



Emergency services has coordinator

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansan.com

The county's emergency services now have an overall coordinator. The Cheyenne County Commissioners, at the Monday meeting, appointed Ryan Murray, county emergency manager, as the coordinator.

Mr. Murray was appointed because of his knowledge of all areas, which include emergency medical services, firemen in the county as well as St. Francis and Bird City, 911 dispatch, county health officer, sheriff, and emergency manager.

People representing the different entities have been meeting to solve problems.

As Janelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, said at the commissioners' meeting, the goal is to get everyone and entities moving in the same direction.

Cody Beeson, sheriff, said that he was OK with Mr. Murray being in charge. He knows that we don't need to be micromanaged, but he knows the regulations that we need to be using. He was concerned that, if Mr. Murray were to move on, there may be a coordinator that did overstep.

The commissioners agreed that this was a problem they would deal with when and if needed. Dr. Mary Beth Miller, county health officer, had endorsed the reorganization of the emergency services.

The intent of the reorganization, Dale Patton, chairman, said, was to help bring better communication to all entities. We need continuity, he added. We want efficiency of operations in the county.

We have no intention of stepping on toes, Mr. Patton said. And, we are not pointing fingers at anyone.

It is apparent, he said, that in the future, we will have to pay emergency medical technicians

and firemen. In small rural areas, we can't afford to pay them. If we try to be organized, he said, we may be more prepared when changes do come.

I would rather be proactive so that, when and if the state comes in and tells us that we have only a short time to be in compliance, we will be ready. Creating this position is for the best interest of the whole county, he said. Let's protect what we have and not lose it.

Dispatch

Terry Rieger, dispatch supervisor, introduced Cathy Holste, who has been filling in as a dispatcher part time. Sam Beeson, full-time supervisor, is moving toward retirement. Both Ms. Holste and Mr. Beeson have agreed to trade working schedules, with Ms. Holste working full time and Mr. Beeson, part time.

Mr. Rieger then turned to the matter of the county's incorrect addressing. He said that the incorrect addressing is a problem statewide.

The state is hiring vendors to fix the county's problem, as well as other problems throughout the state. However, the dispatchers have to identify the incorrect addresses. Unfortunately, the northwest part of the state will be the last area to be corrected.

In the meantime, some of the equipment will become obsolete and will lose maintenance agreements. Addresses need to be corrected before new equipment can be purchased.

Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, said he thought every place, whether it is occupied or an abandoned farmstead, needs to be identified.

We will not lose coverage, Mr. Rieger said. He said he will keep the commissioners informed as more information becomes available.



CHEYENNE THEATER sign received paint and new lights this week. Workers from Commercial Sign Company, Colby, picked one of the nicer days this week to finish up the sign. Herald staff photos by Douglas Sloper

Old theater sign receives face lift

Check out the Cheyenne Theater sign! This week, it received a facelift, going from the neon gas tubes to modern LED lighting.

The theater opened December 1949, and that sign was part of the structure. At one time, there was talk of changing the look of the sign, but it would have been taking away a part of history. In the fall of 2013, the Cheyenne Theater Board and the St. Francis City Council decided to replace the old marquee sign with the new lighting. It was custom designed to match the "look and feel" of the old sign.

The newer LED technology, said Robert Grace, board member, provides greatly reduced maintenance costs, lower power consumption, and greater reliability.

On Dec. 17, workers began the process of preparing the old sign for the new lettering, and painted the background black in preparation for the new letters. On Monday, the workers came back, spread their tools and the letter faces on the sidewalk, and began installing the new lettering and the blue underline. Finally, they applied power to the red LEDs and added the covers to the hollow letters.

At the Oct. 23 meeting, the city council had approved the renovation of the sign's cost of approximately \$7,300.



A WORKMAN CAREFULLY removed the old neon gas tubes and then the background of the sign was painted black. People are urged to check out the new lighting on the old sign.



TIAUNA HAFER was one of the bike winners at a drawing sponsored by Western State Bank at Christmas. Troy Hilt, representing the bank, helps Tiauna with the bike.

Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

Annual board meeting held

The St. Francis Equity Annual Meeting will be held Wednesday, Jan. 15, at the St. Francis Community High School cafeteria.

Following the meal, there will be a short business meeting and election of two board members. Those present will also be eligible for door prizes.

Calling contest has 111 teams sign up

The 2014 Midwest FoxPro Coyote Calling Contest was held over the weekend, with teams from Kansas, Colorado, and Nebraska, as well as many other mid-west states participating. Teams arrived in St. Francis Friday evening to register with the organizers.

Check in was located at the Cheyenne County Fairgrounds. After check in, the teams scattered to their various hunting locations to prepare for the Saturday morning start of the contest. Sunday afternoon, the teams returned with their coyotes, to tally up their harvest, and see how their results stacked up against the competition.

"We had 111 teams sign up, which is a few less than last year, but still a good number" said Brent Rueb, coordinator of the contest. "We also

harvested fewer coyotes than last year, but we were still pleased with the results. Everything went smoothly. We were really happy with the weekend."

The Frontier Arms Class, a new class this year sponsored by Frontier Arms of St. Francis, was won by a team that harvested 13 coyotes. The Hornady Novice Class was won by a team which harvested 8 coyotes.

There were a lot of comments about how well prepared, and how well run the contest was again this year. "I think this weekend was another great success. We are already looking forward to next year."

said Mr. Rueb. Complete results of the 2014 event will be available soon online at midwestcoyotecallingevent.com.

Contest waiting for baby winner

By Amanda Miller

amiller@nwkansan.com

First Baby of the Year 2014 has begun! The Herald staff has yet to receive a phone call with the announcement of a baby being born to residents of Cheyenne County.

The contest will end when The Herald staff receives a phone call and the baby and parents meet the rules of the contest. There is only one requirement to win. The baby must be born to parents living in Cheyenne County for one month or more.

With the departure of Dr. Rebecca Allard, babies are not being delivered at the Cheyenne County Hospital at this time. However, the hospital is gearing up for resuming obstetric services in 2014. Dr. Megan Brown will begin accepting new obstetric patients in March, with deliveries to begin in August.

Without obstetric services at the hospital right now, any baby born to parents that live in Cheyenne

County can win the baby contest. These parents and their newborn infant will be awarded gifts from sponsors.

Last year's First Baby of the Year contest winner was Krissiana Grace DeJong. Her parents are Chad and Lisa DeJong, of Goodland. Krissiana was born on Jan. 3, delivered by Dr. Allard at the Cheyenne County Hospital.

This year's winner will receive prizes from St. Francis merchants as well as gifts from the hospital. Participating in this year's contest is: Owens True Value, a gift; First National Bank, a gift; Krien Pharmacy and The Flower Shop, a gift basket; Western State Bank, a gift; Saintry Liquor, bottle of champagne; United Methodist Thrift Store, \$20 gift card; and a year subscription to *The Saint Francis Herald* or *Bird City Times*.

The Saint Francis Herald office or staff must be notified as soon as possible following the birth. The Herald's number is 785-332-3162 or call 785-332-3246.