

# Meetings planned for key irrigators



Producers, landowners and lenders alike have expressed concern about the high energy costs related to irrigated-crop production in northwest Kansas. Several meetings have been set including one in Cheyenne County from 2 to 5 p.m. on Jan. 9 at the 4-H building at the fairgrounds in St. Francis.

Economists Mark Wood and Todd Ziegler, with the Farm management Association, will review historical and projected 2006 costs of production for typical irrigated crop enterprises in northwest Kansas. Irrigated crop enterprise cost of production examples will be discussed with various water availability and tillage scenarios. Lease arrangements that represent equitable sharing of risk and profits will be discussed in light of the anticipated irrigated crop enterprise

profitability or 2006.

Other meetings scheduled around the area are:

- Sheridan County 4-H building, Hoxie, 9 a.m. to noon, Jan. 4.
- Thomas County 4-H building, Colby, 1 to 4 p.m., Jan. 4.
- CAB building, Sharon Springs, 1 to 4 p.m. mountain time, Jan. 5.
- Sherman County 4-H Building, Goodland, 9 a.m. to noon, mountain time.

Those planning to attend the meeting should contact their county Extension office. In Cheyenne County, the number is 785-332-3171.

# Lease advantages are explained

**By Karen Krien**

The vice president for regional operations of Great Plains Health Alliance (GPHA) presented some of the benefits of the hospital being leased to the Alliance when the Cheyenne County Hospital Board met Friday afternoon.

Jackie John, regional vice president of the Alliance, had a booklet prepared which showed some of the benefits the board reaps from the \$51,759 paid to the Alliance. Because the Alliance is affiliated with 27 other hospitals in Kansas and Nebraska, hospitals are able to do group purchasing of supplies and pharmaceuticals. Cheyenne County saves \$52,261 in this area alone.

ral Primary Care Hospital (RPCH or "PEACH") in 1997.

Tom Keller, St. Francis, has been a member of the Great Plains Health Alliance board for 28 years, serving as chairman for a number of these years.

"Without Great Plains at that time, the hospital might not have survived," said Les Lacy, hospital administrator, who had just become administrator during that period.

At the end of the discussion, the board said they were satisfied with the information Mrs. John had presented and thanked her for the time she had taken to put it together.

Great Plains Health Alliance also prepares the cost report (which would cost around \$10,000 alone), and is able to give the hospitals the benefits of group purchasing services such as financial audits, insurance products, natural gas rates and oxygen contracts, just to name some. There are shared pricing for legal opinions, development of personnel policies, contracts and agreement, corporate compliance, HIPAA privacy and security policies and departmental roundtables, which allows the directors of nursing and education, and other department heads to identify best practices and share solutions to common problems.

The support services for administration and staff provided by Great Plains Health Alliance is estimated to save the expense of about two full-time employees, which, at a rate of \$12 per hour plus benefits, comes to \$64,896. This is also included in the rate charged by Great Plains Health Alliance.

Last year, 77 percent of the contract price of \$49,768 was returned to the Cheyenne County Hospital through the Medicare Cost Report which identifies Medicare allowable costs. "Home Office" costs also get credited to the hospital, which improves the reimbursement on the cost report.

Mrs. John pointed out that, if the hospital doors were to close, the community would have \$2 million less in salaries. In 1994 and 1995, hospital employees saved \$8,572 and the Hospital saved \$30,430 due to a Blue Cross refund creating a premium holiday due to the contract that had been negotiated by GPHA.

Both Rueben Schultz, chairman, and Swede Calnon, board member, questioned if the raise of 4 percent in the contract could be lowered to 2 percent. Mrs. John said their costs had gone up considerably and she knew the answer was "no." She also said that there are other leased hospitals with Great Plains Health Alliance which pay more than Cheyenne County but Cheyenne County Hospital has been with the Alliance almost since the beginning.

**Physicians/staff**

Dr. Mary Beth Miller visited the board meeting briefly and thanked the members for her new contract and for hiring another doctor to help in the future. She also told them that the hospital and the clinic is one of the top-notch facilities in the area and she was sure that all the improvements helped draw the new doctor. She certainly appreciated being able to work in the facility. In addition, she remarked that she felt that Great Plains and the administration had been cutting edge in seeking out improved reimbursement for the hospital.

The new doctor hired is Dr. Rebecca Allard. She signed a contract on Dec. 8 and will be coming to Cheyenne County full-time in August 2007. In the meantime, she will be working at the hospital in a locum tenens capacity over the New Year's holiday and once a month until August 2007.

Administrator Lacy announced that Warren Harkness, an X-ray technician had been hired and will be starting in January.

**In other business**

In other business:

- Administrator Lacy said the new generator for the hospital will require significant changes and automatic switching that could boost the cost to \$120,000. The hospital's funded depreciation account could be used to cover this. The need for an adequate generator for the hospital was brought to a new level of importance after the recent storm which left the city without electricity.
- The 2006 budget was presented to the board by Dennis Fredrickson of Great Plains Health Alliance. The board recommended the budget to the Alliance for approval.
- The board agreed to give employees a Christmas bonus of \$25 each in Chamber Bucks.

**Next meeting**

The next meeting of the hospital board will be at 3 p.m. on Jan. 26 in the basement meeting room of the clinic in St. Francis.

**Death notice**

Funeral services for Ann Ewing, St. Francis, will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday at the First Christian Church, St. Francis.

**Kansans for Life**

The Cheyenne County Kansans for Life will meet at Peace Lutheran Church (202 E College) in St. Francis, Jan. 2 beginning at 7:30 p.m.. All are invited to join in prayer, fellowship, learning, and working together to provide "Life for all."

**Youth basketball practice begins**

Youth basketball practice will begin again Monday, Jan. 9. Fourth, fifth and sixth grades start at 6:15 and second and third grades at 7:15. Practices will take place in the high school gym and will be held every Monday during the high school basketball season.

**Senior citizens' New Year's party**

A happy New Year's party will be held at 6 p.m. on Saturday at the St. Francis Senior Center. Everyone is to bring fingerfood or Christmas sweets. Coffee and iced tea will be provided. There will be a game of Bunco going on and there will be music. Everyone is urged to come, enjoy and bring in the new year.

**Holiday hours**

The offices of The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times will be closed on Monday, Jan. 2, in observance of New Year's Day.

**Neitzel Insurance Service**

Neitzel Insurance Service is holding an open house on Friday, Dec. 30. Check ad in Christmas supplement for details.

**St. Francis Public Library**

The St. Francis Public Library

will be closed Dec. 24 and Dec. 26. It will also be closed on Dec. 31 and Jan. 2.

**Little Kids Wrestling**

Little Kids Wrestling practice is being held on Monday nights. Those wrestlers third grade and under practice from 6:15 to 7 p.m. and those fourth grade and up from 7 to 8 p.m. For more information, contact Clay Keller (332-3108) or Shawna Blanka (332-2875).

**Courthouse and Landfill hours**

Cheyenne County Courthouse will be closed Friday afternoon, Dec. 30 and Monday, Jan. 2.

**Cheyenne County Commissioners**

The Cheyenne County Commissioners will meet at 8 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 30, in the commissioners' room at the courthouse.

**St. Francis Library Art Gallery**

Arts and crafts by Allison Grice are on display in the Art Gallery at the St. Francis Public Library. They will be on featured through the month of December.

**Alcoholic Anonymous /Al-Anon**

Alcoholic Anonymous and Al-Anon open meeting, held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday at the Method-

ist Educational Building, upstairs. Contact 332-3590.

**Northwest Kansas Family Shelter**

Northwest Kansas Family Shelter provides 24-hour-7 day-a-week services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Weekly support groups are available for women and children within the northwest Kansas area. For information or if you are in need of assistance, please call the toll-free number 1-800-794-4624.

**Check your name label**

Have you checked the name label on your paper? This label also shows the expiration date of your subscription. Note that if your subscription runs out completely it will take two weeks after you resubscribe before it will once again be delivered to your mailbox. In order to not have a break in your service, renew by the expiration date.

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# Young Indians complete in games

**Junior varsity**

**By Lezlie McCormick**

The St. Francis Ladies junior varsity team played basketball on Tuesday night in Colby and were defeated 31 to 39.

"We showed more signs of improvement tonight," said coach Larry Flemming. "We just weren't able to hold our lead against a very good Colby team!"

Leading scorer was Holly Keller with 11, leading rebounding was Keller with 10 and Sidnee Crabtree had 5. Elizabeth Gienger came up with three steals.

**C-team**

**By Lezlie McCormick**

The St. Francis Ladies C-team played two quarters of basketball on Tuesday night in Colby and came away with a 30-9 victory.

"We are always talking about playing up to our potential and having perfect execution," said coach Larry Flemming. "This second quarter was a classic example."

Lead scorers for Sainty was Sidnee Crabtree and Andrea Holzwarth with 8 each. Leading the rebounds were Crabtree with 3, and Elizabeth Gienger had 4 assists. The team was 67 percent on free throws.

# Club Clip

**AARP**

The next regular meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 12, at the Senior center with Bud Houtman and Gladys Cullum as hostesses and Ross Manufacturing giving the program.

**Weather**

Date	High	Low	Prec.
Dec. 20	46	15	
Dec. 21	59	26	
Dec. 22	71	32	
Dec. 23	65	35	
Dec. 24	61	32	
Dec. 25	66	29	
Dec. 26	69	27	

BOB'S POPCORN

STOP IN ON WEDNESDAY'S FOR THE BEST POPCORN IN TOWN!

Year-End Closeout on ALL REMAINING 2005's:

Special of the Week

1998 Dodge Ram 2500 ... \$6,500  
 1994 F-Super Duty w/Flat Bed ... \$5,800  
 1984 F250 4x4 w/Flat Bed ... \$1,750

YOST Ford Mercury Bob ~ Jeff

800-524-9678~E. Hwy. 36~St. Francis www.yostford.com

## Menu

<p><b>Monday 1/2</b></p> <p>No School</p> <p><b>Tuesday 1/3</b></p> <p>Breakfast: Muffins, juice, cereal assortment, milk</p> <p>Lunch: Chicken Chunks, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Broccoli, and Pink Applesauce.</p> <p><b>Wednesday 1/4</b></p> <p>Breakfast: Scrambled Eggs, toast, juice, cereal assortment, milk</p> <p>Lunch: French dip sandwich, au jus, cheddar fries, dill pickle spears, and mandarin orange jello.</p>	<p><b>Thursday 1/5</b></p> <p>Breakfast: Frosted Long Johns, juice, cereal assortment and milk.</p> <p>Lunch: Beef Enchiladas, lettuce, tomato, cheese, salsa, corn, pears and cinnamon-sugar churros.</p> <p><b>Friday 1/6</b></p> <p>Breakfast: Biscuits with sausage gravy, juice, cereal assortment, milk.</p> <p>Lunch: Chicken stir-fry, oriental vegetables, seasoned rice, sliced pineapple and fortune cookie.</p> <p>• Salad bar is offered at noon daily in the junior/senior high school</p>
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SHOWTIME: 7:30 p.m. 2 hours 12 min.

Dec. 30, 31  
Jan. 1

Starring: Tilda Swinton, James McAvoy, James Cosmo, Jim Broadbent, Elizabeth Hawthorne

The Chronicles of Narnia:  
The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe

Action/Adventure, Science Fiction/  
Fantasy & Adaptation

Rated: PG for battle sequences  
and frightening moments.

Cheyenne Theater St. Francis, KS  
785-332-2747

Children 11 & under: \$2 12-18 yr.: \$3 Senior Citizens: \$3 Adults: \$4

THE FAMILY OF BETHANY BARTLETT

would like to express our deepest love and appreciation for all your kindness and care shown to Bethany and all of us. It's times like these that cause us to appreciate the joy and value of living in this small, close-knit community. Our Special thanks to the following:

Dr. Miller and all the hospital staff for your professional and loving care.

Patrick and the clinic staff for your love.

Home Health nurses Vicky and Judy for your very special gift to Bethany.

EMTs who came with such promptness and kindness.

Troy, Ben and good neighbors Delbert, Sharon and Tim for being there when we needed you.

Hospice Crew: we were so blessed to have your service available to us when we needed it.

John and Natalie for helping us through this difficult time.

The Wonderful Family at the First Christian Church and Pastor Tony for your constant love and support.

CHEYENNE COUNTY HOSPITAL 210 W. 1st • St. Francis, KS  
785-332-2104

Come Join Us for

FLORIS RAILE'S

RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

Thursday, December 29  
1:00-3:00 p.m.  
at the  
Cheyenne County Hospital  
Front Lobby

We appreciate all Floris' hard work & dedication

American Profile

Celebrating Hometown Life

See American Profile magazine in this week's issue of

The Saint Francis Herald

(available in local area only)

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"Neighbors helping neighbors"