



**ONE WAY TRAFFIC will be found on K-161 as the highway is resurfaced. Chris Zulick was stopping traffic and said the work should be done by the end of the week.**  
Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

**Francis (Fran) G. Hatch**  
June 4, 1920 - Aug. 7, 2007

Francis (Fran) Hatch died on Aug. 7, 2007. Services were held on Aug. 11, 2007, at the McDonald Federated Church. Interment was at Grace Cemetery with full military honors. Fran was a man of great character and an unwavering source of strength — a man greatly respected and deeply loved by his family. He arrived on June 4, 1920, weighing in at a mere 2.5 pounds, the son of Roy and Elva Hatch. With the gift of a tenacious spirit aided by his aunt's diligence and a make-shift shoe box incubator in the family oven, Fran survived this diminutive beginning to become a robust man of 6 foot 3. He was born in Blakeman, Kan., and lived in northwest Kansas most of his life. His family moved to Plainville where he entered fifth grade and attended high school. He then moved with his folks to the David place northwest of McDonald. As a young man, Fran worked in the Denver area before being drafted to serve four years in the European Theater during World War II. As a member of the Army Canine Corp., Fran and his dog, Sadie, landed in Gibraltar then moved through North Africa, Sicily, Naples, Pistoria, up through Italy to the Po Valley and Milan. Most of the time he was at the front lines, often scouting behind the

enemy lines sometimes months at a time. He was awarded two bronze stars for his exceptional service. Just before being drafted, he and Louise Wilkens, who lived 2.5 miles from the David place, connected and fell in love. They were married in 1941 and shared their lives for over 55 years until Louise's death in 1996. When Fran returned from the war in 1945, he joined his ailing father-in-law in running the family farm. This temporary arrangement became permanent when Fran and Louise purchased the farm which became their home. This union resulted in three children, eight grand-children and 21 (and counting) great-grandchildren. Fran and Louise were active members of the McDonald community and Fran served on several boards including McDonald Federated Church, the Equity board and the school board. Fran's work ethic and respect for life was evident in his stewardship of the land and animals under his care. He became a respected stockman and wheat farmer noted for his willingness to help others. Fran enjoyed living and valued friendship. His sense of humor and propensity for friendly teasing was known by all who were close to him. After Louise's death, Fran became active in the Bird City Senior

Center where he met and married Joan Deeds. Fran's family expanded to include three step children and nine step grand-great grandchildren. Fran and Joan remained active in Senior Center and community activities until illnesses required both to enter the Good Samaritan Home in Atwood. Fran considered himself a man of great wealth — the true wealth that comes from a loving, vibrant family. He took pride in his children and grandchildren and expressed contentment that he could leave this world knowing that they were leading successful lives. Fran's influence and memories continue through his family. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Louise Wilkens Hatch, and two brothers, Sam and Virgil Hatch. Survivors include his second wife Joan Deeds Hatch; brothers Wilbur and Therese Hatch and Robert and Shirley Hatch; children Al and Becky Hatch, Jim and Patsy (Hatch) McClurg, and Doug and Rita (Hatch) Zeman; grandchildren and great-grandchildren Tim, Marsha (Hatch), Kennedy, Mollie, Cooper and Max Reves; Mike, Melynda, Mitchel, Madison and Mason Hatch; Roger, Michele (Hatch), McKenzie, Grace and Noah Crossman; Jon, Carolyn, Audrey and Michael McClurg; Tom, Susan, Ryan,

Lauren and Jackson McClurg; Bob, Karen (McClurg), Sam, Jacob and Benjamin Sheffres; Jeremy, Beth, Ashley and Kaitlyn Zeman; Brent, Angie (Zeman) and Braden Dornier; stepchildren John and Darla Deeds; Daryl and Sherry (Deeds) Donahey; Bret and Ginger (Deeds) Conley; step grandchildren and great-grandchildren Greg, Erika (Deeds), Audrey and Amelia Likens; Adam Deeds; Randy and Brenda (Donahey) Mackey; Jason, Courtney and Avery Donahey; Devin and Aidan Conley. His family expressed that Fran's joy of life, wisdom and compassion will be missed by all of them.

**Ken Wieck**  
Oct 22, 1947-Aug 8, 2007  
Ken Wieck Sr. died at the age of 59 on Aug. 8, 2007, at Longmont United Hospital. He was born Oct. 22, 1947, in St. Francis, Kan., to Henry D. and Faye M. (Dayton) Wieck. He graduated from St. Francis Community High school in 1964. Ken was a painter by trade doing residential and commercial projects in the Longmont area. He loved to play golf, was a sports enthusiast and enjoyed special times with his four grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his four grandparents; his parents Henry and Faye; one brother and two sisters. He is survived by his two sons Kenneth D. Jr. and his wife Leslie Wieck of Mulberry, Fla., and Jeffrey S. and his wife Kati Wieck of Parker, Colo.; four grandchildren Makayla and Aidan of Mulberry, and Jordan and Mason of Parker; two brothers, Lyle Wieck and his wife Flo, Lee Wieck and his wife Joyce; five sisters Gay Walz, Donna Jensen and her husband Chris, Shyrlee Auston and her husband Charles, Ardyth Jolle and her husband Roland, and Jody Angel-Myers and her husband Roger; three aunts Leone Wieck Krien and her husband Bill, Elva Wieck, and Opal Dayton Seaman; one uncle Max Dayton. He also leaves 30 nieces and nephews, many great nieces and nephews, and a host of cousins and friends. A private family gathering will be held. Cremation was at Ahlberg Funeral Chapel. Memorial contributions in his memory may be made to the Williams Syndrome Association, Wood Crest Office Plaza, 570 Kirts Blvd, Suite 223, Troy, MI 48084 in honor of Makayla Wieck.



Bill and Bertha Hilt



August residents of the month: Bertha and Bill Hilt

# Husband and wife share resident honors

**By Karen Krien**  
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Bill and Bertha Hilt are sharing the Good Samaritan Village resident of the month spotlight for the month of August. They came to live at the Village in 2002. Bill served in World War II and was involved in five major battles: Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge), Rhineland and Central Europe between 1942 and 1945. He was in a field artillery battalion and was taken in to General Patton's Army in Northern France. He said "he liked to throw artillery." In the winter battle at Ardennes,

it was extremely cold and the soldiers' clothing was inadequate. Many of the soldiers sleeping in foxholes froze their feet because of the damp conditions but he realized that, if he kept walking, his feet would not freeze, so, he often volunteered for guard duty. Holding the rank of sergeant, he was honorably discharged on Nov. 3, 1945. He earned many ribbons and medals including the Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Theatre, American Theatre Campaign, European-African-Mideast Theatre Campaign with five Bronze Service Stars and the WW II Victory. He was born in Richville, Wash.,

on Aug. 26, 1913, to Elizabeth and Jacob Hilt. He had two sisters, Esther and Pauline, and three brothers, Emil, Walter and Lawrence. At the age of 10, Bill came to Cheyenne County with his parents in 1923. He went to school at German Plains, a country school northwest of St. Francis. As he was growing up, he helped with the chores and remembers life has being "hard work." Bertha was born in Cheyenne County on May 8, 1910, to John and Mitilda Keller. She had four brothers, Ed, Albert, Robert and Elton; and two sisters, Helen and Ella. She went to school at District 16

Hackberry, north of St. Francis. Her favorite subject was spelling and she finished school through the eighth grade. At home, she helped with chores, milking the cows, working fields, shucking corn and cooking. "We kids had to work hard to make ends meet," she said. Through a cousin, Bill and Bertha met. On Jan. 27, 1946, they were married at Salem Lutheran Church, rural St. Francis. They lived on a farm northwest of St. Francis where they both worked on the farm. Bertha said she liked being out on the farm.

They had four children, Martin (deceased), Alfred, Ruth and Ruby. They also have four grandchildren. Bertha was a good cook and was known for her pies. She also liked to crochet, knit and quilt. When asked what advice they would give to the young people of today, Bertha said they should live a "God-fearing life." Bill had no advice. Family and friends gathered at the Village when the Hiltts were recognized. Besides residents and staff, others attending were Robert and Dixie Keller, Rachael Keller, Elton Keller and Albert and Vinta Keller.

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