

Considers serving on county committee if you are asked to help

The Cheyenne County Resource Conservation and Development: Who is it? What is it? Why is it? And what does it stand for?

The Cheyenne County Resource Conservation and Development is actually a local advisory committee to the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. Members of the Cheyenne County local advisory committee are provided by the Cheyenne County Conservation District, Cheyenne County Commissioners, Cheyenne County Development Corporation, City Council of Bird City and St. Francis City Council. The Natural Resources Conservation Service and Kansas State Research and Extension provide advisors to the local board.

Local committees provide input into the Area Council of the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development. Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area was incorporated on March 29, 1994. The council's first president was Margaret Bucholtz of Cheyenne County. The Conservation Districts and County Commissioners of the member counties appoint representatives to the area council. Member counties include Cheyenne, Decatur, Logan, Rawlins, Sheridan, Sherman, Thomas and Wallace.

The Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, works toward a common goal. Its mission is to be the vehicle to establish an environment of cooperation that will promote economic growth, stability and enhanced quality of life within the counties of northwest Kansas. The Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that was created to help groups and organizations within the member counties to develop and improve the social, economic and environmental conditions in their communities. The organization is project driven.

How does this come about? The United States Department of Agriculture provides a coordinator, secretary, office space and some office equipment. The coordinator for the Western Prairie group is Duane

Cheney. Local groups or organizations submit project proposals to the local advisory committee for consideration. The local advisory committee considers these local and area project proposals and recommends area council action on those projects they believe will have the most benefit. The area council acts on the project proposals brought to the council. Assistance provided by Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development might be organizational, planning, technical or financial in nature. Each project must have a sponsoring organization or group.

Area projects have included training in foundation organization and grant writing, coordination of efforts in area recycling, hosting of no-till conferences and rangeland management workshops.

Projects that have impacted Cheyenne County in which either the local or area committees have had some involvement include the following: living snowfence promotion; fundraising workshop; Project Wild, Wet, or Learning Tree workshops; Holistic Resource Management introductory and follow up workshops; emergency preparedness workshop; Cover Your Acres (no-till) field days. Projects that are still in progress include a no-till conference, St. Francis ballpark, and Farmers' Market.

County Advisory Committees are the foundation upon which the Resource Conservation and Development operates. The local committee is the main contact, and in many cases the only contact, that our local people will have with the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development. They are the vehicle for the "grassroots input" into the Resource Conservation and Development. How strong or weak the County Advisory Committee is will have a direct effect on how much benefit our county receives from the Resource Conservation and Development. If you are asked to serve locally or at the area level, please consider doing so.

For more information, contact the local conservation office located in the United States Department of Agriculture Service Center on West Highway 36 in St. Francis.



MEMBERS of the Lawn Ridge 4-H club checked out the new Cheyenne County Drug Dog. Members are (l to r) Brooks Hobrock, Scott Ford, Lane Hobrock, Heidi Yonkey, Chance Hobrock, Logan Whitmore, undersheriff Cliff Flock, Dog Bronson, Kattie Ford, Logan Whitmore, Heahter Hempler and Sarah Whitmore. Lawn Ridge 4-H club made a donation to the K9 Drug Dog Fund.

Residents from Cheyenne County attend Farm Bureau meeting; one family honored

Cheyenne County Farm Bureau was well represented at the 84 annual meeting which was held Nov. 18-20 in Manhattan.

Taking place the first day were the Young Farmer and Rancher contests where two county individuals competed, Megan Douthit and Shawna Blanka.

Douthit was a finalist in the Discussion Meet and placed fourth. There were three rounds where four of the participants were seated with a moderator and a question was asked on topics such as water rights, land-use, world trade and markets. Each participant had 30 seconds for an opening statement then there was 20 minutes for the participants to discuss the topic and ask each other questions then they each had a one-

minute closing statement. After the three-rounds, four finalists were chosen to participate in one more round at the Young Farmer and Rancher Night, where the winners were then announced. Douthit received a plaque and \$25 for placing fourth.

Blanka was a participant in the Outstanding Young Employee in Agriculture contest. The contestants were judged on their involvement in agribusiness, leadership abilities, involvement and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations (civic, service and community). A written application asking questions of the participants experiences was sent in ahead of time and judged. At

Manhattan an oral presentation was presented to the judges. Blanka received third place and received a plaque and \$50.

The winners of both of these contests will go on a compete at the American Farm Bureau annual meeting being held this year in Tampa, Fla. in January.

On the evening of the 19th at the Recognition and Award banquet, Roger and Melissa Zwegardt and family were honored for being chosen as District 10's 2002 Kansas Farm Family. The entertainment for the evening was Ron Gustafson, an inspirational speaker and author. Mr. Gustafson was raised on a farm near Lyons, Neb. And at the age of nine was involved in a tractor accident that left him battling for his life. To

experience his message is to lose all self-doubt and to find the strength to succeed.

Others attending from Cheyenne County were John Finley, Jeanne Dunn and Shannon and Raquel Grover.

Beginning at this annual meeting Shawn and Shawna Blanka will represent District 10 and serve on the state Young Farmer and Rancher Committee. This is a two-year term and the first main project is the annual Young Farmer and Rancher Leadership Conference being held in Manhattan Feb. 7-9. This is for the county Young Farmer and Ranchers to get together and meet and have some fun. For more information please contact the Blanka's.

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