

Businesses start small, grow up in St. Francis

By Karen Krien

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Most small communities are searching for industries, big or small. Cheyenne County is no different and some small industries have actually started up and survived here.

In St. Francis, Gordon and Carol Ross opened Ross Manufacturing in 1995. He had developed an idea of Mike Callicrate's for a band castrating tool for livestock.

He and Mrs. Ross started producing the Callicrate Bander and Loop, an easy way for castrating cattle and sheep, in the back of a rented building.

In March 1996, the office and loop production moved to a building at 109 W. Jackson in St. Francis, while the machine shop remained where it was. In 1996, the machine shop outgrew the building and was moved to west U.S. 36 that December.

The office and loop production expanded and moved to a building across the street. In the old office, John Guthmiller, the Ross' son-in-law, began doing plasma cutting for signs, doing laser engraving and making solar-powered pumps which replace windmills, as well as building aluminum sheds for a gas well company.

Becky Roberson developed B&R Bierocks in 1991.

The basic sandwiches, filled with beef, with

Cheyenne County

- **Money spent** for economic development in Cheyenne County in 2006 — \$18,000
- **Population** today 2,911, in 2000 3,165, in 1990 3,243, in 1980 3,678.
- **People working** today 1,632, in 2000 1,893, in 1990 1,952, in 1980 2,155.
- **Economic Development Director** — David Butler, two months
- **EDC office** at 107 W. Washington, St. Francis. Phone (785) 332-3508.
- **Median family income** in 2000 — \$25,797.

or without cheese and cabbage, were created by Mrs. Roberson in a small building.

Today, she employs seven people in her own facility at 306 S. College in St. Francis. They produce 300 dozen bierocks a week and she travels 600 to 1,000 miles weekly to deliver the frozen sandwiches to supermarkets throughout parts of Kansas and Colorado.

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