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GROUNDWORK HAS RESUMED at the Cheyenne County Airport. The runway will be longer and wider. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of July



SOLID ROCK was found under a portion of the runway extension. This huge jack hammer was clearing away the rocks and loaders were hauling it off so the dirt work could be done.

Herald staff photos by Tim Burr

Construction underway on runway

*By Karen Krien
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The Cheyenne County Airport runway south of St. Francis is nearing completion. The cement plant has been set up at the south end of the runway and, on Monday, the big equipment started the groundwork.

Dave Yost, Airport Commission president, reported there was a change of plans when those using the equipment ran into solid rock. The Federal Aviation Administration approved a slight change in the plans and work will continue.

The concrete work will begin when the dirt work is done and the dirt is packed.

The concrete runway will be wider and longer allowing larger planes to land.

The runway project was made possible with a Federal grant which paid for 95 percent of the cost while the county paid for the other 5 percent.

The total cost of the project will be \$5 million with the county only paying \$250,000.

We were able to get the 95-5 grant before the Federal Aviation Administration raised the matching funds to 90-10.

Work will continue on the runway throughout the spring with the completion date estimated to be near the end of July.

Theater manager retires after 10 years

*By Karen Krien
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After spending almost every weekend at the Cheyenne Theater in St. Francis for the last 10 years, Kim Ritter is retiring.

What I have enjoyed the most in those 10 years, she said, is the people. I am a people person and I liked being able to serve the public.

There have been many high school students who have worked at the theater. I have enjoyed watching them grow into young men and women.

She also noted that people who once lived in St. Francis and attended the movies like to come back and see how it has changed. They say they like seeing a movie in a small theater like the Cheyenne Theater.

The residents are fortunate that the city owns the theater, she said, and they are able to keep it going.

Ms. Ritter has seen many changes in the last 10 years. The new seats made a great difference, then there was a new screen, digital movie equipment (no big reels of film which was threaded onto the big projector) and, most recently, they have begun to serve hot dogs, along with the popcorn, candy and pop.

The first weekend of the month, they give free popcorn to those bringing a food item for the Food Pantry.

While there are a number of movies that are well attended, Ms. Ritter said the movie having the most people attending was "Cars."

Through the years, Kim said she had worked with many high school kids. These kids, she said, stop in to tell her "hi," and watch a movie.

Ms. Ritter thinks the future of the theater is good. There is good, up-to-date equipment and new movies are easier to get.

The theater also has a good board who cares about the theater and are willing to work when needed.

There were few things that Kim said she didn't like but most of all was working every weekend. She said she is retiring from the theater because she wants to spend more time with her grandchildren. However, she said, I will miss the people.



KIM RITTER, Cheyenne Theater manager, is filling a pop order. She will be retiring at the end of the month after managing the theater for the last 10 years.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

County landfill in trouble due to several violations

*By Karen Krien
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The Cheyenne County landfill has been targeted by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment... not once, but several times. Some of the violations the landfill has been cited for includes blowing trash, not covering the day's trash with 6-inches of dirt and not compacting waste enough.

On March 8, a letter from Rebecca Wenner with the Department of Health and Environment, was received informing the commissioners the county was being fined \$15,250.

The commissioners called a special meeting to discuss the matter on Thursday. Present besides the commissioners were Ed Garner, solid waste manager; Dave Flemming, road and bridge department supervisor; Kari Gilliland, county attorney; Karan Thadoni assistant attorney; J.R. Landenberger, St. Francis city supervisor, and Deb Lindsten, deputy clerk.

Ms. Wenner had stated in the letter that if the county would agree to the terms of a consent agreement, the fine would be reduced to \$2,000. The remaining \$13,250 would be paid off in community service labor.

Those present talked about what was needed at the landfill including cross fencing and other fencing, vacuum for picking papers off the fences, compactor, shorter hours and another employee. It will also be necessary to close the dump when the wind is blowing.

Mr. Landenberger said the St. Francis City Council will be requiring that all trash put into the dumpsters be bagged or it wouldn't be picked up. Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, said Bird City residents are already required to bag their trash.

Mrs. Gilliland said that the first thing that needed to be done was to accept the conditions of the agreement, pay the \$2,000 and tell Ms. Wenner that plans were being made. She would meet with Mr. Flemming and Mr. Garner and work out a standard operation plan.

In the future, there will be changes made at the landfill. When the rules are established, people bringing items to the landfill will have to abide by them. Mr. Garner will need to enforce the rules set by the commissioners.

The landfill will be on the agenda of the March 30 commissioners' meeting.