

Local resident has many memories as she turns 100

Amanda Miller
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"Did you know you have a birthday coming up?" I asked. "Well yes, I do, and I will be 100!"

Not only is Pearlne Rath aware of her upcoming birthday, but she is excited! She should be, she is reaching a milestone many are not lucky enough to live long enough to see.

Mrs. Rath will be celebrating her 100th birthday on July 2. To honor her on her birthday, her family will be having an open house and greeting card shower at the Good Samaritan Village, where she is now a resident.

Pearlne has lived at the Good Samaritan for the past year. Before that she was very independent, living in her own home well into her 90's.

Mrs. Rath was born Pearlne Freehling in Haigler, Neb., on July 2, 1914. Her parents were Peter and Mary Freehling.

She had a twin sister named Pauline. Pearlne was next to youngest of nine sisters and one brother and is the last surviving sibling.

Her father, Peter, died when she was two years old. This left her mother, Mary, to raise her 10 children while running the family farm. She also maintained a home on the farm and a home in Haigler.

Pearlne and her twin sister both attended nursing school in Lincoln, Neb.

She married Edwin Rath of St. Francis on April 8, 1934, and raised a family of four, two boys, Ed and Dale, and two girls, Jeanette and Janice, on the farm northwest of St. Francis.

She was always fond of singing and music and volunteered for the sing-a-long at the Good Samaritan Village for years.

Pearlne loves gardening and growing tomatoes, squash and cucumbers. She was an active gardener until breaking her hip in 2013. She enjoyed living in her own home until her accident.

She said she also enjoys sewing, and does it when she can. She wishes she was able to do her hobbies more often, but her body doesn't want to cooperate all the time.

Pearlne is a grandmother



Pearlne Rath

to five grandsons and seven granddaughters, and great-grandmother to five boys and eight girls.

She enjoys her church and was the primary Sunday school teacher for years. She attended the Lutheran Church.

Please join the family with your card on Wednesday, July 2, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Good Samaritan Village or send a card to Pearlne Rath, Good Samaritan Village, 820 South Denison, St. Francis, KS 67756.

The family appreciates everyone for helping her have a fabulous 100th birthday!

Grocery store owner pulls same stunt in Akron, Colo.

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It seems as if St. Francis' previous grocery store owner is up to his same old tricks. Across the state line in Akron, Colo., residents are being forced to drive over 50 miles round trip to buy groceries because their only grocery store, Bella's Market, has empty shelves. Sound familiar?

As many St. Francis residents will remember, VM Odell's operated Bella's Market grocery store from 2006-2013. After the first few years, a steady decline was being beginning with the name change to Bella's Market in 2011. Empty shelves were a constant eyesore, and customers could not find fresh produce or meat.

The store and its owner had a long, strange history before the closing. To review, let's look at a timeline of events:

- May of 2011: Saintry Super's changes name to Bella's Market. Sam Mancini, president and managing partner of the store group, says that in an effort to reduce confusion and extra advertising costs, because the store group owns eight stores with six different names, they are naming all stores Bella's Market.
- Jan. 31, 2012: Bella's Market

is closed for several hours so that it could comply with the state sales tax policy. Mr. Mancini explained that the main bank the group used had been shut down, leaving them financially constrained. They were running inventories lower than they would like to at all of the stores. As a result of the turmoil, the company failed to timely file sales tax reports.

"We are committed to the city of St. Francis. We will continue to rebuild the inventory in the store and we will continue to improve operations at the store," Mr. Mancini said.

- Aug. 3, 2012: St. Francis market was closed overnight for non-payment of sales tax.

- Sept. 24, 2012: Mr. Mancini said that VM Odell's voluntarily filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy in U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Denver.

- Sept. 25, 2012: Directly after the company filed bankruptcy, St. Francis' Bella's Market grocery store closed on a court matter which apparently was a "replevin case" filed by Betty and Leroy O'Dell for money owed. It opened two days later. Stores in Colorado were also closed in the towns of Wiggins, Haxton, and Akron, but reopened a few days later.

- Sept. 19, 2013: Mr. Mancini appeared in Federal court in Denver. The judge's final decision was to allow the St. Francis store to go back to the owner, Leroy Perk Odell, of Akron, Colo.

Throughout the years of unpaid sales tax, and reduced or completely removed inventory, Bella's Market took a hit on the financial stability of St. Francis. Although other store owners stepped up and tried to have supplies available for residents, many customers were forced to go out of county to purchase goods and groceries.

While it is hard to pin point just how many tax dollars left, it is estimated that during the reduced inventory, the weekly sales at Bella's were off approximately 80 percent from corresponding weeks during previous years of sales. Sales correlate to tax dollars.

Now the most recent victim of the owners of this store group are the residents of Akron. According to The Denver Channel's 7News, residents of the town are frustrated and concerned.

Mr. Mancini is citing legal issues once again, and is not stocking the shelves of the rural farming town. City and county officials are concerned, and are trying to wait for the legal issues to be resolved. In the meantime, residents of the steady 1,800 population county seat are forced to drive to Brush to get groceries.

"It is killing this town. If this town loses its grocery store, we die," said resident Kimberly Weninger. "When shoppers leave Akron to buy groceries, they also buy everything else out of town."

Mini golf course set to open Friday

A new attraction in St. Francis is scheduled to open Friday, June 20. Empire Mini Golf, located behind the Empire Motel, will offer 50 holes of mini golf, in four different courses.

Owner Ted McCoy and his crew has been busy this spring, preparing the course for use.

"It's something I've wanted to do ever since we took over the motel, I just needed the time to get it done," he said. "I think everybody will enjoy the experience."

Each of the four courses is slightly different, and all unique, featuring different themes.

"We've got some neat stuff, from lighthouses, to ponds, to ducks, to dinosaurs," he said. "We've got a nice, shaded seating area for watchers, and an area with tables for snacks or birthday cakes. We even have complimentary gas barbecue grills for those hot dog meals."

You can bring your own snacks, or vending machines will be available, he added. There are plans for a smaller, "pee wee" course, just for the little ones, to be completed soon.

Empire Mini Golf will be open seven days a week, from 10 until 10. Entry is by a \$5 pass, good all day, come and go. People can reserve the course for parties or functions by calling the motel at 785-332-2231, or just stop by and set it up with Ted or any of his staff.



TED MCCOY stands ready to welcome local "mini" golfers to his new course.

Herald Photo by Tim Burr

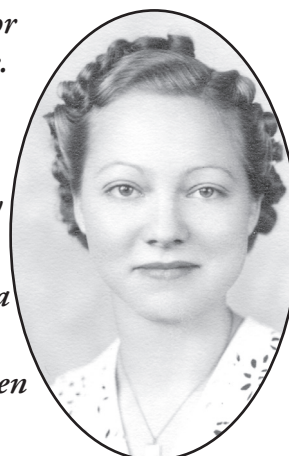
Student News

Sterling College named Adam James Guthmiller of Saint Francis to the 2014 Spring Dean's Honor Roll. The College announced that 192 students met the requirement of a semester grade point average

of 3.50 or better in at least 12 credits of residential work or 10 credits of online work. Guthmiller is the son of John and Kristi Guthmiller.

Who is this raving beauty?

- She will be celebrating a major birthday in the month of June.
- She has been a life-long resident of Cheyenne County.
- She graduated from Bird City Rural High School.
- Her husband took her as a child bride.
- She brought four children into this world.
- She is a daughter, wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.



If you think you know who she is, send her a birthday card at Box 65, Bird City, KS 67731. —KTSK

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