

Board hesitates to apply for credits

By Karen Krien

Some board members were concerned about applying for another Kansas State Tax Credit when the Cheyenne County Hospital Board met on Thursday. Tax credits have been used to help with the hospital and clinic remodeling projects. The program allowed taxpayers to make a donation which is traded for tax credits.

Traci Neitzel, board member, suggested that all current projects be finished before applying for another grant or tax credit, adding that the staff also needed a break from the remodeling.

Les Lacy, hospital administrator, said there are a number of projects which should be looked at. At the top of the list is the ambulance entrance at the rear of the hospital.

Jackie John, Great Plains Health Alliance director for the hospital, on a conference call, said that the ambulance entrance could be a liability because of the slope and the problem it causes during icy weather.

Administrator Lacy said the ambulance entrance would cost approximately \$180,000 to remodel. He also noted that the hospital would have 18 months to fill a tax

credit program. He reported that, on the last tax credit program which was \$300,000, about one-third or \$100,000 of the total was filled with donations from outside the county.

Joy Anderegg, board member, said there were people asking if they would be able to give to a tax credit project this year. Rueben Schultz, board president, remarked that it

was a lot of money; Robert Van Allen, board member, said he liked the tax credit program.

"The tax credit program is a way of returning benefits back to the community," Administrator Lacy said.

The administrator said he would contact prior contributors to check on the level of

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1935 BRIDGE IS DEMOLISHED — Greg Cahoj was operating the big crane which brought the 8-span, 8 foot bridge down Wednesday. The road was blocked but several people,

knowing that a historic landmark was coming to an end, were on hand to watch the demolition.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Old historic bridge is demolished

By Karen Krien

Those traveling north on River Street past the St. Francis Equity were halted shortly after they crossed the railroad tracks on Wednesday as barricades warned that the road was closed.

The reason for the road closing was the demolition of the old cement bridge, built in 1935,

which once was the main bridge for crossing the Republican River as people traveled along K-27. Before the flood, the river flowed under the bridge but the flood changed the course of the river, sending the water to the east.

Tobe Zweygardt, Cheyenne County historian, said the highways leading to and from the city were

much different than they are today.

He said that U.S. 36 came into St. Francis from the east on what people know today as the "old Wheeler Road." The highway passed the water tower, traveling on through town until it came to River Street (T.L. Moberly had a little shop which sat on an angle at that corner). Mr. Zweygardt also noted that, at

that time, there were tiny cabins on the corner.

People wanting to travel on U.S. 36 would continue on west to the light plant, then turn south following the angle road on to what is now U.S. 36.

Those wanting to travel K-27 would turn north on what people

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New hospital board member selected to serve

By Karen Krien

The Cheyenne County Commissioners had the difficult job of selecting a new board member to serve on the hospital board. After reviewing the three applicants, they selected Jerry Toler, St. Francis.

The two applicants applying for the board position besides Mr. Toler were Kari Gilliland and John Finley. Mrs. Gilliland had sent in a resume but, because of a sick child, was unable to attend the commissioners meeting on Monday.

Mr. Toler's background includes 26 years of working with the public in law enforcement, five years in which he was a chief of police in the Denver metro area. During this time, he was involved with grants, budgets, management and supervision of employees. He was able to consistently stay within budget guidelines.

He was an instructor at Metro-

State College in Denver and certified as a personnel manager.

Prior to his law enforcement career, he worked as a research technician in the department of Radiation Biology at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, and also in the BioSatellite program administered by National Aeronautics and Space Administration. These positions led to some work with the electron microscope.

Mr. Toler also worked as an American Society of Certified Pathologists Certified Medical Technologist with emphasis in histology and frozen section techniques. He was employed by Dr. Thomas Starzl of Denver (a kidney transplant pioneer) and witnessed the first human kidney transplant performed in the United States and was on the surgical team. He has been medically retired since 1988 due to a paralysis in

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Commissioners appoint new fair board member

By Karen Krien

Dick Bursch, fair board president, met with the Cheyenne County Commissioners on Monday morning. He reported that Gary Cooper had agreed to serve on the fair board if the commissioners made the approval which they did. Mr. Bursch said the board is still five members short: two from Bird City, two from commissioner Ray Lee's district and one from commissioner Andy Beikman's district. He noted that if more volunteers for the board come up in one district than needed, they will not turn those volunteers down — members are needed.

Remodeling nearing competition

The remodeling of the building at the fairgrounds is nearing an end. Mr. Bursch said that the commissioners' request to have carpet line the walls part of the way up and the replacement of the furnace (which had not been expected) had caused the cost of the project to reach \$4,000. The \$4,000 was taken out of

the Parks and Recreation Fund.

Mr. Bursch said the insulation had really made a difference and during the coyote calling event, only one furnace was needed to keep the facility warm.

Mr. Bursch said the board had a licensed commercial weed applicator (Jared Douthit) who had offered to spray the weeds at the fairgrounds if the county would supply the chemicals. Mr. Bursch said the county's noxious weed supervisor is busy and, if the board could get the fairground weeds early, it would cut down on the work and broken weed whips right before fair time. The commissioners gave their okay on the early spraying.

The fair board was basically out of money when the year came to an end. Mr. Bursch asked if the fair board could negotiate with the county to take care of the insurance as the cost had jumped around \$3,000 last year. Discussion was held with no decision being made.

County commissioners lift \$1,000 lid on amount paid to St. Francis council

By Karen Krien

The Cheyenne County Commissioners met Monday morning where they agreed to lift the lid on the amount paid to the city of St. Francis for trash kept out of the landfill by recycling.

Roger Jensen is a city council member and the county's representative to the Northwest Kansas Recycling Center located in Colby. Mr. Jensen said there are five counties making up the Recycling Center and last year, the Center had sold 518 tons of recyclable materials for \$36,394. Cheyenne County had sent 108 tons to the regional center.

Mr. Jensen pointed out the city of St. Francis had spent \$18,376 on the recycling center in St. Francis and asked that the county lift the \$1,000 lid on the reimbursement which would help keep down the expenses

of the St. Francis center. He also asked that the rate per ton be raised from \$10.

Jane Brubaker, commissioner, said the rate could not be raised because the budget had already been sent. However, the commissioners agreed to lift the \$1,000 lid.

The commissioners also approved Joy Anderegg to serve a two-year term as representative from Cheyenne County. She will replace Susan Hobrock.

Testing bill

Troy Gardner, sheriff, presented a bill for psychological testing which dated back to 2001. Clerk Terry Miller had researched the minutes and found the bill had been denied when the commissioners decided it was not necessary and the sheriff's budget was already insufficient to cover the charges.

Sheriff Gardner had talked to the company about the bill. He said the company would still serve the county even if the bill was not paid but he and the commissioners agreed that this was not the way to do business.

Sheriff Gardner said that, in order to get into the police academy, a psychological test was required. He said that he did not believe in psychological testing until the job was offered.

"We want to run through an interview and do a background check. When a selection is made, the applicant is given a pre-provisional and then they need to pass the physical test and the physiological test," the sheriff said. "This reduces liability."

The sheriff said he hated to see the \$345 for the bill come out of his budget now but thought it needed to be

paid. The commissioners agreed.

The sheriff presented a comp time policy he would like to implement in his office. Ray Lee, commissioner and former sheriff/law officer, said he thought it important that officers be paid for the time they work.

Sheriff Gardner asked for executive session to discuss personnel but no decisions were made when coming out of session. He noted that five candidates had applied for the job of sheriff's deputy.

Noxious weed supervisor report

Dan Schlittenhardt, noxious weed supervisor, presented his annual weed survey report which he turns into the state. The survey requires him to check out 10 areas in the county which the state picks. The

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Best hands to take home bouquets

The February days can be long and cold but nine St. Francis businesses have decided to put a little flare into the air by participating in the "Don't Gamble With Love" game. The two winners will take home a Valentine bouquet supplied by Goodell Greenhouse and Floral.

Businesses participating are: Goodell Greenhouse and Floral, Owens True Value, Stuart's Jewelry, P & L Ideal Meat Market, Krien Pharmacy, Schultz's, Stevens' Kansas Territorial, Burr Liquor and Video Connection.

Each time a customer visits one of the businesses and makes a transaction, they are entitled to randomly pick a playing card. The object is to collect the cards,

then people are to pick their best natural poker hand and bring it into *The Saint Francis Herald* office, 310 W. Washington, by noon on Friday, Feb. 11.

If there are more than two people with winning hands, there will be a draw off with the highest number/suit being the winner.

Check out the businesses and the specials they are offering for Valentine's Day. The special page is located on Page 12A of this issue.



CREDITS

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support available for a new tax credit program and report at the next meeting. This would also give board members a chance to talk to residents about participating in another tax credit program.

The tax credits are issued on a competitive basis. Applications are scored just like grants. The last time the hospital applied for the tax credit, there were only 27 projects selected out of 90 submitted.

"We need to carefully choose the project we need the most with the greatest potential for funding."

Other various projects and/or equipment needed at the hospital are room lifts, gate for the north ramp, equipment and remodeling of the physical therapy area and improving the front entrance.

Several of the board members had been approached about doing some landscaping at the hospital. It was suggested that memorial funds be used and decided to allow around \$5,000 as total budget. Administrator Lacy said he would contact a landscaper and report back to the next meeting.

2005 Budget
The 2005 hospital budget was given the okay. The budget was based on the projected average usage of 1.8 inpatients per day and 1.6 swingbed patients per day. The new budget showed an increase of \$15 per day for semi-private and private rooms and skilled swingbed care. This raise was less than that of the Rawlins County Hospital and the Sharon Springs Hospital which both still have a higher rate than Cheyenne County.

There was \$20,000 budgeted for physician recruiting; \$50,000 for staff development plus there was budgeting for several small-scale in-house remodeling projects.

Great Plains Health Alliance report
The Great Plains Health Alliance Board report showed that the last quarter of the year was spent helping 19 hospitals complete budgets for the coming year. Among some of the plans for the first quarter of the year will be assisting hospitals complete the end of the year closings for their 2004 financial records to prepare for the completion of the Medicare cost reports and annual audits.

Director John said the March 22 meeting of the Great Plains Health Alliance Board will be held in St. Francis starting at 9:30 a.m.

Administrator's report
Administrator Lacy reported that acute and swingbed volume has been variable during the

month of January. Early January saw the hospital nearly full, but the hospital was nearly empty for a brief time as well. Outpatient volume was steadier. The hospital was able to meet its cash needs since the last board meeting.

Administrator Lacy also reported:

- The county health project is at a point where it is waiting for out-of-town contractors, specifically the fire sprinkler contractor.

- The "punch list" (finishing of projects) at the hospital is still underway and should be completed in a week or so.

- The computer wiring was delayed over the holidays but is the students from the Goodland Tech College are back at work. One electronics student will work part time for an internship project this winter.

- The temperatures in the attic crawlspace have been safe and stable to house the sprinkler system. Mr. Schultz and Mr. Van Allen both said if the crawlspace was too warm, the hospital was losing too much heat. Mr. Schultz asked for a comparison of gas prices this year and last year but also noted that with the addition, it would almost be impossible to make much of a comparison.

- Another KAN-ED technology grant had been submitted. This grant is oriented toward development of an ear, nose and throat specialty clinic in St. Francis using special cameras and interactive television (ITV). The specialist would spend some time in the community and provide additional services using the ITV system.

- An open house to show off the hospitals addition and remodeling has been set for Sunday, March 13, at 2 p.m.

- A health fair has been planned for the week of March 7. Details will be available soon.

- The on site bone density scanning capability is now fully functional and the osteoporosis truck will stop as soon as all the comparison testing is complete.

In other business

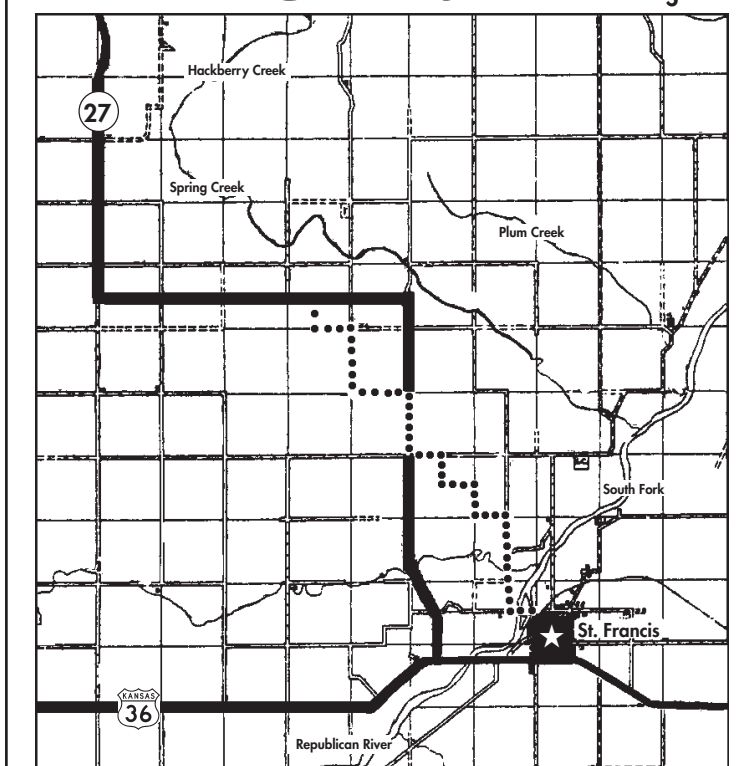
- Administrator Lacy said that Tammy Church, St. Francis, is shifting from housekeeping to the nursing department, remarking that she indicates an interest in nursing school in the future. Several other members of the staff are interested in advancing their professional education as well.

- The board approved the contractor pay application for Penn Building Service of \$19,710. They also approved payment to the architect of \$12,077.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the hospital board was tentatively set for 7 p.m. on Feb. 17.

Old Highway 27



FOLLOW THE DOTTED LINE — In 1935, K-27 went north directly out of St. Francis and made 13 corners before reaching K-27 as we know it today. The layout of the highway was changed in 1949.

BRIDGE

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know today as River Street and followed the road out of town.

Dave Flemming, county road and bridge supervisor, provided the map which shows the old highway. There were 13 corners in the road before it reached what is now K-27. The old highway turned at the Glenn Raile farm and went past Ben Leibbrandt's farm before turning onto the highway. In 1949, the K-27 route was changed to the way it is today.

Supervisor Flemming said the bridge was an 8-ton bridge, was 20-feet wide and 120-feet long. The bridge was no longer wide enough and, once the demolition started, it was evident that parts of the structure were beginning to crumble. It was replaced by a culvert and filled in with dirt.

Mr. Zweygardt said that after the flood, the bridge was tipped up on one end and had to be lowered back into place.

Before the flood, Mr. Zweygardt remembers Cap Rath and Ted Rath had farm ground in this area and were raising 1,500 tomato plants. They used an irrigation pump which pumped water out of the Republican River onto the farm ground. The flood took the irrigation pump downstream and they never found it.

Editor's note: History is interesting to many. Maybe some of The Herald's readers remember the bridge, old highway, the tiny cabins or maybe they have photos they would like to share. Please write, call or drop by with information.

Brothers entertain at Colby College

The Hughes Brothers, a family performing group from Branson, Mo., will appear in the Cultural Arts Center at Colby Community College at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 5. Admission will be by Western Plains Arts Association season pass or at the door.

The Hughes Brothers' program features a wide variety of vocal and instrumental music including country, Broadway, opera and classic ballads. They enhance their presentation with humor and dance, and

appearances by their wives and children add unique sparkle to the show.

This presentation is supported by the Heartland Arts Fund, a program of Mid-America Arts Alliance funded by the National Endowment for the Arts with additional contributions from the Kansas Arts Commission, Courtney S. Turner Charitable trust, and foundations, corporations, and individuals throughout Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas.



LID

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commissioners signed the report.

He reported that, as of March 15, he will no longer be able to kill prairie dogs.

The commissioners agreed to allow Supervisor Schlittenhardt to spray weeds in state highway ditches if he felt like he had the time. He said he would be making money for the county. He noted that the state will only pay for the wholesale cost of chemicals. He has been purchasing them from local dealers. Commissioner Beikman suggested that he go to the different businesses to see if they can match the price. Commissioner Brubaker agreed and to see what the difference will be in the cost.

The commissioners agreed for the supervisor to attend a conference in Topeka the first of March.

Development Corporation

Carol Redding, Cheyenne County Development Corporation coordinator, discussed the projects which she is looking into for the county.

One of the projects is a micro-loan plan which would revolve around the county—the money would grow but would provide money needed to get small businesses a boost or a start. She is looking into grants for the county as well as pursuing prospective businesses dealing with organic dairy farms and wind farms.

She asked if the county had any tax incentive programs for new businesses and industries? The county has free trash pick up and offers priority snow removal but no tax incentives as established businesses resent the fact that they had no help and the new businesses are getting help.

Ms. Redding will return to the next meeting to further discuss the micro-loan plans.

Ambulance report

Janelle Bowers, ambulance billing clerk, said \$1,307 had been written off of ambulance billing this month but pointed out that the write offs were only Medicare. After the secondary insurance has paid, approximately 80 percent of the bills will be recovered.

Larry Gabel, emergency medical service director, reported that the new ambulance will be delivered to St. Francis the first part of March.

He also said that Beth Gabel, instructor, will be teaching an I-class (starting IVs in the field). There are eight people signed up to take the class and while he didn't have the cost, he said the class would be routed through Colby Community College. The county will pay the instructor bill which is over what the college will pay. He noted that Mrs. Gabel had not charged for the last class. Commissioner Brubaker said she would like to know what the cost of the class will be before it starts. Director Gabel said she would be in to talk to the commissioners.

Hospital board appointment

The commissioners appointed Jerry Toler, St. Francis, as the new Cheyenne County Hospital Board member, replacing Bob Van Allen whose term had expired. (See related article for more information.)

Road and bridge report

Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, gave his monthly report of work on county roads and talked about the county bridge which was taken out last week. He said that it was time for the bridge to be taken out as it started crumbling as it was destroyed.

Commissioner Beikman asked Supervisor Flemming if he always bought locally. He said that he did in almost every instance except for items purchased from Inland because it was cheaper and the parts were delivered. The commissioner asked that the try talking to those businessmen who do business with Inland and give them a chance to at least figure and see if they can match the price.

In other business

In other business:

- Gary Cooper, St. Francis, was approved as a new fair board member. (See related article.)

- Correspondence on the Service Master bill showed the bill had been paid.

- The Community Development Building Grant contract for the new fire trucks was signed. The county did get the grant giving all the money asked for to purchase three new fire trucks. George Harper, fire chief, said all 2005 chassis were sold and they would need to bid on a 2006 chassis. This may cost the county an additional \$2,000.

- The commissioners signed the declaration of participation for the Firefighter Relief Tax Fund.

- The commissioners briefly discussed relocating the Food Pantry from the top floor of the courthouse to another location in the courthouse but, after discussion, the commissioners decided there was no other location at this time—that the county attorney was using the only other usable room in the building.

- Gary Rogers, emergency manager, asked before the first of the year for the commissioners to consider a mileage rate raise from \$.33 to \$.36 noting that Rawlins County does pay \$.36. The commissioners agreed to raise the rate to \$.35 per mile.

- Courthouse needs a new fire alarm system. The present system was installed in the early 1960s. Maintenance supervisor Carl Williams said the cost for the system would be \$2,905.

- Jim Laffond, St. Francis, had talked to Commissioners Lee and Beikman about the problem of parked vehicles in front of his home. He said it is a rodent problem and was bringing the value of his property down. The commissioners discussed the matter with county attorney Justin Barrett who said there was probably little they could do without establishing zoning laws. The commissioners were reluctant to establish the zoning laws as they could affect those who live on farms which will then need to conform to the zoning laws. The county attorney and Commissioner Brubaker would take a look at the property and the vehicles. The county attorney didn't think the view of vehicles should affect the appraisal value but could affect the sale value.

MEMBER

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this spinal cord.

Mr. Toler has recently received treatment as an outpatient at the hospital. He was impressed by the medical and nursing staff and the kind manner of care given. He thinks the county is fortunate to have the facility.

After talking to both Mr. Toler and Mr. Finley and looking over the applications of Mrs. Gilliland and Mr. Toler, the commissioners agreed to appoint Mr. Toler to the hospital board.

The appointment is a four-year term and there is no salary or benefits involved.

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Forms for Singing Valentine Telegrams will be available from any band, vocal or advanced music student, at the high school office or St. Francis Supers.

The money raised will be used by the students to attend a musical production in Denver later this year.

Friday, Feb. 11 10:00 CT
(Storm Date: Tues., Feb. 15)

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60' 6" Speed King auger w/Wisc. Motor; 20' pickup head; 18' Double tool bar; 9' Super-H 3 pt, rink hyd. blade; 9' 3-pt blade.

VEHICLES & LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT
1973 GMC 6000 truck, 5 sp/2 sp, 16' steel box & hoist, 366 motor, 27,000 mi.; 1979 Chevy tandem axle truck, Scottsdale, 5 sp/2 sp, 20' steel box & hoist, 366 motor, 20,000 mi.; 1963 Ford 2T truck, 4 sp/2 sp, V8 motor, 13.5" steel box & hoist w/drill fill auger; 1997 Chevy 1500 pickup, auto ext. cab, 30,000 mi. on new diesel motor (clean); 1997 Lincoln Town car, signature series, loaded, 105,000 mi., super nice; 1993 Dewitt 6x18 gooseneck stock trailer, used very little; Stockton 6x18 gooseneck stock trailer; Army 4x4 truck w/5x9 Blair feedwagon; 1958 Ford F600 truck w/280 Oswald mixer box; 5x9 Blair feedwagon; Silage gate, calf creep feeder; 65 - 5x12 cattle panels; Bearcat grinder; JD #22 Roller grinder; TC11 Power posthole digger, like new; W-W cattle chute w/self-catch headgate; Posthole diggers; Sev. round bale feeders, mineral feeders, feed bunks; Fence stretchers, wire roller; Feed King 4T bulk feeder on wheels; Monitor pump jack w/elec. motor; 3T bulk feeder on wheels; Lots of elec. posts & elec. fence chargers.

MOWER • SHOP RELATED • MISC.
Yard Machine riding mower, 17.5 hp, 42", like new; Winco 25,000w PTO generator on trailer; 180 amp Forney welder, helmet & rod; Agtronic 3600w generator, like new; DeWalt 4" grinder; Misc. oil barrels, drip oil, irrig oil; 200 amp 2/40 charger; Alum stepladder, transfer pump; Sockets, wrenches, screwdrivers, etc.; Tires & rims; New air grease gun; Ace hyd transfer pump, fert hoses; Elec cords, misc hand tools; Sev Air Master fans, aeration tubing; Avery, hyd, Hi-boy jacks; 2-irrigation motors, Chrysler 413; New 25cc 17" Homelite weed eater; Irrigation socks; Poulan 2150 chainsaw, like new; Shop vacuum, jumper cables, come-a-longs; 1000 gal diesel tank w/elec pump; 500 gal diesel tank w/elec pump; 150 gal Hastings fuel tank; 200 gal fuel tank w/Tuthill 12v pump; 2-propane tanks, 115 gal & 42 gal.

MISCELLANEOUS too numerous to mention. There will be some misc. furniture, appliances & antique furniture.

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