

Principals receive 1-year contracts

Administrator contracts, mainly the principals' contracts, was one of the items of business discussed at the St. Francis Board of Education Monday evening. After considerable discussion, it was the consensus of the board to give both the elementary and junior-senior high principals one-year con-

tracts instead of two-year contracts. In years past, the St. Francis board has given principals and the superintendent two-year contracts. Earlier in the year, Carl Werner, superintendent, reported that he was retiring. At a later meeting, the board offered him a 10-month contract from Sep-

tember 2004, through June 2005. His contract will now be considered by the board each year. Larry Gabel, elementary principal, will be eligible to start retirement at the end of next year. Superintendent Werner said it would likely provide the best flexibility for

everyone involved if Principal Gabel's contract was allowed to become a one-year contract and then his contract could be considered each year. Board president Gene Dodd asked Principal Gabel what he would prefer — to continue on a two-year contract

or a one-year contract. "You do what you have to do," Principal Gabel said. "I would prefer we weren't in this situation (financial) but I would also not want to be responsible for a teacher losing his or her job."

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K-161 to be closed April 19

By Karen Krien

Bird City residents and others traveling to and from Benkelman will need to find a different road after April 19 when the K-161 is closed for the construction of a bridge. It will remain closed for six months or until late October.

The Kansas Department of Transportation will close K-161 at the U.S.36/K-161 junction north of Bird City to U.S. 34 in Nebraska, just south of Benkelman. The contractors, L&M Contractors, Great Bend, can begin the dirt work and removal of the Big Timber Creek Bridge. The project is expected to cost \$798,036.

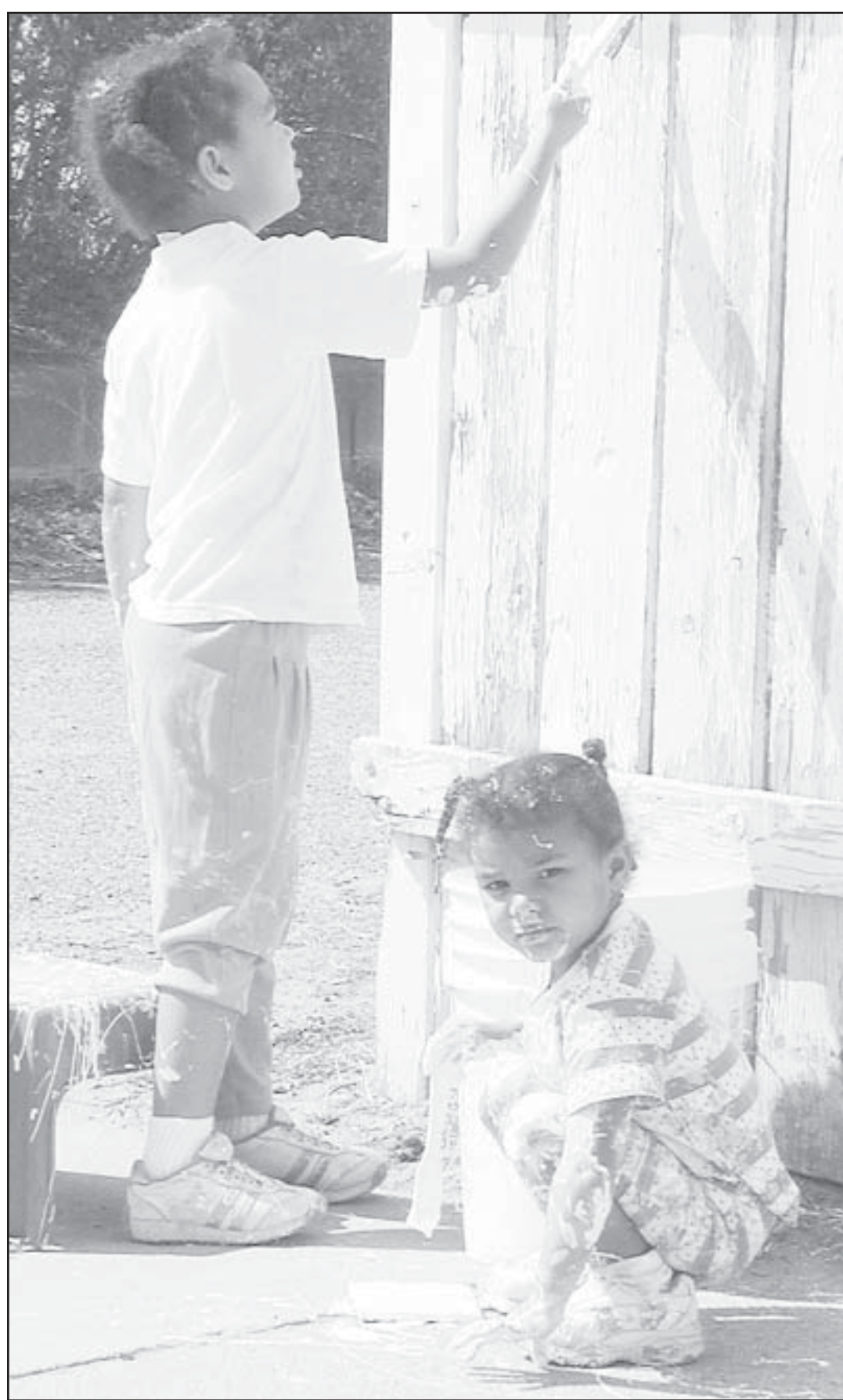
The bridge, which will be replaced is located 9.5 miles north of U.S. 36 and is located at the bottom of a series of curves on the south and a tall hill and curve to the north.

An official detour has been designated which will direct travelers west on U.S. 36 to K-27, then north to U.S. 34, and east on U.S. 34.

Dave Flemming, county road and bridge supervisor, reported that the county crew has been graveling 25 miles of roads in that area for the last two years in preparation for the detour but noted that these roads are for local travel only.

The detour will be a long drive out of the way for those people planning to use the highway.

For more information on the K-161 detour, contact Tom Hein, Kansas Department of Transportation public involvement liaison at 785/877-5652 ext. 205 or by email at tom.hein@ksdot.org>tom.hein@ksdot.org.



TOMSAWYER would have been proud of these little painters. Mandi, age 4, and Cassie Cooks, 2, took advantage of the nice weather and painted grandpa Tim Poling's fence. Cassie was a little tired of painting the fence so had turned to painting the sidewalk. The girls are the daughters of Terrance and Chrisy Cooks. Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Ambulance billing left in department

By Karen Krien

All three commissioners agreed to let the ambulance bookkeeper do the ambulance billing as she has been doing and not turn it over to the hospital. The decision was made at the March 30 meeting of the Cheyenne County Commissioners.

The ambulance billing has been on the commissioners' agenda for several months after Medicare had refused to pay for some ambulance runs. Janelle Bowers, ambulance bookkeeper, had said that she had put the emergency medical technicians' reasons down on the report but there had been more reasons for the runs. During this time, the hospital administrator said the hospital's billing department would do the billing for \$6 per run which the commissioners felt was a reasonable price. However, before turning over the billing to the hospital, the commissioners felt they needed to know more about how the

ambulance billing work and what were the duties of the ambulance bookkeeper.

Commissioners Ron Krien and Tim Raile had talked to Mrs. Bowers earlier but commissioner Jane Brubaker had been unable to until just before the March 30 meeting. She said she had spent four hours with Mrs. Bowers and had then found out exactly what the hospital would be doing for \$6. It was her consensus that the billing be left in the hands of the ambulance bookkeeper — that she was doing her job well and was continuing to improve on collections from Medicare/Medicaid, insurance and individuals.

The other two commissioners also agreed to leave the billing as it was.

The ambulance contractual obligations (money not collected) for the month of March were \$1,168. It was noted that the bookkeeper had sent bills for \$5,057 and \$3,888 had been brought in.

Liquor, guarantee discussed at fair board meeting

By Lezlie Hilt

The president of the Cheyenne County Wildlife had met with the fair board president before the Thursday meeting and president Dick Bursch reported on what the Wildlife organization wanted in return for helping with the remodeling of a building on the fairgrounds.

The Cheyenne County Wildlife wants some kind of guarantee that if they fund the project, that the building was going to be kept up for the next 15 to 20 years.

Mr. Bursch said that not only

could they not give that guarantee but that they didn't know if there would still be a fair board let alone a fair building and that giving a guarantee like that was something he could not do.

The Wildlife organization also wanted to know about serving hard liquor on the fairgrounds.

After checking with the state Mr. Bursch found there could not be any hard liquor served on county property, however each county could pass a resolution to allow the service.

See MEETING on Page 7

Donors needed for blood drive

The American Red Cross will be collecting blood from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday at the Bird City Community Blood Drive at the American Legion Hall.

The American Red Cross is asking all those people who have thought about becoming a blood donor, but just have not taken the time to step forward.

New donors are those who have been out of the system for a few years or those who are coming out for the first time. Everyone must have their photo identification.

Many restrictions have been lifted

in the past few years:

- If you have been cancer free for at least 5 years you may be eligible again.

- Many of the medications you are taking do not disqualify you.

- Diabetes is acceptable if you have it under control.

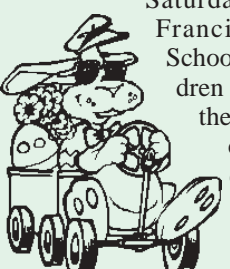
Many have thought they couldn't donate but they might be surprised! Everyone is urged to come to the Blood Drive on Friday and become a blood donor.

For an appointment call 1-800-448-3543. Walk-in donors are always welcome.

Easter Bunny arrives at gym on Saturday

There will be candy, prizes and the Easter Bunny at the Easter Egg Hunt set for 11:30 a.m. on Saturday in the St. Francis Grade School gym. Children should bring their baskets to collect the candy and prizes.

There will also be opportunities for parents to take their child's picture with the Easter Bunny. There will be five age divisions: 1-year-olds; 2-year-olds; 3-year-olds; 4- and 5-year-olds; and 6-, 7- and 8-year-olds. The Easter Egg Hunt is sponsored by the Chamber but is funded and coordinated by Milliken Law Office, Ross Manufacturing and Ken Bracelin Farm.



OLD TIN SHINGLES along with two dormers came off the senior center last week and Leon Merklin's crew put new shingles on. Doing the work on the roof were Brad Merklin, Chris Merklin and John Hankins. Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Building has interesting story

By Karen Krien

The St. Francis Senior Center is changing daily! Before the remodeling is done, there will be a new roof, some new windows and a coat of paint on the outside.

Last week, Leon Merklin and his crew began tearing off the old round tin shingles which appeared to have been put on the building when it was built but people were having trouble remembering that far back. The

crew also removed two dormer windows which most people had gotten so used to seeing that they didn't think that they may have had a reason for being there.

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Spring luncheon to be held April 12

Ladies, the St. Francis Area Chamber of Commerce is bringing back the Spring Luncheon.

The luncheon will be held from 11:30 to 1 p.m. on April 21 in the First Christian Church Fellowship Hall. Tickets can be reserved by calling the Chamber office or they can be picked up at KM Clothier or the Chamber office in the southwest basement corner of the courthouse. Tickets can also be purchased at the door the day of the luncheon.

The luncheon is being sponsored and organized by the Chamber and they are being assisted by Esther and the girls at Country Pantry.

A variety of salads, a casserole, rolls and drink will be served. There will be no program but door prizes will be given throughout the meal.

"Come enjoy the salads and visiting with friends and neighbors," said Gloria Bracelin, Chamber secretary.



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When the building crew began to remove the first dormer, they discovered that there had once been living quarters in that area. It appeared there had been two rooms, neither of them very big and, at one period of remodeling, the ceiling downstairs had been raised and the rooms now had very little standing area.

This little bit of remodeling raised a number of questions.

When had the building been built?

Who had built it?

Who had lived in those upstairs quarters?

Ken Quigley, a senior center board member, said the west part of the building has a basement and it appears there was an addition built to the east at one time. The addition has no basement.

Was the first building a gas station or filling station as it was called in the early days? It appears that it might have been as there are round spaces which might have housed gas pumps on both the west and the south sides. The roof of the building indicates that there was an overhang which would have allowed the Model Ts and As to drive through and be under cover while they got their gas.

The St. Francis Equity board had sold the building to the senior citizens in 1987. The Equity had also sold gasoline there but when they built the new station across the street, it was no longer used.

Tobe Zwegardt, local St. Francis historian, remembered there being a lively stable in that location before the building had been built. A man by the name of Woody Wright had run the station after it had been built



DORMER was just about to become a thing of the past as the Merklin crew began tearing it down on Monday. Below: The dormer windows showed two small room that were once living quarters for the man running the gas station.

Herald staff photos by Karen Krien

in the late 1920s and had lived upstairs.

Mr. Quigley said there had been some receipts and business papers in the basement which they had taken to the museum and believed they had the names of Schlittenhardt and Lockard on them. Tim Burr, Equity manager, said, since the new Equity station is located where Ted Schlittenhardt had a car dealership, those papers could have been moved to the basement which might account for those names being on the receipts.

The old station has been a mystery. Maybe some of *The Herald* readers might know more details on the station. If you do, please let us know at 785-332-3162.



CONTRACTS

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"If we allow this (one-year contract) can we still hire him next year," asked Cliff Raile, board member.

Bonnie Zwegardt, board member, asked if they decided to put the principal on a one-year contract this year, could the board decide to put him on a two-year contract next year or in the future?

"I think we need to leave it at a two-year contract—it (one-year contract) shows instability," Pete Raile, board member, said.

President Dodd said that, with the school finances in the shape they are, he thought the one-year contract would be the best.

Superintendent Werner said that going with a one-year contract did not mean that he or the board intended to release Principal Gabel from his duties.

It was at this point that Principal Scott Carmichael spoke up, saying, "Maybe my contract needs to be a one-year contract? My faith is in you guys as a board."

"I want to help the school and the community.... this is where my home roots are.... I love my job and I never dread going to work," Principal Gabel said, who has been employed with the school district for 31 years.

"I trust you (the board)."

When the discussion ended, the board agreed to allow the principals' contracts to be one-year contracts due to the instability of school finances.

If, in the future, there is more money for schools, the contracts may again be extended to two years.

Superintendent Werner said that some schools have three-year administrator contracts which is the limit; the St. Francis schools and others have had two-year contracts but many

schools have just one-year contracts.

He also pointed out that the board and administration were forced to cut \$240,000 from the budget and with an estimated 30-less students next year, they will need to cut another \$180,000. The legislature had made numerous proposals in how to fund schools but when they adjourned the other day, they had not adopted one of the proposals. They will resume session on April 28 but the superintendent did not expect them to come to any decision and the school would probably be working with the same amount of funding per student as last year.

MEETING

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ing of hard liquor in certain places.

Mr. Bursch said that he was not nor was the fair board asking the commissioners to pass a resolution and if the Cheyenne County Wildlife wanted the resolution so they could serve hard alcohol at their banquets, they would need to approach the commissioners.

However, Mr. Bursch had mentioned the matter to the commissioners but they would like to hear from the community before they do anything. The consensus of the board and commissioners was that at fair time, no hard liquor would be allowed on the fairgrounds during the fair.

Fair entertainment

President Bursch had received a call from the Kids' Ranch Rodeo people that member Wade Krien had never returned the contract and they needed to get the date and arrangements set up. The only night that was available was Friday. After discussion it was decided that since there wasn't any other entertainment for fair to go with the Friday.

The Tractor Pull Association also had called Mr. Bursch and said that needed a night either Thursday or Friday and with the pickup pull entries, they wanted to start at 6 p.m. There is no way that this show could start at 6 p.m. on Friday as that was also the night of the Premium Sale so Thursday was reserved for Tractor Pull.

Entertainer Carl Ackoff was scheduled a few years ago to perform but had an accident and wasn't able to show up. Since that time, the members had understood that the deposit was never returned.

Mr. Ackoff had contacted Mr. Bursch about entertaining this year the board thought maybe they could get their money back and thought if he would entertain in between the tractor pull event they may be interested however after talking to Mr. Ackoff and researching old deposit

slips, Mr. Bursch discovered that Mr. Ackoff had returned the deposit about six weeks after he was to perform so the board decided they could not afford to have Mr. Ackoff.

Premium Sale

Nick Ketzner brought up the fact that in the last few years there has been a big decline in the numbers of members in 4-H. Mr. Ketzner suggested that maybe they allow each 4-H member to take two projects through the premium sale however they can two project of different species or one livestock and one non-livestock but that a 4-H'er can not take two animals of the same species through the sale. As an example, they may take one steer and one sheep or lamb or they may take one animal and one non livestock item through the sale. The members approved.

In other business

In other business:

- Lampe Hardware had offered some used toilets and will give them to the fairgrounds. The members agreed to accept them.

- Fair board member, Clint Bursch resigned. Mr. Bursch felt that with his college education and everything he is doing that he was not able to give the fair board what he should. After Mr. Bursch finishes with college, he can become a board member again.

- Tye Faulkender, extension director, was present to report that the kitchen had been cleaned and they had contacted Janice Krien to go through what was left and see if there was anything left that could be used.

- Theme for the fair parade will be "As Good as it Gets" taken from the sign that Kaye Bauman designed east of St. Francis.

- Cort Antholz was approved as janitor for the fair this year. It was also discussed that there may be some kids that have community service who could possibly help the janitor at the fair.

POLICE ACADEMY

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Society presents special encore

The recent Cliff Dwellers Acting and Singing Society of Wray's production of "Over The River and Through the Woods" was so well received that there will be a special encore presentation in Yuma, Colo., on April 15, 16 and 17. The cast will revise their roles in what was reviewed as "the funniest and most touching play (the Cliff Dwellers) have done so far."

It begins with Nick, a single Italian - American guy from New Jersey who has dinner every Sunday with both sets of his beloved but annoying grandparents. What happens when Nick is offered a dream job that will take him away to a new city? The humor begins as the grandparents scheme to keep Nicky close to home.

If this play were rated like a movie,

it would probably receive a G or PG rating. G because it will draw laughs from the whole family; PG, because unlike last summer's Cliff Dwellers production of Charlotte's Web, young children might miss out on some of the deeper aspects of the story line. But the quick paced dialogue, easily identifiable characters and a family at the center of the whole play, makes this a wonderful live theater experience for audiences of all ages.

The Cliff Dwellers are enthusiastic about presenting community theater in Northeastern Colorado and hope many will come and enjoy this hilarious show. Performances will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Yuma High School Auditorium. Tickets will be available at the door and in advance, call 970-332-4220 for more information.



DR. AND MRS. SEUSS, or better known as **Bobbie and Bob Poore**, participated in "Hat Day" at the senior center.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

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