

The year 2013 sees many events of interest

By Amanda Miller
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Each year, there are many things that happen throughout the year and 2013 was no exception. There are new businesses, people and groups receiving awards and many events of interest.

Everybody has their opinion on what they think is important, said Karen Krien, publisher.

The Herald and Times staff came up with some topics they thought were the most important through the year. They included the opening of St. Francis Supers grocery store, the murder trial of Leanna Windell in the death of her ex-husband, the resignation of Dr. Allard, a spring snowstorm, along with community events such as the 125th St. Francis Celebration, July 4 Celebration, Thresher Show, County Fair, and the Kansas Walk, Run and Rock for a Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Cure. A disappointing wheat harvest was reported, and the Good Samaritan Village nursing home and apartments were finally turned over to the county. It was an eventful year!

Kansas Walk, Run and Rock
The Kansas Walk, Run and Rock for a Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Cure was held Saturday, April 27, at the fairgrounds in St. Francis. It was the first benefit to help raise money for the cure.

The day began with an 8.9K and 2K run that began at Wheeler and ended at the fairgrounds. The walk

was held at the high school track.

Eight bands performed from Kansas, Nebraska, Indiana and California. The line up included Shantey Loiter, A Life Led Lucid, Fresh Picked Parsley, 9ine Foot Squirrel, Buffalo Head, Phil Crawford, My Starving Lion and Keel Raven.

It was the first year for the awareness benefit and unfortunately, there was not the attendance the organizers had hoped for.

Spring Snowstorm

A spring snowstorm moved through northwest Kansas on the evening of March 22, making for a chilly weekend. It started with rain which quickly turned to large snowflakes. The next morning, the snow was still falling but as the morning progressed, the snowfall was heavy and there was freezing, fog and windy conditions reported by the National Weather Service. The wind was coming from the north at a steady 30-plus miles per hour and gusting to 41 miles per hour.

Roads were considered slick and snow packed with blowing snow so U.S. 36 and I-70 were closed on Saturday. All roads were opened early Sunday morning.

Kathy Woodcox, St. Francis weather observer, reported a cold 29 degrees high on March 23, 24 and 25 temperatures dropping to 3 and 4 degrees on those mornings.

She reported 8-inches snow accumulations and .69-inch moisture. There was also a trace Sunday eve-

ning when, almost out of nowhere, it began to snow again.

The wet snow helped the winter wheat and pastures. While it was beneficial, the moisture deficit still showed northwest Kansas in the drought area.

Doctor Resigns

Dr. Rebecca Allard turned in her resignation, and her last day at Cheyenne County Hospital and clinic was June 30. Dr. Allard officially came to the hospital in August, 2007, and began delivering babies as well as practicing general medicine.

The first baby she delivered was November of 2007. She moved to Sidney Regional Medical Center, Sidney, Neb., with her husband and two daughters.

During her time at the hospital and clinic she has served as the chief of staff, served on the Kansas Academy of Family Physicians on several committees and served on their Foundation Board and been involved in the community.

Dr. Megan Brown will be full-time at the hospital in August of 2014 and she will continue the obstetrics and delivering babies. She is already coming to the facility on weekends and will be here more often throughout the year. Dr. Dallas Walz will be here full-time August 2015 and his plan is to also help with the obstetric program. Dr. Walz will also be covering call starting the spring of 2014.

Local Homicide

In April, Brad Figgins, a 45-year-old man, was found dead in his home in St. Francis.

Emergency medical technicians were dispatched to 541 E. Third Street that evening. Sheriff deputies and St. Francis police officers responded to the scene. Resident Brad Figgins was found in the basement of his home with injuries to his head. He was taken by ambulance to the hospital, and later pronounced dead.

Leanna Windell, who was at the scene, was held for questioning following the incident. She was held in custody while evidence was gathered. A preliminary hearing was then held on Oct. 10. Windell was bound over on the charge of premeditated murder.

Leanna and Brad were married in 1992. They had two children, Garrett and Kaitlin. However they had been divorced for many years.

Windell was arraigned in Cheyenne County District Court on Friday, Nov. 8, and pled not guilty to the charge of premeditated murder in the first degree in the death of Figgins. 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.

If found guilty, the penalty for premeditated murder 25 years to life

in jail, the theft charges carry a penalty of up to 12 months of jail time for each count.

Windell waived the right to a speedy trial in order to give her court appointed defense lawyer, Charles Peckham, more time to prepare. The trial is set to begin on April 21.

125th Celebration

The 125th St. Francis Birthday Celebration took place in June in conjunction with the St. Francis high school alumni gathering. Earlier, the Community Garage Sale was held and deemed a huge success, bringing in needed funds for the celebration.

The day started on Friday, June 14, with games in the park for kids. There were some vendors set up on the lot east of the theater along with other areas on Main Street and they were also back the next day. There was a cake decorating contest and the cakes were served that night with the barbecue. People also enjoyed the beard contest.

A special exhibit of 14 sculptures created by St. Francis native, Glenn Zwegardt was held. For over 40 years, Glenn has been an active sculptor and educator with more than 50 solo exhibitions and multiple purchase awards to his name, he shows works both nationally and internationally.

The Art Walk, sponsored by the Cheyenne Center for Creativity, was a success again as art was displayed and musicians played. It showed that there was a great deal of creativity and talent in the county.

The barbecue featured barbecued beef with all the trimmings as well as a beer garden. There was a dance both evenings. Saturday morning, 125 people participated in a run-walk. Groups served breakfast, there was a bike rodeo, car wash, touch-a-truck display, a brat feed, sand volleyball tournament and a poker rumble.

Following the alumni banquet, the music began at the park and the beer garden opened again.

Equity Birthday Celebration

The St. Francis Mercantile Equity celebrated 100 years. And, in honor of the event, a 100th birthday lunch was held in the Equity meeting room on June 7.

Fourth of July Celebration

The Cheyenne County Fourth of July Celebration was held this year after being canceled the year before because of drought conditions. Many activities, from a kid's parade; to horseshoe throwing, to the hot dog eating contest, to the Patriotic Sing-a-Long, and games were held before the fireworks began. The fireworks display was planned by a number of people but specifically by John and Anita Amack, Roger Neitzel and Rodney Neitzel.

Wheat Harvest

A disappointing wheat harvest

was reported in Cheyenne County. When asked if this was a "50 percent, 30 percent, what percent of normal" kind of harvest, none of the managers for the county grain elevators wanted to give a hard number.

Most of the rest of Kansas reported excellent yields, except for the extreme western counties. The county grain managers reported that test weight and quality remained good throughout harvest, even with the stress the wheat had suffered.

"There were reports of some really bad fields south of town, and some really good fields in the northwest part of the county," said Steve Douthit, while getting some information at the Wheeler Equit. "Most of our fields suffered. I'm glad harvest is done. I'm a farmer, so I always hope next year is better"

Thresher Show

The Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Show was held the last of July. Carol (Oliver) Peters was selected as the 2013 Thresher Queen.

The Cheyenne County Fair was held the following week and Skip and Betty Petersen were the fair parade marshals.

Good Samaritan

After months of meetings, reviewing and re-writing the lease, the Good Samaritan Society turned over the Good Samaritan Village nursing home and apartments to the county. The county took possession on July 1. Jeff Paulsen, administrator, agreed to make monthly reports to the Cheyenne County Commissioners.

Grocery Store Reopens

After months of seeing understocked shelves at the grocery store, St. Francis Supers opened its doors at the beginning of October with truckloads of groceries for customers.

Perk and Betty Odell have spent the last year in federal bankruptcy court with Sam Mancini, the former owner of the store. They got the keys to the St. Francis store on Oct. 7. They and their children, Tab and Tammy, are now the official store owners.

They immediately stocked the shelves with \$70,000 in groceries. The community was happy to see the business open, after almost a year of minimal grocery supplies available.

City Council puts together committee

By Amanda Miller
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The St. Francis City Council met on Dec. 9 to discuss the electrical upgrade and other new business in the city.

J.R. Landenberger, city superintendent, said that he has reviewed what information he has currently available on the electric revenue for 2013. It appears at this point that the margin should stay about the same, with nominal revenue accrued.

Carla Lampe, board member, said that the council cannot base a repayment of the upgrade on electrical revenue. Electricity is a volatile commodity and fluctuates drastically.

Mr. Landenberger said that because electricity fluctuates so much, it would be impossible to predict a certain number that would be made every year. It is unlike water, which stays relatively constant compared to electricity.

After some discussion, Mike Day,

city attorney, suggested that a committee be made to put numbers and options together. The committee would not be making a recommendation as to which way to pay for the upgrade, but rather will simply be crunching numbers. Bruce Swihart and Carla Lampe, council members, volunteered to be on the committee. Mr. Landenberger and Glori Milne, city clerk, will also be on the committee with their knowledge. The committee will decide on a layman to help with ideas and avenues to use. They will meet after the first of the year.

Connection fees

Instead of paying a deposit that is returned, new customers will now be paying a flat connection fee. The connection fee will not be returned. After some debate on the price of this fee, Bruce Swihart suggested that there be a \$50 flat fee that is charged to connect electricity and water for new customers. A moving fee of \$10 will be charged if an ex-

isting customer changes residences.

Mr. Landenberger and Mr. Day will be putting a city ordinance together for the change that will begin at the beginning of the year.

Flood Plain Certificate of Elevation

Many homeowners have noticed a substantial increase in their home owner's insurance premium. This is due, in some cases, to the change in regulations that FEMA has set. The city has only recently required that homeowners include flood insurance, and so they were not grandfathered in to older rules and regulations.

Currently St. Francis is considered to be in the same flood plain as those living on the coast. Mrs. Lampe said that a land surveyor has not been to record elevation since 1975. To reduce the cost of insurance to home owners, the council is arranging for someone to come and give a Flood Plain Certificate of Land Elevation. Once the elevation is noted, the council is hoping that the increased insurance costs will decrease some.

Police report

Shane Rodriguez gave the police report for November. There were seven citizen's assists, and only one ticket was issued for a dog at large. There were two suspicious vehicles reported, and four traffic warnings were issued in November.

He requested \$1,000 for ammunition purchases. The police department, he said, uses up minimal ammunition while practicing.

Other business

The city council is very pleased with Travis Milne's work on the Scout Hut. He has all the plywood down and now the council must

decide what flooring to lay. Several board members commended his work and said it looked great.

Pizza Hut and Majestic's were both approved for Cereal Malt Beverage licenses.

The Cheyenne County Development Corporation will be receiving the full funding at the first of the year.

Mr. Landenberger reported that the Christmas lights will not last another year. They will need to be replaced before the next Christmas, and asked the council to be considering what kind of lights they would like to use. He priced rope multi color LED lights, and they would cost around \$18,000.

The hospital has requested that the city pay for half of the repair cost of the asphalt where the MRI machine parks. Half the cost would be \$4,700. The council is considering the payment.

AT&T will be leasing space on the water tower to put up its antennas.

Mrs. Milne said the city office is needing a new copier.

The next city council meeting was Dec. 23.

Varsity basketball

By Douglas Sloper
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The Lady Indians and Indians took on the Oakley Plainsmen on Friday, Dec. 20, in Oakley. The Lady Indians and Indians were defeated in their games, while the junior varsity boys defeated Oakley in a close contest. The junior varsity girls were beaten in a shortened game.

Lady Indians

The Lady Indians were beaten by the Plainsmen 56-48.

The junior varsity lost to Oakley 18-8.

Indians

The first quarter ended the Indians trailed 22-9.

At the half the Indians trailed 42-20.

The third quarter came to a close, with the Indians trailing 65-28.

Game ended 71-36.

High scorers: Wyatt Landenberger, 10 points; Mason Schiltz, 8 points; Cade Bracelin, 8 points; Jacob Baxter, 6 points; Taylor Rogers, 4 points.

In the one bright spot, the junior varsity boys team defeated Oakley in a close contest 58-52.

The next game for the Lady Indians and Indians will be against the Golden Plains Bulldogs on Friday, Jan. 3 in St. Francis, beginning at 4:45 p.m.



Jan. 8 is an important date! Happy 80th birthday to Carol Mears.

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Reflections

Time is a funny thing, it never stops, it never stops, it is one day more and one day less, so there is a certain urgency that moves us forward as we reflect on the past. With this in mind, I am giving a shout out to my wife, Miss Margaret Ellen Williams Voorhies and praise God for this precious soul that has shared my life for these past 50 years and for the family which could never have happened without her. We looked back, on the laughter and tears, the joys and fears that go into a lifetime together and want to thank God once again for his marvelous incomprehensible Grace. We also want to thank you children for planning a special surprise anniversary gathering this past week. One never knows how a blind date will turn out!!! Proverbs 31: 10-11 & 28

R. Kent Voorhies