



Woman pleads not guilty; trial set for April 21

By Amanda Miller
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The trial date has been set for a local woman who has been accused of murder in St. Francis.

Leanna Windell, 43, was arraigned in Cheyenne County District Court on Friday, Nov. 8.

Windell pled not guilty to the charge of premeditated murder in the first degree in the death of Brad Figgins. Figgins, 45, was found in the basement of his home the evening of April 3, 2013, with injuries to his head. He was taken by ambulance to the hospital, and later pronounced dead. The penalty for that charge is 25 years to life in jail.

Windell also pled not guilty to two counts of theft, class A misdemeanors. One count was for silver coins that were valued at less than \$1,000 that were taken from the Figgins home. The second count of theft was for Figgins' personal effects, valued at less than \$1,000. The penalty, if found guilty,

is up to 12 months of jail time for each count.

During the preliminary trial, the prosecution called two expert witnesses to testify to Figgins' cause of death. They called three additional witnesses to testify to the whereabouts of Windell on April 3. The defense did not call any witnesses.

Judge Scott Showalter said that Windell will be given a trial by a jury of her peers in Cheyenne County. Jury questionnaires were to be agreed upon by the prosecution and defense, and sent out as soon as possible.

Windell waived the right to a speedy trial in order to give her court appointed defense lawyer, Charles Peckham, more time to prepare. Peckham told Judge Showalter he felt the defense would be ready in the spring. Prosecutor for the state, Nicole Romine, Assistant Attorney General, agreed that it would be adequate time to prepare.

The trial is set to begin April 21.

Service planned

Salem Lutheran Church is hosting the ninth "Christmas in the Country" at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14. Prelude music begins at 4:30 p.m.

The public is invited to come hear carols sung and the Christmas Gospel read in German and English in honor of the Black Sea Germans from Russia who founded the historic church.

A light supper will follow the

service, in the church basement. A free-will offering will be received to benefit local helping agencies.

Salem Lutheran is located 8 miles northwest of St. Francis. From K-27 go west 3 miles on Road R; or from U.S. 36 go north 4 miles on Road 9. Last year's program will be shown on Smoky Hills PBS channel sometime in December. Watch for local listings.



DALE WEEKS, manager of the Wheeler Equity, presented the yearly audit at the annual meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 6, in the St. Francis Community High School cafeteria.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Annual meeting held in St. Francis

Wednesday evening, Nov. 6, members and guests attended the Wheeler Cooperative Mercantile Equity Union's 96th annual meeting, held in the St. Francis High School cafeteria. After a dinner prepared by the school cooks, and entertainment provided by Mrs. Fiala's advanced music class, board president Bruce Feikert called the meeting to order. He recognized Rex Murray for his years of service to the Equity board. Mr. Murray has reached his term limits, and his position on the board was up for election. Mr. Feikert conducted the election, with Keith Zweggardt being elected to the board.

The company showed a profit, although less than in previous years. "Because of the weather conditions, we had about 60% of a normal wheat harvest. Our fall crops were hurt, as well. Yet, we showed a profit, were able to build 200,000 bushels of new storage without borrowing any money, we are able to pay a patronage, and pay out our stockholders who are over the age of 80. We even loaned the fair board money to place a new roof over the arena. I think that is a pretty successful year." Mr. Weeks concluded his comments by thanking the board, his employees, and the company's patrons. The meeting adjourned with the distribution of door prizes and patronage check.



PHEASANT HUNTERS took to the fields during the weekend – the first weekend of pheasant hunting season. Left, Taryn and Kyler Zweggardt showed one of their pheasants they had bagged to Ben Killingsworth.

Herald staff photo by Norma Martinez

Grant requests taken to Dec. 27

The St Francis Community Foundation is soliciting grant applications for 2013 disbursement from the New Generation Fund and the Senior Living Fund for Cheyenne County. Applications will be taken up to Friday, Dec. 27, for all or a portion of the grant amounts. Successful applicant(s) will be notified by Jan. 31.

Grant applications for charitable causes can be obtained from the St Francis Community Foundation website, www.sfcommunityfoundation.org, or from the St Francis city office. Application are due by Dec. 27.

Applications from the New Generation Endowment Fund may be for the improvement of the quality of life in St. Francis and Cheyenne County. Grants made in previous years from this fund have included the Celebration - St. Francis for the 125th anniversary, Cheyenne Center for Creativity, St. Francis LED Sign, St. Francis Community Garden and the Cheyenne County Historical Society.

Applications from the Senior Living Fund in Cheyenne County can be for the benefit of senior citizens living in St. Francis and Cheyenne County. Grants in the past have been made to the Senior Center in St Francis for remodeling the kitchen, addition of automatic entrance doors, and the purchase of a commercial refrigerator.

Please contact any foundation board member with questions regarding the foundation: Dara Carmichael, Mike Day, Dennon Flemming, Tom Keller, Carla Lampe, Jim Milliken, Judy Rockwood, Bruce Swihart or Carl Werner.



DECORATING AND GETTING OUT the Christmas items at the Thrift Store is a major undertaking. Rev. Warren Cico and Sherry Schultz, coordinator, are putting garland down the staircase.

Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

Time to start making plans for Christmas activities

By Amanda Miller
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With just over 40 days until Christmas, the countdown has officially begun! Christmas activities will begin soon in St. Francis, and there won't be any room for the Grinch.

Now is the time to start thinking about the Christmas Parade of Lights to be held on Friday, Nov. 29 at 6 p.m. sharp. Floats and individual entries are needed to make this year's Parade of Lights light up Main Street for everyone to enjoy.

People, young and old, love to come down and see the floats, the lights, and the people gathered to watch the event.

Light floats are easy to make, and anyone can enter! Children can be in the parade as well.

Dress them as angels or elves or even Christmas presents. But, remember, the float cannot have a Santa. The only Santa allowed in the parade is the real Santa.

Santa will be at Bankwest after the Parade of Lights so that all the little boys and girls can let him know what they would like for Christmas.

There will be a soup supper before and during the parade from 5 - 7:30 p.m. at the Senior Center. Be sure to stop by and warm up with some soup!

You can also find Celebrate St. Francis memorabilia for sale outside the Herald office during the parade. The memorabilia makes great Christmas presents or stocking stuffers for everyone in St. Francis, or those living away who still want a connection.

The St. Francis area Christmas Treasure Hunt, sponsored by Western State Bank, also begins soon. Look for numbers inserted in the Saint Francis Herald and in the Bird City Times the week of Nov. 25. Check numbers on Nov. 29 and Dec. 16 at the participating businesses. Look for more information in this week's paper.

The St. Francis area has many houses that shine brightly during the holiday season. However, there is no longer a Chamber of Commerce to sponsor the Christmas Lighting Contest, and St. Francis needs someone who would like to be in charge of it! The Herald staff can give those interested information from past years.