



Airport offered \$170,000 grant

By Karen Krien

Two members of the Cheyenne County Airport Authority Board along with two airport managers and the county road and bridge supervisor talked to the commissioners about a special offer of funding for airport equipment and apron (parking) pad when the commissioners met on Friday. The

commissioners agreed to see about the Federal funding, noting that the commissioners could halt the purchases whenever they wanted to. They also agreed that more than two Airport Authority Board members meet and further discuss the opportunities.

Dave Yost and Rodney Bracelin, Airport Authority Board, Robert Grace and Richard

Grace, airport managers, and Dave Flemming, supervisor, made the presentation with Robert Grace as spokesman. In short, Mr. Grace said that an error had been made in money distribution to small airports in Kansas while others in the Central Region were benefiting. Congressman Jerry Moran had gone directly to Federal Aviation Admin-

istration and small Kansas airports were then contacted that there was money available. In fact, in the next four years, small airports could receive up to \$500,000.

However, to receive the money, the Federal Aviation Administration officials needed to know the county's answer by Friday. A special meeting was held but, unfortunately,

only two Authority members showed up but, because of the need to let the Federal Aviation Administration know that day, those two voted "yes" to apply for the funding if the commissioners agreed. The money which the county could receive this year is around \$170,000 and would cost the county \$8,500.

See GRANT on Page 3

Chief assumes duties

By Karen Krien

St. Francis has a new chief of police.

Troy Gardner started his duties as St. Francis Chief of Police Monday morning, replacing Jason Ryan.

"Troy Gardner is going to be a big benefit to our police department and city," mayor Scott Schultz said.

He said the rest of the department had come to city council members and himself asking that Chief Gardner be hired.

"Everything just fell into place — Jason wanted to move closer to family and Troy had moved back to St. Francis to be closer to his family."

Chief Gardner was born and raised in St. Francis and has been away from his hometown for 20 years, having spent the last 14 years in Fort Morgan, Colo.

"It's good to be home — so good!" Chief Gardner said.

"I care about this county and it has been in my heart all this time."

In Fort Morgan, Chief Gardner was a patrol officer for three years,

then moved to the detective department for the next eight years. The past three years has been spent in community resources. He compares Fort Morgan to a "little Denver" because

of the crime and he has worked about every kind of case. He tells about an 82-year-old woman who was beaten and sexual assault was attempted. He

was instrumental in helping to track down the attacker in Texas and because, the case is still open, he was

very careful about giving any other information.



NEW POLICE CHIEF Troy Gardner, left, reviews some of the records with officer Norvin Anderson and secretary Sarah Smith.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

"It was fulfilling to be able to couple the skills of my department with those of other agencies," he said, adding that there was also some luck involved. "I saw that God really does watch out for us!"

In the last three years, he worked closely with the community, businesses and schools. He started a lot of community outreach programs, wrote and administered grants including the "Cops In Schools" grant

and Homeland Security and Gang Resistance Education and Training (GRANT).

As the new chief of police, he will be the head of the department with

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Commissioners start process to acquire county fire trucks

By Karen Krien

The Cheyenne County Commissioners, on Friday, agreed to apply for a grant in order to have enough money to purchase fire trucks for the county.

Attending the meeting were Susan Hobrock, Cheyenne County Development Corporation coordinator;

Dave Hickert, Bird City fire chief; and George Harper, St. Francis fire chief. The county applied for a Community Development Block Grant

last year and was granted \$97,488 to remodel the St. Francis clinic basement into the county health office. At that time, all areas of Cheyenne County with the exception of the city

of St. Francis (it had been surveyed earlier) were surveyed and found to be in the low to moderately-low income status. The survey results, which are difficult to gather, are still good for this year and the county has been looking at getting new fire trucks for several years.

Chief Hickert reported that Bird City needed one fire truck but Chief Harper said St. Francis really needed two trucks. Each truck was estimated to cost around \$100,000. The commissioners wanted to get the process started so it would not be "last-minute" with everyone scrambling to get facts together. They asked that they gather the truck and other asso-

ciated equipment prices together and give to Mrs. Hobrock.

Chief Hickert said the Bird City Emergency Medical Service and fireman meeting and training room still needed to be finished and he was interested in seeing if a Community Development Block Grant could be requested for this project. Mrs. Hobrock said that the meeting/training room could be submitted as a separate city application. The county is allowed two grant applications and each city is allowed one.

The fire chiefs will work Mrs. Hobrock and with Amy Griffey, who writes the Community Development Block Grants.

County receives moisture

January went out with a little bit of snow. Kathy Woodcox, weather observer, reported .09 inch of moisture. However, weather forecasts for Wednesday and Thursday are calling for more snow. Cheyenne County is dry -- extremely dry and moisture is needed in whatever form it comes.

Unfortunately, it is cold and, on Jan. 27 and 28, the low was only 6 degrees.

Date	High	Low	Prec.
Jan. 27	47	6	
Jan. 28	27	6	
Jan. 29	39	19	
Jan. 30	59	16	
Jan. 31	32	24	.09
Feb. 1	34	10	
Feb. 2	38	12	



LET IT SNOW — Joe Nasuti said he didn't mind sweeping snow -- just wished there was more of it!! Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Ambulance billing tabled for two months

By Karen Krien

For the last three months, the county commissioners have been discussing who will do the ambulance billing for the county. At the Friday commissioners' meeting, they once again tabled the billing issue, this time for two months.

The problem began when patients were upset because their ambulance costs had been rejected by Medicare as they were deemed "not necessary." Dr. Mary Beth Miller informed the commissioners that those ambulance runs were necessary and listed some of the reasons. However, the runs had been turned into Medicare as the technician had coded them which, when the technician had filled out the ambulance form and not being a physician, had listed the patient's comments and obvious pain.

Les Lacy, hospital administrator, had offered the hospital's services in working and turning in ambulance runs to Medicare, Medicaid and insurance companies for \$6 per run. Since the hospital staff works in this area day after day, the commissioners considered the administrator's offer as an alternative. However, they felt that they needed to study the matter further by contacting other county emergency medical service directors and officials as well as working with the county's ambulance department bookkeeper Janelle Bowers.

Both commissioners Tim Raile and Ron Krien had been to the am-

bulance barn to talk to Mrs. Bowers and Commissioner Raile had made numerous calls to different counties. Commissioner Jane Brubaker had illness and several deaths in her family making it impossible to make the visit so felt that, at this time, she was unable to make any decision on the bookkeeping matter.

"I want to spend time with Janelle and see how her days at the office are spent and how much time is spent in each area," she said.

The commissioners agreed to wait for two months and see how the collection of ambulance fund money was going before making any decision.

The commissioners had reviewed \$10,790 in contractual obligations (previously referred to as write-offs) but \$322 in the obligations was a bankruptcy amount.

It should be noted that contractual obligations are not necessarily money lost to the county. A bill is sent to Medicare, Medicaid and/or insurance companies. Often Medicare and Medicaid will pay only a portion and the rest is billed to the insurance companies. What the insurance companies do not pay is considered a contractual obligation and the ambulance service is forced to settle for the amount received.

The hospital is also forced to settle for contractual obligations.

Look for more information on contractual obligations in the near future.

See BILLING on Page 7



PRAIRIE MUFFIN TRUCK was brought to the Kansas Day displays by Fred Magley. Magley said the wheel barrow was used by homesteader women when they went to the pastures to gather cow chips which were burned in the cook stoves. The 1899 wheel barrow was purchased at the Brice Murphy farm sale north of Wheeler.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

2004 Kansas Day activities recognize eldest man, woman

By Marsha Magley

The 75th annual countywide Kansas Day Celebration was held at Bird City on Jan. 29. There were many recognitions made including the eldest born attending. Coy DeGood, born April 2, 1920, was the oldest to be born in Kansas and Eva Murray, who was born Feb. 5, 1909, was the eldest woman to be born in Cheyenne County, Kansas and was also the eldest woman in attendance.

Doors of the American Legion Hall opened at 9 a.m. for set up of displays. Coffee and muffins were

served during the set-up period.

Past presidents Helene Landenberger, Manette Keeler and Fred Magley were the Kansas Greeters, directing those arriving to the registration table, manned by Marsha Magley, Vada Leach, Rosemary Powell and Connie Miller, where printed programs and name tags were distributed.

J. D. Eggers, president, presided over the day's events, introducing Reverend Norman Morrow, Church of Christ, St. Francis, to deliver the table grace and invocation at 11:30, prior to the Kansas Day potluck.

During the luncheon hour, the Swinging Seniors provided musical selections (Bob and Gertie Zweygardt, Manette Keeler, Larry Miller, Bert Basgall, Vern and Nancy Werner and Caroll Reed).

Mr. Eggers extended a welcome to all as afternoon festivities began. Charles Coleman and John DaPron posted the American and Kansas flags and Chad Miller led in the singing of the national anthem.

Two readings: "Kansas" and "It's Raining Out In Kansas" were shared by Connie Miller, past president.

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General agreement was that we would all love to have some rains as described in the second reading.

During the annual business session, the following persons were elected to serve as officers for Kansas Day 2005: Darla Dible, president; Casey McCormick, vice president; Marsha Magley, secretary and Helene Landenberger, treasurer.

Educational and musical segments by the Cheylin fourth grade and St. Francis third grade classes pleased Kansas Day go'ers. Several parents, during their lunch breaks, came to support the children performing.

Four students from the St. Francis community High School speech class appeared as notable Cheyenne County figures: Dylan Loyd as Henry Loyd; Grace Hnizdil as Sylvania B. Wishom; Sheryl Miller as Bertha Raile and Sawyer White as Dr. Lucille Stephenson.

Much to the delight of all present, the very talented Ann Zimmerman, guest performer, of Salina, presented several crowd-pleasing vocal selections, accompanying herself on the keyboard.

Marsha Magley, secretary, presented Display Certificates to Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Association (Stan and Dee Dorsch), Home Circle Club (Carol Brubaker), Coy and Neva DeGood, Fred Magley, Ken Beougher, Norman Dorsch, for displays exhibited.

Besides Coy DeGood and Eva Murray, special recognition Certificates were also given to: Walde



A TIME TO DISCUSS HISTORY — Frank Sowers talks to Barb Beougher before the Kansas Day activities began on Jan. 29 in Bird City.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Hempler, born Nov. 2, 1907, in Burr, Neb., was the Eldest Man in Attendance; Otto Bandel, born Sept. 4, 1918, in Sarato, Russia, was the Eldest Foreign Born Person; Granite Bock, born Dec. 15, 2000, was the Youngest Boy Present; McKenna Marie Poling, born Jan. 21, 2004, was the Youngest Girl Present. Married The Most Years were Maynard and Lucille Wright, 64 years. Married the Shortest Time were Reverend Ron and Daphne Roberts, 6 1/2 years.

Reverend Doug Mason, Immanuel Methodist church, Bird City, deliv-

ered a Memorial Tribute remembering residents or former residents of Cheyenne county who died during the year 2003. The Kansas Day Memorial Roster, 2003-2004 contained 108 names.

Closing announcements were made.

Reverend J.W. Glidewell, First Southern Baptist church, St. Francis, offered a benediction.

The Colors were retired and the 75th annual Kansas Day closed, to meet again on Jan. 29, 2005.

CHIEF

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administrative duties. He will manage the budget, supervise personnel, work with the public and do his share of patrolling city streets.

He plans to have good relationships with other law enforcement officers both in Cheyenne County and surrounding cities and counties.

"I plan to use some of the resources I have brought with me to enhance training," he said.

"My philosophy is to be a 'peace officer' instead of a law officer—we need to solve problems and keep the peace."

He said he is extremely fortunate to step into the office with a fine staff of officers, Mark Davidson, Norvin Anderson and Tom Raile. However, he noted that the backbone of the office is Sarah Smith whose title is chief's secretary.

Following graduation from St. Francis Community High School, Chief Gardner went to the University of Denver where he received bachelor

degrees in psychology, sociology and anthropology. Following graduation, he had three degrees but said he was unsure what to do with them.

As he looked through the classifieds, he saw that there were many openings for policemen and this occupation interested him. So, he entered the Arapahoe Community College for his academy training. He now has 1,200 training hours above the academy training.

His first job was with the Colorado State Parks but he soon moved on to Fort Morgan. He has earned his masters in criminal justice from the University of Colorado and noted that, while earning the master's, he was given the opportunity to take courses outside of the degree program which he thoroughly enjoyed.

Chief Gardner and his wife Annalynn moved to St. Francis in October. He looks at the move as a "leap of faith." They knew they didn't want to raise a family in Fort Morgan and both loved St. Francis but, in leav-

ing Fort Morgan, they didn't have jobs. The chief landed a job with the city at the plant and Mrs. Gardner was hired as radiology technician with the hospital. They bought the Uplinger house on Jackson Street.

"We walked into the house and Annalynn loved it," he said, noting that it is probably going to take some work and, on Monday morning, the boiler had gone out but that goes with owning a historical house.

Chief Gardner's parents, Chet and Colleen Gardner, grandmother Ruth Reynolds and his brother Justin and his wife Paige live in St. Francis and it nice to have family around again. (The reason he went to Denver to school was because it was close to home).

Chief Gardner reported that the people of St. Francis have given both him and his wife a warm welcome which he has appreciated and they are enjoying meeting the chief's old friends and making new friends.

"I'm just so glad to be back home!"

BILLING

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Employees compensated

An employee had asked that the commissioners consider an incentive for long-time employees. After discussion, they agreed that employees working 15 years or more, one more personal day; 20 years or more, two more personal days; and 25 years or more, three more personal days. The new ruling will be added to the Employee's Handbook.

The commissioners talked about employees not using county computers for personal use because one of the computers had acquired a virus. After discussion and checking in the handbook, they agreed that the rule is already stated in the handbook. However, the commissioners asked that Terry Miller, county clerk, send memos to all department heads asking that they follow the rules in the handbook and not use the computers for personal use.

Road and bridge report

Dave Flemming, county road and bridge supervisor, presented his monthly budget report and showed the commissioners a map where road work had been done. Dan Stephens asked that 1 mile of road south of St. Francis be officially closed. The supervisor said the road is not maintained nor is it used. The commissioners gave permission for Supervisor Flemming to start the process of contacting landowners so the road can be closed.

The supervisor reported, that in the last six years, it had taken \$65,308 to dig out sand and gravel for county roads. He proposed that the county purchase an excavator instead of hiring or renting the sand and gravel removed. However, after reviewing the cost of a used excavators from \$79,000 to \$128,000, the commissioners felt the money would be better spent on the purchase of a road grader or other equipment.

In other business

In other business:
• Two Airport Authority members, airport managers and county supervisor talked to the commissioners about Federal money which the airport may be eligible for to make improvements at the airport.

(See related articles.)

• The commissioners once again read the bill from Infinitex which is the internet company were the clerk of the court's computer is connected. While reading the letter from the Judicial Administration, the commissioners found that, while the computer is a mandated purchase which they approved to pay, the Judicial Department was required to take care of the upkeep and maintenance. The commissioners agreed that the Judicial Department's responsibility includes paying the internet company costs.

• Kevin Berens, county attorney, reported that the commissioners were to pay the autopsy costs questioned at the last meeting. He said the law states that the county where the death took place pays for the autopsy expenses. The warrant for \$396 was approved.

• Clerk Miller had called the Northwest Kansas Local Environmental Protection Group personnel and, after talking to several individuals, he was told that the service would bill the county when a well or water check was made and the county would bill the individual. Commissioner Brubaker said the commissioners from Rawlins County were contesting the Local Environmental Protection Group because they feel that there should be no charge for services made in counties - that the program is Federally funded.

• Commissioner Brubaker said Rawlins County Commissioners had found out that each county is paying the Kansas Bureau of Investigation \$200 a month for a service which they are required to cover even if the \$200 fee is not paid. Commissioner Ron Krien reported at the last meeting that he had heard something similar.

• County attorney Kevin Berens was asked to find out more information about Harvest Energy, a company which owes back taxes to the county. The commissioners want to start foreclosure procedures if possible.

• Mary Morrow was given permission to have some Register of Deeds volumes rebound for a cost of \$750 plus shipping and handling. She also

noted that she will be putting up a shade in the vault to protect the volumes from the sun.

• The commissioners agreed to pay the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development dues of \$1,797.50. They also approved for the following people to attend workshops, classes and certifications: Dolores Jenik to attend a treasurer meeting and certification class; Carol Gamblin attend a Criminal Justice Information System class; Dan Schittenhardt, the annual county weed directors meeting where he will be certified in the control of prairie dogs.

• The commissioners signed employee wage agreements giving each employee a cost-of-living raise of \$25 per month plus employees were given merit pay raises ranging from \$0 to \$25 depending on their evaluation made by the department head.

• Mr. Schlittenhardt asked about purchasing a product to control prairie dogs from a company outside the county. In the past, the product has been purchased from the St. Francis Equity and it was cheaper from the other company. The commissioners said that there wasn't enough difference in the price and that the money needed to be spent in the county whenever possible.

• Kurt Bucholtz, Lampe Hardware, talked to the commissioners about where emergency lighting would be placed in the courthouse. The emergency lighting is a fire marshal requirement.

• The sheriff's vouchers were reviewed and the sheriff agreed that he wouldn't charge for any gas or mileage used when he picked up a person at Larned as he was already at another meeting. The undersheriff said that he would take care of the cell phone bill of \$635 before the next meeting.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the commissioners has been set for 8 a.m. on Feb. 13. The meeting would have ordinarily met on Feb. 16 because the 15th falls on Sunday. However, Feb. 16 is Presidents' Day and the courthouse is closed.

Valentine Love Lines

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The Saint Francis Herald
Bird City Times



Walz

Cards are requested

The family of Harvey Walz is requesting a card shower in honor of his 80th birthday on Feb. 14. Cheer Harvey up by sending greetings to him at Route 3, Box 245, St. Francis, KS 67756.

Hospital floor to be fixed soon

By Karen Krien

Members of the hospital board and the commissioners met Tuesday morning with Mike Mersch, supervisor with Rhoads Construction, to hear what the contractor had planned to repair the new floor in the hospital addition.

Mr. Mersch said the company will be taking out the concrete to the prestress 10 foot, 6 inches into the hallway and into an adjoining room. An inch and a half of cement will then be poured into the area and it will be tapered off so there will be only 1/8 inch slope to each foot of floor.

The hospital board and commissioners had met on Jan. 16 to further discuss the floor which measured 1.5 inch lower than the old hospital floor where the two floors were supposed to meet. At that meeting, the contractor proposed sand down the floor and apply a polymermodified

epoxy-type material to the top, thus bringing the floor up 1.5 inch to match the old hospital floor

Commissioner Ron Krien was against applying the epoxy-type material as he didn't think it would adhere for any length of time.

The contractor and architects studied the issue further and agreed that taking the cement out and pouring new cement might be the best way to go and still make the commissioner happy.

The commissioners approved the new floor repair proposal. The hospital board members then called a special meeting in the commissioners' room and approved the proposal.

Work is supposed to begin to correct the floor this week so the contractors can meet their upcoming deadline.



NO INJURIES IN ACCIDENT — There were no injuries reported in this early Monday morning accident. However, there were some injuries in an accident on Sunday morning. No details were available when the newspaper went to press. *Herald staff photo by Karen Krien*

GRANT

Continued from Page 1

The Airport Authority had that much money in its budget but the money was earmarked for runway repairs.

Mr. Grace said that receiving this amount of money with only a 95/5 match was probably a one-time opportunity for the county's airport. There were three suggested projects: a beacon, a master plan and an expanded runway apron which would be used for incoming plane parking.

The present beacon is around 60 years old and, while it could last for another 10 years, it could go out tomorrow. The present apron is extremely small and if more than one aircraft comes in, they are forced to go out on the sod and, if there is snow, it cannot be bladed off of the sod without tearing up the sod. A master plan, when drawn up, will outline the future for the airport. A master plan is required if the Airport Authority would want to apply for any additional Federal funding. With the \$170,000 funding, the Federal Aviation Administration is willing to have the master plan costs taken out of the funding.

Mr. Grace said that master plans are expensive, often costing from

\$40,000 to \$60,000 which makes it almost prohibitive for any small airport to have the plan.

The Authority estimated that the beacon will cost \$25,000, the master plan, \$45,000 and the apron, \$105,000, alling runway lights.

State funding

Mike Armour with the Kansas director of Aviation is also suggesting the Airport Authority apply for funds which could require 90/10 matching funds. These funds would be used to purchase a weather reporting system. State funds helped pave the airport runway several years ago.

The approved weather reporting equipment would allow air taxi and hospital flights to better utilize the instrument approach.

All of the surrounding airports including Burlington, Colby and Goodland have installed this equipment and Atwood is in the process of installing it.

The cost of the equipment is \$76,000 and the county could pay around \$7,600 (which some of that cost could be cut by using the county crew to do some of the ground work).

Introducing the Graduating Class of 2016



MORNING CLASS: back row, (l to r) - Jude Faulkender, Payton Beims, Shirley Swihart, Garrett Brunk, Kylie Sherlock; front row - Emily Elfers, Journey Lee, Hannah Stafford, Carol Eve Harris, Jason Owens, Jakob Church, Lance Hobrock. Absent - Travis Rogers.



AFTERNOON CLASS: back row, (l to r) - Sydney Sundstrom, Kaitlynn Raile, Maggie Lambert, Shirley Swihart, Kattie Jenik, Chris Hoard, Justin Pacheco Jacob Pearce; front row - Alex Miller, Jarod Schafer, Kayla Reed, Breanna Charnoff, Blake Meyer, Philip White.

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