

2006 first baby to receive gifts

By Karen Krien

The first of the year is just days away and it is hard to say just who is going to be the first baby born in 2006.

The "First Baby of the Year 2006" contest begins Monday. It will end when the first phone call comes in and the baby/parents meet the rules of the contest.

Actually, there is only one requirement and that is the baby must be born to parents living in Cheyenne County for one month or more. These parents and their new born infant will be awarded gifts from sponsors.

The Saint Francis Herald office must be notified as soon as possible following the birth. The Herald's number is 785-332-3162 or call 785-332-3246.

The parents of this year's first baby will receive a car wash from the St. Francis Equity, \$50 bond from Bankwest, a \$50 bond from First National Bank, a baby photo album or frame from Schultz's, a baby gift from Owens True Value, a baby basket from Krien Pharmacy,

two bottles of champagne from Burr Liquor, a spinal adjustment for Mommy and baby plus a tube of Biofreeze from Poling Chiropractic and Family Health Center, a \$25 gift certificate from Donna's Gift Palace, and a year's subscription to The Saint Francis Herald or Bird City Times.

The first baby of the year will also receive a special quilt from the Prairie Piece Maker Quilt Guild, Goodland.

The parents of the new baby will need to pick up their gifts or claim their services within 60 days after the birth.

Since most babies are not on schedule, it's hard telling when the first baby of 2006 will be born.

2005 First Baby of the Year

The 2005 First Baby of the Year was Matthew Ellis Berens. He was born at 2:25 a.m. on Jan. 5 to Kevin and Angie Berens of St. Francis. Matthew weighed in at 7 pounds, 11 ounces and was 20-inches long. Matthew has a brother, Joshua.

Today, Matthew is an active little boy.



THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS was told by children at the Christmas Eve program at St. John Lutheran. (back row) Joseph (Ethan Young), Mary (Stephanie Busse) and baby Jesus, Taos Dale). (middle) Shepherds (Caleb Keltz, Jeremiah White, Ty Carmichael and Joey McCormick). (front) Craig Busse, Jacob White and Elizabeth Keltz.

McDonald By Vera Kacirek

Lighting Contest

The votes from the box in the post office have been tabulated and the winners of the lighting contest are as follows: Bill and Lois Schaff, Jay and Rose Gordon, Dave and Sylvia Hubbard, Jim and Lois Morelock, and Norman and Tessa Davis. Others receiving votes were Kelly and Diane Simmonds, Johnene Cheney, the City Park, the Lions Club Metal Tree and sign decorations at the entrance to McDonald, Gail and Kay Miller, Les and Tish Loker, and Betty Lewis.

This contest is sponsored by McDonald Area Development and they do not recognize country lighting. However, north of McDonald was impressive by the beautiful lights of Craig and Jeri Antholz and C.W. and Sandy Antholz. It really gets one in the Christmas spirit to see what so many do to make the season more beautiful.

Calendar of events

Monday, Jan. 2, McDonald Senior dinner and meeting; Wednesday, Jan. 4, McDonald Area Development meeting; Wednesday, Jan. 11, McDonald Garden Club at Vera Kacirek's; Wednesday, Jan. 18, birthday and luncheon at the Frosty Mug.

Christmas Day guests of Ray and Marlene Johnson were Mr. and Mrs. Dave Johnson, Jeremy and Megan of Moundridge, and Ted and Dixie Bethell of McCook and Brian and Connie Sabatka. Dana Howard was an afternoon visitor.

Christmas guests of Joan Tongish were Doug Tongish, Jamie Cody, Mikayla and Katie of Goodland, Mike and Diana Tongish, and Clinton and Linda Hopkins, all of Atwood, and Dick Beamgard of Michigan.

Lila Loker has returned to her home in McDonald, and was able to enjoy the Christmas celebrations with her family at the home of Dennis and Lila Howard. Other guests of the Howards were Dana and Chris Howard and Mitchell and Johnny Johnson of Kanorado.

On Friday Cheryl Wilkinson accompanied Shawn Wilkinson to Laramie, Wyo., where they attended the graduation of Ray Wilkinson from Wyoming Tech College. They then moved Ryan home to enjoy the Christmas celebrations.

Stan and Dana Palmer and children of Kansas City, Mo., arrived on Friday to spend the Christmas week with grandparents, Kenny and

Phyllis Wilkinson. Additional Christmas Eve guests of the Wilkinsons were Rod, Lisa and Josh Johnson, Greg and Cheryl Wilkinson, Shawn Wilkinson and Ryan Wilkinson.

Christmas night supper guests of the Wilkinsons were the Palmers and the Johnsons.

Laddie and Vera Kacirek entertained on Christmas Day with a dinner for Kenny and Phyllis Wilkinson, Stan and Dana Palmer and children, Kent and Marilyn Lorens and family of Stratton, Neb., Rachel and Taylor Wilson, Chanda Sabatka, and Garrett Dowling, all of Manhattan, Kasey and Jennifer Sabatka and children, and R.J. and Susie Sabatka.

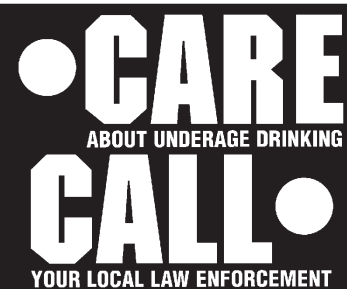
Ratha Lea Loker accompanied Gary Loker to Hays on Monday where they visited Eunice Officer in the Hays hospital.

Rick and Kathy Frisbie hosted a family dinner on Christmas Day for Bud and Helen Frisbie, Fred and LaVina Waters, Marsha and Marvin Tischhauser, Lance and Veronica Tischhauser, Ben and Susan Frisbie and Sierra and Babs and Herman Antholz.

Guests of Owen and Phyllis Wingfield for the Christmas festivities were Debbie Wingfield of Tuscon, Ariz., Greg and Dina Wingfield, Molly and Orion of Alma, and a foreign student from Japan, Naohiro, who is living with Greg Wingfield family.

James Atchison came on Friday to spend the Christmas holiday with his mother and grandmother. Other guests for Christmas Eve at the home of Ameila Banister and Karlyne Atchison were Ami and Kevin Torrey of North Carolina, Jim and Cheryl Banister, Tammi and Wade Carmichael and children, Kathy Banister Amanda, David and Debbie and Joan and Kent Banister.

Unless you're prepared to pay the consequences...



A message from the Kansas Department of Transportation

Director presents advantages to lease

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.

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.

Great Plains Health Alliance started in 1950 through the Lutheran Church. The Cheyenne County Hospital was leased by the Alliance in 1952. Between 1993 and 1996, when the hospital was having trouble keeping the doors open and meeting payroll, Great Plains Health Alliance did not collect their fee nor charge interest on the overdue balance for the lease but continued to provide all the services. These fees were caught up when the hospital finally received cost based reimbursement as a Rural 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.

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.

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To list your business, call 785-332-3162.

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The Saint Francis Herald and The Bird City Times

Papers will be printed one day later next week. All Ads & Copy MUST be in

Tues., Jan. 3

The Saint Francis Herald

Will be CLOSED Mon., Jan. 2nd



Advocate ads must be in by Noon on Fri., Dec. 30

FSA FARM SERVICE AGENCY FARM/RANCH FOR SALE For sale is approximately 950 acres located in the NE1/4 and the E1/2SE1/4 of Section 10; the S1/2 of Section 14; the E1/2 and the E1/2SW1/4 of Section 15; all in Township 1 South, Range 38 West of the 6th P.M., Cheyenne County, Kansas. Priced to sell at \$270,000.00 This property is being offered for sale to those individuals who are considered to be qualified beginning farmer/ranchers by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), who operation will not be larger than a family-sized farm/ranch. Qualified beginning farmers or ranchers must be in need of FSA credit assistance either in the form of direct FSA financing, an FSA guaranteed loan or a beginning farmer/rancher downpayment loan. For the other requirements and information on how to qualify as a beginning farmer/rancher, you may contact our office. Financing may be available subject to the availability of funds. If financing is not available at the time of the sale, the selected applicant will be given the opportunity to lease the property for up to 18 months or until such time as the Agency funds become available, whichever comes first. Applications can be obtained at the Red Willow FSA County Office. Applications must be completed and received by January 19, 2006. The Government reserves the right to cancel the sale at any time, and the right to reject any or all applications. For Additional Information, please contact Justin J. Terry, Farm Loan Manager, at the Red Willow County FSA office located in McCook, Nebraska. Telephone Number 308-345-4163. FSA is an Equal Opportunity Lender

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The Saint Francis Herald and The Bird City Times Papers will be printed one day later next week. All Ads & Copy MUST be in Tues., Jan. 3 The Saint Francis Herald Will be CLOSED Mon., Jan. 2nd Advocate ads must be in by Noon on Fri., Dec. 30