

City maintenance discussed Monday

The Bird City Council met March 3 to discuss and act on a variety of subjects including city maintenance, building and business permits and animal control.

City maintenance concerns about snow removal, summer parks upkeep and property appearance were addressed. Two citizens were present wanted to have more effort given to the removal of snow and ice in the gutter in front of the post office.

The council members are aware of the problem and the city has dealt with what all agree is a poor design of the building's location. The main defects are that the post office has a northern exposure, which does not allow for enough sunshine and heat to take care of the frozen ground, and water from other areas naturally collects in what is a low spot in this part of town.

Mayor David Hickert offered two solutions, in addition to the city's maintenance crew giving more time to snow removal and sand application: 1) he suggested that postal patrons park a few feet to the east in front of the Memorial Park where the sun shines more often and the gutter is generally clear; and 2) that the city consider closing off that block of the city and create a non-traffic mall area "perhaps

similar to the Sixteenth Street Mall in Denver," he said. This, of course, would be open to further discussion.

No decision was made for summer help and park upkeep but applications are being accepted. The north wall of the old movie theater building is close to collapse and the owners have been contacted to make the situation safer.

A building permit was approved to Chris Cisneros for a privacy

fence in town. Jerry Toler was given permission to operate a popcorn vending trailer along U.S. 36 this summer and the Hometown Market was granted a Cereal Malt Beverage License.

Police chief Stan Harp offered proposals for an animal cage to hold stray dogs and be used to transfer them to the nearest area pound since Bird City does not have the facilities to kennel dogs. Chief Harp also

requested vacation time in April. The council approved the request contingent that it did not conflict with the Cheylin High School prom and that the Cheyenne County Sheriff's office would be able to cover Bird City in Chief Harp's absence.

Other items Mayor Hickert's proclamation that April will be Fair Housing Month and the council moved forward in efforts for a new tornado siren.

Screening scheduled



Cheylin School District, in conjunction with Early Childhood Services Staff, will be sponsoring hearing, vision and Developmental Screenings for all children from birth to school age, on Wednesday, March 19. These screenings are free of charge, and though children entering kindergarten next fall must participate, parents are encouraged to bring all children not already in school.

Parents are the primary and most influential teachers their children will ever have. These screenings will help parents discover their child's developmental stage and how best to encourage their ever changing skills. These screenings also help the school district plan and prepare for future students in order to try and offer the best educational experience.

Parents are encouraged to accompany their children through the screening process so that parents and staff can share observations and

discuss the results of the screening. If there is an indication that further evaluation is needed, an assessment is available at no cost to the parents.

Screenings will take approximately 30 minutes for infants 0-6 months, one hour for those 6 months through 2 years and 90 minutes for children 3 to 5 years old. If bringing two or more children, you may go through the screening first with one child and then the other, or you may bring another adult so that the children can be screened at one time. Another option is to schedule one child in the morning and one in the afternoon, bringing them one at a time.

The screenings will be held at the Methodist Church in Bird City on Wednesday, March 19. They are free but appointments are needed and can be made by calling the Cheylin Elementary School secretary at (785) 734-2351.

Attendance awards dropped at 2003 fair

By Lezlie Hilt

After years of having Attendance Awards at the fair, the fair board members voted to no longer have the drawing. In past years, the fair board has given away \$2,000.

Art Krueger had approached a board member and said the people from the Senior Center would still sell the tickets at fair however they wanted the fair board to set up the tables and then be in charge of the money after it is taken.

In the last few years the fair board had made little money off the Attendance Awards and last year, the drawing only cleared around \$100. After much discussion, the board decided that it was time to quit that promotion. Mr. Krueger said that the senior citizens would still help with taking money at the gates and help wherever they could at the fair.

Insurance

Last year the insurance for the fair was \$2,400; this year the bill was \$3,124.

Photography

Casey Johnson, county agent, was present representing the Extension Council. Some 4-H'ers had asked if there could be a class for panoramic and contact prints in photography. This way they wouldn't have to increase the size to an 8 by 10. They felt like if these two divisions were added, the project would increase in size.

In other business

- The Jack Ford family had asked about planting a tree in memory of Jack. The members asked if the family knew that they would have to care for the trees after planting it. The family was aware of this and the members thought when they went down to work on the roofing perhaps the family would like to come down and they could decide on a spot for a tree..

- Mr. Bursch had spoke to a printer in Goodland about printing the fair books. Mr. Bursch felt like it would cost too much. Agent Johnson said she would get a quote from Kansas State.

- Member Jared Douthit said that Douthit Brothers would possibly plant the corn for the fair barbecue this year as long as the board supplied the seed and when it came time to pick the corn they would need to have people to help.

- Mark Mills was approached by Steve Orth, who had read the gas meter at the fairgrounds. He said that apparently after the Safety Day was held at the fairgrounds Jan. 18, the furnace had never been shut off. The board has a bill of \$800. After much discussion as to who was negligent and who would pay, the board read that the contract states that it is the renter's responsibility to leave the building in the condition it was found (and that included the temperature), they decided that the hospital or the state office that held the Safety Day would be responsible for paying the bill.



HOMETOWN MARKET signs is raised to the roof at 112 W. Bressler. Hanging the signs are volunteers **Andrew Johnson, Don Wright and Ernie Ketzner.**
Times staff photos by Casey McCormick

New market opened doors Wednesday

By Casey McCormick

The wait is over for Bird City households as the Hometown Market on 112 W. Bressler opened its doors on Wednesday. Brenda Johnson and staff have worked hard to put the final touches on the long awaited re-opening of the grocery store. Shelves are fully stocked, cases packed and services are ready and so are area shoppers.

"I've been putting off going out of town to shop," said local resident Carol Black. "I sure need a lot of things."

The windows of the building have been covered with white paper for months as the transformation within took place. So most people in this small town do not know what to expect or how much has gone on behind the store front. Thanks to the vision of Century II, plans for this remodel began several months back and the group made it happen.

With the community in mind, the majority of this project was performed by local people. Electrical, plumbing, painting, clean-

ing, haul off and many other needed services were done by either local volunteers or local contract labor. If a job could not be done by someone in Bird City who had the skills and resources Century II found workers from nearby towns.

There was one exception. Performance Refrigeration Systems had to be brought in from Denver. Ernie to assist with the complete replacement of the cooling and freezer system. John Swenson and Miguel Perez spent many hours away from their families working hard on what could be called the backbone of this store. Bird City residents became very familiar with these two gentlemen as they spent time here.

Mr. Swenson, the project manager, said this is a "very, very pleasant town to work in ... with a laid back atmosphere and friendly people." Mr. Perez liked that there was "no traffic and no problems." Bird City hopes they will visit again.

The Hometown Market will be open Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The store's phone number is 785-734-5020.



THE SHELVES of the Hometown Market are stocked with ample supplies of groceries.

Cheylin students enjoy rally

Cheylin High School's Future Community and Career Leaders of America members participated in a Road Rally Thursday night. Eight teams of students were given clues in riddles which directed them to locations in Bird City. Fighting the excitement of competition, the drivers were aware that they must observe stop signs and traffic rules.

After a pre-race pizza supper, the anxious teams drove into the night. Faculty sponsors Babs Antholz and Melanie Hill remained at the school in case students became stumped by the riddles. The winning team, headed by Hayley Young, did not need help, returning to the high school after about an hour.

Although some residents wondered why there was unusual activity on their streets that evening the club members had a safe and fun time.



DRIVING INTO THE NIGHT, Cheylin students hunted throughout Bird City for certain locations given to them through riddles.

Times staff photo by Casey McCormick

Cold temps finally turn to the 60s

Temperatures went from a very cold 8 degrees on March 4 to a balmy 66 degrees on March 6.

The weekend was supposed to be warm but Cheyenne County was on the edge and the weekend was spent cold and blustery with wind chills dropping below zero.

Decision Weather reports that the spring equinox is right around the corner. By March 17, the length of day will be up to 12 hours and the temperatures will go up too.

This last week of cold temperatures may be the last spell this winter. However, there may be some snow as this has happened many times in the past.

Just keep in mind -- spring is just a few weeks away.