



Property cleanup on city's agenda

By Sandy Barnhart

The St. Francis City Council again discussed the cleanup program going on in St. Francis.

At the Jan. 20 meeting, they talked about the property at 613 W. First Street. Attorney Mike Day explained that the structure was free to burn and suggested that the fire

department present a written proposal to the council for approval. He will then present the proposal to the judge for final approval.

Superintendent J.R. Landenberger reported that he was still unable to contact Ed Zuege concerning the property at 610 S. Francis Street. Attorney Day suggested he continue to try and reach him by next meet-

ing, before filing the claim in District Court.

Attorney Day presented to the council the proposed letter asking the public help in eliminating the city of junk vehicles. The letter was approved by the council and is published in this issue of *The Saint Francis Herald*.

Recycling center

Councilman Roger Jensen reported on the latest Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Organization meeting. The city of Colby and Thomas County, owners of the property where the recycling items are taken, asked that the organization carry their own liability and workmen's compensation policies.

He explained that the organization is a new venture which most companies are not familiar with and the organization was struggling obtaining a policy. The insurance companies contacted do not acknowledge the money they receive from the five counties as part of the income, therefore the or-

See CLEANUP on Page 10A



Kansas Day activities begin on Thursday

The 75th annual Kansas Day on Thursday will celebrate the Sodbusters, working with the theme "Sodbusters To Satellites." Activities will begin at 9 a.m. with the set up of displays. Registration opens at 10 a.m. Those attending the Bird City Kansas Day activities will also be celebrating the 143rd year of Kansas' statehood.

Individuals, clubs and other organizations are encouraged to provide displays of farming, household, small appliances, photographs and other items of choice which reflect changes over the past 100 years.

The annual potluck dinner begins at 11:30 a.m. with dinner music provided by the Swinging Seniors. At 12:30 p.m., the Kansas Day program, featuring the St. Francis third grade, the Cheylin fourth grade and students of the St. Francis Community High School speech class will begin.

Ann Zimmerman, composer and professional performer from Salina, will present some special entertainment during the program. Ms. Zimmerman is the wife of former Bird City resident Dexter Eggers and the Kansas Day officers are delighted to welcome such a talented performer to the annual celebration.

During a short business meeting, the 2005 Kansas Day officers will be elected. The 2004 officers include: J.D. Eggers, president; Darla Dible, vice president; Marsha Magley, secretary; and Manette Keeler, treasurer.

Past days are recorded

Editor's note: The following article is taken from articles which appeared in the Bird City Times starting in 1930. Compiled by Marsha Magley, St. Francis and Kansas Day officer, the article tells about the first Kansas Day held in Bird City and it is amazing how many of the original traditions are still a part of today's Kansas Day activities.

Kansas became a state on Jan. 29 and so in order to fittingly observe the day, the ladies of the Mothers Circle are going to hold a "Kansas Day Picnic" on Wednesday, Jan. 29, in the basement of the Methodist Church. It will be an all day affair starting at 10

See PAST on Page 10A

Following display and special recognitions, the program will conclude with a memorial tribute honoring residents or former residents of Cheyenne County who have deceased since the last Kansas Day.



EXTENSION DIRECTOR Tye Faulkender checked out the Cheyenne County Wheat Plot, located east of Wheeler, on Friday. Prospects of a Wheat Field Day this year look a little dim.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Fire trucks to be checked

By Sandy Barnhart

George Harper, St. Francis fire chief, was present at the Jan. 20 St. Francis City Council meeting to discuss several issues concerning the fire department including the safety inspections of the fire trucks.

Mr. Harper said the Kansas State Fire Marshal had contacted him concerning safety inspections. However, Mr. Harper said he did not realize the inspection was to be done yearly and, after discussing the issue with the commissioners, he was in the process of making arrangements with Dave Flemming, county road and bridge supervisor, to have both city and county trucks inspected.

Second on Mr. Harper's agenda was the reporting system of fire runs. As of this year, the Kansas Fire Information Reporting System (KFIRS) will require all fire runs be reported on-line. A suitable computer had been donated to the department, but the department would need around \$200 in software to get the system up and running. The county has already approved to pay half and the city council approved the other half.

Last of all, Mr. Harper introduced a program to the council called Kan Step. He explained that the grant program, if the fire department is accepted, the grant would provide the money for materials while the community would need to provide volunteer labor to do the job. The program is offered through the Department of Housing of Commerce and is not a competitive grant and, although the program requires a community survey, he said the sur-

See TRUCKS on Page 10A



FIRST BABY OF 2004 was born to Brett and Cynthia Poling on Jan. 21. McKenna Marie is surrounded by her brothers, (l to r) Foster, Tiernan and Tyson.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

First 2004 baby arrives

The first baby born to parents living in Cheyenne County arrived on Jan. 21 to Brett and Cynthia Poling, St. Francis. McKenna Marie was born at the Wray Community Hospital at 9:14 a.m. She weighed 8 pounds, 1 ounce and was 21-inches long. She was welcomed home by three brothers, Foster who is 8 years old, Tiernan, 3 and Tyson 1 1/2.

McKenna and her parents will receive a number of gifts from St. Francis businesses including: a full

car wash from the St. Francis Equi-ty; a baby blanket and stuffed animal from Steven's Kansas Territorial, a \$50 savings bond from Bankwest, \$50 savings bond from First National Bank, \$15 gift certificate for baby food or formula and new-born diapers from Saintry Super Foods, \$15 gift certificate from KM Clothier, and a year's subscription to *The Saint Francis Herald* or *Bird City Times*.

McKenna's grandparents are:

Tim and Margaret Poling, Raedell Winston, all of St. Francis; Mike Bahnmaier, Wichita; Randy and Coleen Prehm, Streetman, Texas; Yale and Diane Schutt, Clarion, Iowa. Great-grandparents are John and Jeanie Prehm and Eldred and Bev Schutt, all of Clairon.

Last year's first baby of the year was Joseph Melton who was born on Jan. 13 to Jim and Tanya Melton, Wheeler. He weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was 18 3/4-inches long.

New business begins producing 'wonder' mats

By Karen Krien

A new manufacturing and retail business is up and running in St. Francis.

Carefree Gardener with two facilities and employing nine people, is producing the "Watering Weedless Wonder™," which makes gardening easier or, takes the "ing" out of gardening leaving only a "garden." The product is basically a mat made out of a sturdy woven weed barrier with finished edges to insure the mat lays flat (even in northwest Kansas winds), heat-cut planting openings which vary with the kinds of mats, and a sturdy type of soaker hose is enclosed next to the planting openings.

Most people love having a garden but dislike constantly nurturing plants from seedlings to healthy, full-sized plants. Gardening generally requires bending and stooping, and watering and weeding before the garden begins to produce. The Watering Weedless Wonder™ reduces weed growth while providing an efficient and effective watering system.

Jim Milliken developed the plans for the Watering Weedless Wonder and Gordon Ross brought the plans to reality by creating the method and tools for

See BUSINESS on Page 10A



CAREFREE GARDENER is now producing mats which will make easy work out of gardening. Deanna Grice, right, and Leslie Hook are two of the nine people employed to produce the mats.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Gardener designs weedless, water mats

Jim Milliken, Cheyenne County lawyer, has been an avid gardener for years but, in 1997 at the end of the gardening season, he informed his wife Ruth that he was done with gardening! However, when spring

rolled around and the seed catalogs came out, he started getting that "planting" fever.

Mrs. Milliken could see what was happening and she began

See MATS on Page 10A

PAST

Continued from Page 1A

o'clock in the morning.
A potluck dinner will be served at noon with Rev. Hoyer of the Lutheran Church asking the blessing.
The ladies of the Mothers Circle cordially invite everybody to attend this Kansas Day Picnic. A good program will be given and everybody will have a very enjoyable social time.
Don't forget the date and place.

Mr. and Mrs. W.T. Rogers, who came to Kansas in 1907, were the first two people to sign the registration book. Then 123 names following theirs, along with C.S. Payne, who recorded that he had come to Atchison in 1857.

Cynthia Annie Maxon Trickett, president of the Mothers Circle, who had conceived the idea of the Kansas Day Picnic and served as Kansas Day president for several years, had herself lived in both Wano and St. Francis prior to her marriage to Charles Wesley Trickett, a resident of Bird City. (The Maxon house, moved from Wano to St. Francis in 1887, sat on the northeast corner of the intersection of East Webster and South Scott streets, which is now the vacant lot on the corner of Don Sherman's house.)

From its inception, children have played an important part in Kansas Day celebrations. The *Bird City Times*, in February 1931, printed the first real program itinerary:

The kindergarten and first grade pupils gave several little dances and games. The second grade gave a very interesting radio playlet. The third

grade gave a Kansas Acrostic. The fourth grade acted out a pantomime called "The King of the Cannibal isles." A reading was then given by Jean Venell and Ruth Overturf. The sixth grade sang a Kansas song. Hester Overturf, Bernice Hickman and Dorothy Foe each read a short history of Kansas. The children all did well and they and the teachers are to be commended.

After this, L.A. Munn, a grandson of Ben Bird, after whom Bird City was named, gave a short history of early days when his grandfather lived in this county. J.G. Butler talked on early day life of Cheyenne County and Minnie Lawless of St. Francis, gave a short history of the county from the year 1886.

After the program, a potluck dinner was served and 222 registered.

Bylaws by which the Kansas Day Association is governed today were adopted, by vote, at Kansas Day in 1935.

A memorial tribute, honoring all residents or former residents deceased since the previous Kansas Day, became part of the Kansas Day tradition in 1937. Vada Leach has served as chairman of the Memorial Roster Committee for several years and this is a big job!

Not many of the folks who signed their names at the very first Kansas Day survive today but there are a few including long-time teacher Lucile Kilmer Long, born Aug. 11, 1906, who now lives in Colby.

Cora "Hope" Miller Bressler, el-



Ann Zimmerman is part of the entertainment for Kansas Day.

dest living past Kansas Day president, formerly of Bird City, now resides at the Good Samaritan Village in St. Francis. She served as Kansas Day president in 1970 and 1971. She and all past presidents have a special pride in the distinguished history of past Kansas Days in Cheyenne County.

MAT

Continued from Page 1A

urging him to develop something that made gardening easier. He spent many hours at his garden lot thinking about the problems and finally decided to try keeping the weeds down with large pieces of cardboard and using a soaker hose to water. The first strong wind found

his cardboard blocks away. He gathered them up, laid them back down and anchored them but knew that cardboard wasn't the answer.

Next, he started using the polypropylene weed barriers but soon found there were differences in the many types and qualities of weed barriers. After trial and error, he found a UV resistant woven polypropylene that was strong enough to stand up to the hot sun and weather conditions but the best weed barrier also raveled when it was cut. He got out his craft wood burner and began cutting with this tool but the blades used for cutting were constantly breaking. Gordon Ross, St. Francis, was making blades but he soon tired of making blades and designed a tool that would stand up to the cutting.

All the time, Mr. Milliken was dreaming and designing. Endless experiments were tried with the different materials, the amount of water applied and seeing how plants

grew in the new mats compared to the "old-fashioned" way of gardening.

This summer, he and Mr. Ross met at 8 a.m. each morning, working toward the manufacturing of the Watering Weedless Wonder™ and, after searching out distributors for the different materials which are found all over the United States, they remodeled a building for manufacturing and leased an office for distributing. Lea Keller was hired in the office for web-site operations, advertising, promotion and customer relations, Dustin Gilliland has the job of sales manager and will be attending garden and farm shows; and John Guthmiller is in charge of manufacturing.

For more information, stop by the office at 301 W. Jackson or call 785-332-2552. People can also log onto the web site at www.carefreegardener.com or e-mail info@carefreegardener.com.

TRUCKS

Continued from Page 1A

vey had already been completed through the sewer grant.

Mr. Harper said the fire department is outgrowing the present fire house as more equipment is coming from another grant. However, the department is hoping of adding on to the south of the building. Mr. Harper also noted that this type of grant program could also be useful for other projects around town. The council will review the tape which Mr. Harper gave them.

BUSINESS

Continued from Page 1A

making it. The Watering Weedless Wonder™ is now available for spring plantings whether it be vegetables or flowers.

There are three types of mats (and more models are in the plans). The mats now being produced are 44-by-58-inch mats made of UV resistant polypropylene material (weed barrier) which allows air and water to pass through the top into the ground but will not let weeds grow. The weed barrier also helps keep the ground moist. Around the edges is a rubber strip which is encased by heat bonding. There are also grommets on the corners and sides which allow multiple mats to be linked together.

Each mat has either three rows, five rows or 12 openings that have been heat-cut to prevent raveling and transplants or seeds can be planted in the rows/openings.

Each mat has a 3/8-inch porous hose similar to most soaker hoses. The hose is encased in the weed barrier right next to the openings where there will be plants. A flow-control device on the female end of the hose limits water supply to approximately 1 pint per minute and it takes about 10 minutes a day to water the plants in the mat. At this rate, the water slowly seeps into the soil and there is no waste or run-off.

Mr. Milliken said the mat can be quickly installed after the ground is prepared for planting. Once the soil or root zone is wet, it will retain moisture with minimal additional water by reducing evaporation.

"Because of the consistent moisture levels, plants thrive and production is abundant," he said.

He recommends early planting of spring vegetables such as radishes, lettuce, carrots, onions, spinach, beets, turnips, peas and broccoli. When these vegetables are harvested, it is time to plant tomatoes, beans, peppers, corn, okra and eggplant. In the fall or late summer when the summer vegetables are basically done producing, he recommends going

back to planting the spring vegetables.

He said that the Watering Weedless Wonder™ shouldn't be limited to vegetables as flowers grown in the weed barrier are beautiful and he is developing a special mat just for growing herbs.

Kansas State University's Experimental Station at Colby will be testing the mats this summer and already expect to find them extremely water saving for gardens.

The gardener can leave his garden for days and even weeks at a time by installing a timer for watering his plants. When he comes home, he will

find a lush garden with vegetables to be picked but no weeds to pull.

In the near future, Carefree Gardener will host tours through the facility and greenhouse. In the meantime, the facility is closed to visitors.

Anyone interested in seeing or purchasing the Wondering Weedless Wonder™ mats are welcome to stop by the Carefree Gardener office at 301 W. Jackson, St. Francis, during business hours (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) or call 785-332-2552. More information can be received by e-mailing info@carefreegardener.com or visiting the web site: www.carefreegardener.com.

CLEANUP

Continued from Page 1A

ganization shows an income of \$15,000 from recyclable sales with an expense of \$19,000 for an employee. St. Francis insurance agent Kelly Frewen was still looking into the matter.

Superintendent report
Well 9 - Superintendent reported that Well 9 has been pulled and he is in the process of reviewing the charges for repairs with Thaniel Monaco of Miller and Associates, McCook.

Chemicals - The council approved the purchase of chemicals for the parks and recreation areas from the St. Francis Equity in the amount of \$3,289.84. Other bids were: Grace Flying, \$3,381.17 and Timberlain, \$3,606.30.

School - The council approved for Superintendent Landenberger and two other employees to attend a one-day water school in Salina for a cost of \$36 each.

Attorney report
The Council approved Ordinance 522 which is published in this issue of *The Saint Francis Herald*. The Ordinance pertains to setting up a swimming pool board which would sit as an advisory board to assist the council in running the day-to-day

operations of the pool. The mayor and council will still retain overall management and control of the pool.

Other business

In other business:
• Dues approved by the council included: Northwest Kansas Planning and Development, \$1,797.50. The county pays the other half of the dues. The organization allows the city and county the use of their services and helps with obtaining grants, like the sewer grant the city recently received. Chamber of Commerce, \$500 and Kansas Rural Water, \$684.

• Appointments approved by the council are: Scott Schultz, Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Committee; Dave Yost and Rodney Bracelin, Airport Authority.

• The council approved to give the Cheyenne County Council on Alcohol and Drug Related Problems one-half of the money which the city has collected from tax on alcohol. The other half is put into the Parks and Recreational Fund.

• The council approved trailer park licenses: William Peter, Merlyn Sherlock, Kathy Woodcox and Eldon Zimelman.

• The council approved kennel license for JaNan Cooper.

McKenna Marie Poling!!

W e l c o m e

\$15 Gift Certificate for Baby Food or Formula — and — New Born Diapers

Sainty Super Foods

120 E. Washington
St. Francis
785-332-2064

McKenna made her first appearance on Wednesday, January 21 at the Wray Community Hospital. McKenna weighed 8 lbs. 1 oz.

Congratulations to her parents Brett & Cynthia; big brothers Foster, Tiernan & Tyson!

\$50 Savings Bond

"Where The Employees Are The Owners"

Bird City, Colby, Goodland, Kirk, Oberlin, Quinter, Sharon Springs & ST. FRANCIS

FDIC

FREE FULL Car Wash!

ST. FRANCIS EQUITY

105 S. River
St. Francis
785-332-2421

Stuffed Animal and Baby Blanket

STEVEN'S' KANSAS TERRITORIAL STORE

212 W. Washington
St. Francis
785-332-3300

\$50 SAVINGS BOND

121 Washington • St. Francis • 785-332-3333

Other Locations
Colby • Goodland
Idalia, CO

\$15 Gift Certificate

KM Clothier

116 W. Washington
St. Francis
785-332-3434

FREE Subscription to the:

The Saint Francis Herald

or *The Bird City Times*

310 W. Washington
St. Francis
785-332-3162