Office at 785-460-4582 or check us out online at www.thomas.ksu.edu.

This year the Horseman's Day sessions include: Jumping-Form over Fences, Trailering - From Nose to Tail Lights, Animal Chiropractic Care, Feed Supplement Savvy, and Introduction to Versatility Ranch Horse with Jay and Gena Henson.

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Congratulate Your Graduate

The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times are now planning the Senior Graduation Supplement and will be giving parents a chance to put a baby picture in along with a short message from the family for \$20 extra. This feature is optional. Senior pictures will be sponsored by parents, grandparents, individuals and/or businesses for \$39.00 each or three for \$99. Deadline for baby picture and message is Friday, April 29.

Matt Raile

I plan on attending Colby Community College or Fort Hays State University and pursuing a degree in animal science. After college I hope to come back to the family farm.

Matt Dillon— It's been a joy watching you grow from that special little boy of ours to the fine young man you are! We wish you lots of success and happiness in all that you do. You've made us very proud! With all our love, Mom and Dad



Parents: Delbert and Marilyn Raile

For more details, contact the Saint Francis Herald at 785-332-3162

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