

Casey's Comments

**By Casey McCormick**  
Spirit is there!  
Seeing the "Red" planet, Mars, this last fall was an amazing sight. "Mother Nature" managed to go through her usual program and swing one of her most prominent orbs in this solar system close to Earth. The two traveling balls came as close as they had in over 60,000 years.  
Viewing our sister planet with the naked eye almost became normal after several evenings. But if you were able to see her from a telescope the experience was unforgettable.  
That man has been able to see

that our planet goes beyond the flat plains of our vision was the first step. It required a leap of faith to the intangible. Imagine the first European sailors who ventured towards the horizon when popular thought was that they would sail off the sharp edge?  
But man has pushed understanding further. The unmanned space probe, Spirit, is sending back brilliant images from the Gusev Crater on the surface of Mars. Looking at the pictures it reminds one of the flat plains of northwest Kansas, only the dust is reddish.

Western Plains Art presents production

The Seem-To-Be Players are a professional troupe of actors, playwrights, directors, teachers and musicians who seek to expand the imagination, encourage creative thinking and promote and appreciation of human values through innovative productions and drama education for children, educators and families. Since 1973 the Players have shared a vision of a world where girls and boys have great adventures, where the unexpected is necessary and where fantasy and reality meld in an absurd potpourri of theatrical images stirred and mixed with original music.  
The Players will present "Tales of Tom Sawyer" by Mark Twain, as adapted by Artistic Director Ric Averill. Designed to be most effective for the family audience, this production will introduce audience

members of all ages to the delightful and fascinating world of Mark Twain's beloved Tom Sawyer of Hannibal, Mo. The play features original period music with a contemporary bluegrass feel designed to enhance the colorful settings and costumes. This production brings to life one of the most important books in American Literature.  
This presentation will be brought to you by the Western Plains Arts Association at Oakley High School auditorium at 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 11, with admission at the door or by Western Plains season passes.  
This program is presented in part by the Kansas Touring Program of the Kansas Arts Commission, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Honor Roll

New and renewed Times subscriptions: Shelly Heavlin, Blue Springs, Mo.; Rob and Dorothy Applegate, Lincoln, Neb.; Keith Dankenbring, St. Francis; Meta Dankenbring, Bird City; Dennis and Denise Denning, Wichita; Rob Jensen, Bird City; Edna May Lanam, Garden City; Dave and Karah Maloley, Columbia, S.C.; Dana Orten, Crescent, Iowa; Don

Orten, Bird City; Daryl and DeAdre Strouts, Manhattan; Robert Hinz, Lakewood, Colo.; Jon Magley, Bird City; Treg Vyzourek, North Platte, Neb.; Norma Butcher, Bird City; Gene Young, Bird City; Millie Rambat, Bird City; Lois Combs, Larned  
Ken Beougher, Bird City; Stan Biel, Marienthal; Gary Moore, Bird City

Accident claims the life of St. Francis man

**By Karen Krien**  
The roads were now packed which might have been the cause of an accident on Saturday night which took the life of a St. Francis man.  
Ervin Hilt, 76, and his wife, Linda, 65, were coming home from a family gathering in Burlington when Mr. Hilt, coming around the curve onto U.S. 36 about 30 miles west of St. Francis but still in Colorado, slid off the road.  
The Colorado State Patrol report noted that the accident happened at 5:53 p.m. mountain standard time. Mr. Hilt, driving a 1990 Ford van, entered the curve, lost control, slid and went off the left side of the road. The van then moved into a broadside slide, struck a fence, then rolled one time, stopping on its right side. Mr. Hilt was ejected, landed just north of the vehicle and was pronounced dead at the scene.  
Mrs. Hilt, a victim of multiple sclerosis, was a passenger in the van but was riding in her wheelchair.

She was severely injured, suffering a broken neck, ribs, collar bone, leg and bruised lungs.  
Mrs. Hilt was taken to the Wray Community Hospital where, on Tuesday, she remained in serious condition. Her family reported that she is in a lot of pain but encouraged people to visit, make phone calls or send cards to her.  
Funeral services for Mr. Hilt are planned for 10:30 p.m. today (Thursday) at Peace Lutheran Church. Burial is in the St. Francis Cemetery.  
Mr. Hilt was born and raised in Cheyenne County and attended German Plains county school for eight years. He joined the Army on Sept. 9, 1952, and was honorably discharged July 10, 1954. He then continued in the Army Reserves until 1960.  
He married Linda on Nov. 29, 1963, and they had three children Mitchell, Martin and Lorna. He had spent most of his life farming on the family farm north of St. Francis.

**Home Circle**  
Home Circle Club will meet at 2 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15 at LeBow Manor.  
**American Legion Auxiliary**  
The American Legion Auxiliary will have a regular meeting on Friday, Jan. 9 at 2 p.m.  
**Community Club**  
The Bird City Community Club will meet Monday, Jan. 12 at 7 p.m. at the LeBow Manor conference room.  
**Cheyenne County Commissioners**  
The Cheyenne County Commissioners will meet at 8 a.m. Monday, Jan. 12, in the commissioner's room at the courthouse.

**Fair Board**  
The Cheyenne County Fair Board will meet at 7 p.m. tonight (Thursday).  
**Hospital Board**  
The Cheyenne County Hospital Board will meet at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 15 in the clinic basement, St. Francis. The Builders meeting will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 15 in the clinic basement. All interested people may attend.  
**Vet rep in St. Francis**  
Jody Tubbs, of the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs, will be in St. Francis at 9:30 a.m. central time at the county clerk's office to assist veterans and their dependents with VA claims work on Thursday, Jan. 15. If you are unable to contact

Ms. Tubbs in St. Francis, you may contact the office in Colby any Monday, Wednesday or Friday. That phone number is (785) 462-3572.  
**Alzheimer's Support Group**  
Alzheimer's Support Group will be held at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12 at the St. Francis Public Library.  
**Alcoholic Anonymous/Al-Anon**  
Alcoholic Anonymous and Al-Anon open meeting, held at 8:30 p.m. Thursday at the Methodist Educational Building, upstairs. Contact 332-2078.  
**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 the 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 mail box. In order to not have a break in your service, renew by the expiration date.

News From the Past

**10 years ago - 1903**  
Lighting Contest winners in McDonald include John Powell, Mac and Hank Olson, Bob and Amelia Banister and Annie Antholz. McDonald Area Development (MAD) was in charge of making the decisions.  
Dr. Lonnie Willis of rural Bird City is the newest member of the Cheyenne County Hospital Board, taking the position vacated Velda Wright.  
Seniors on the Cheylin honor roll include Shane Antholz, mark Montgomery, Mariah Berry and Melissa Horn.  
**15 years ago - 1988**  
Eleven girls have reported for workout for the Lady Cougar basketball team. They include Ami Banister, Dawne Coleman, Becky Frisbie, Jennifer Ratzlaff, Camie Wilkens, Tish Sabatka, Kandee Krien, Barbara Knapp, Stacy Merklin, Carrie Sabatka and Ashley Wilkens.  
Glenn Boyington was honored on his 80th birthday at the Bird City Senior Center on Nov. 27.

Lavern and Ruth Klepper celebrated their golden wedding anniversary at the senior center in McDonald on Nov. 26.  
Bird City residents were pleasantly surprised by a windfall in the amount of \$150,000 from the estate of Walter Eggers. Being community minded much of his estate was willed to different areas within the city including \$50,000 to the Antique Engine and Thresher Association, \$50,000 to the Bird City Library and \$50,000 to the City of Bird City.  
Immanuel United Methodist Church and the American Legion of Bird City each received checks of \$10,000 from the Alfred L. Hendricks Estate  
Two Cheylin teams competed in the Atwood Academic Bowl. Team I consisted of Monica Kamla, Dina Balik, Jason Elijah and Jeff Montgomery. Team II was composed of Jennifer Ratzlaff, Ted Glasco, Cory Busse and Kody Krien.

For the Record

**Sheriff's report**  
15 Vehicle inspections were made.  
9 Summons delivered.  
9 Subpoenas delivered.  
8 warnings for speeding issued.  
1 Ticket for defect tag light issued (eight improper lights on vehicle).  
Dec. 18: Fingerprinted kids at Cheylin Schools.  
Dec. 18: Wellness check on a Cheyenne County resident.  
Dec. 22: Check on weaving vehicle on highway.  
Dec. 23: Investigated damage to mailbox north of St. Francis.  
Dec. 24: Investigated call of cattle out west of St. Francis.  
Dec. 29: Investigated damaged mailbox north on K-27.

Dec. 29: Jared Stam of Benkelman was driving a 1998 Chevy pickup when he lost control on Road S and Road 7 and rolled it northwest of St. Francis. No injuries were reported but there were over \$500 in damages.  
Dec. 29: Rebecca Legler of Grant, Neb., was driving a 1999 Pontiac van on K-161 north of Bird City when she lost control coming out of the curve and rolled it. There were no injuries but there was over \$500 in damages.  
Jan. 2: Checked on fire south of Wheeler on K-27 at the Beaver Creek bridge crossing.  
Jan. 5: Investigated a truck broken down on K-161 north of Bird City.

Book Review

Book review from the Bird City Public Library  
**To The Nines**  
*By Janet Evanovich*  
Stephanie Plum's got rent to pay, people shooting at her, and psychos wanting her dead every day of the week (much to the dismay of her mother, her family, the men in her life, the guy who slices meat at the deli...oh, the list goes on). an ordinary persons would cave under the pressure.  
But hey, she's from Jersey.  
Stephanie Plum may not be the best bounty hunter in beautiful downtown Trenton, but she's pretty darn good at turning bad situations her way...and she always gets her

man. In *To The Nines*, her cousin Vinnie (who's her boss) has posted bail on Samuel Singh, an illegal immigrant. When the elusive Mr. Singh goes missing, Stephanie is on the case. But what she uncovers is far more sinister than anyone imagines and leads to a group of killers who give new meaning to the word hunter.  
In a race against time that takes her from the Jersey Turnpike to the Last Vegas Strip, Stephanie Plum is on the chase of her life. The unforgettable characters, nonstop Action, high-stakes suspense, and sheer entertainment of *To The Nines* define Janet Evanovich as unique among today's writers.

Club Clips

**McDonald Senior Citizens**  
On Monday, Jan. 5, the temperature was in the single digits, but 32 senior citizens and one faithful health nurse braved the elements to attend the McDonald Senior Citizen dinner.  
Newly installed president, Phyllis Wingfield, welcomed everyone for coming out, and birthdays and anniversaries were acknowledged.  
It was announced that Della Morris, who is in the Prairie Living in Colby, had been taken to the emergency room on Monday morning. Owen Wingfield read a story about two young cowboys and their belief in Santa, followed by prayer.  
Tables were decorated with a penguin carrying a little box of candy. How appropriate on such a cold January day — just right for penguins!!  
After dinner, all enjoyed bingo called by Leonard Vyzourek. Galdys Cullum and Bob Binning shared the blackout prize.  
At the business meeting Phyllis thanked everyone who helped in the kitchen. Reports were accepted as read. For new business a motion was made to purchase a new serving car, a push broom and a snow shovel. Ray and Vance will take care of the purchases.  
February committees are: Poem and Prayer, Ray Johnson; Prizes, Lavina Waters; Bingo, Leonard Vyzourek; Kitchen Help: Joan Tongish, Marlene Johnson, Emma Threlkel and Phyllis Wingfield.

Bloopers

• "We are sorry to announce that Mr. Albert Brown has been quite unwell, owing to his recent death, and is taking a short holiday to recover."  
— Parish Magazine  
• "Men, I want you just thinking of one word all season. One word

and one word only: Super Bowl."  
— Bill Peterson, football coach  
• "Hawaii is a unique state. It is a small state. It is a state that is by itself. It is different from the other 49 states. Well, all states are different, but it's got a particularly unique situation."  
— Dan Quayle, US VP

Give Blood. Share Life!  
  
American Red Cross

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**SHOWTIME: 7:30 p.m.** 2 hours 10 min.  
**January 9, 10 & 11**  
**The Missing**  
*Drama and Western*  
*Rated: R for violence*  
Starring: Tommy Lee Jones, Cate Blanchett, Evan Rachel Wood, Jenna Boyd, Aaron Eckhart  
**Cheyenne Theater** St. Francis, KS 785-332-2747  
Children 11 & under: \$2 12-18 yr.: \$3 Senior Citizens: \$3 Adults: \$4

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**CHEYENNE COUNTY HOSPITAL** 210 W. 1st • St. Francis, KS 785-332-2104  
**The Cheyenne County Hospital would like to thank you for your continued patience through the hospital remodeling project. We appreciate your support and look forward to serving you in 2004.**  
  
**Non-surgical treatment of hemorrhoids.**  
**John D. Ferris, MD** will be at: 291 15th Street Burlington, CO  
**Wed., Jan. 14 & Sat. Jan. 17**  
For information or appointment, call **1-800-593-0009**  
**Hem Cure**

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See American Profile magazine in this week's issue of **The Bird City Times** (available in local area only)  
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