

## Kansas Day celebration begins today

The annual Kansas Day celebration will be held today (Thursday) at the Legion hall in Bird City. Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. and a potluck meal follows at noon.

There will be displays and entertainment including the students from St. Francis and Cheylin schools, the St. Francis Singers

and the Swingin' Seniors.

Arnold W. Schofield, Kansas historian, will be the guest speaker.

Dr. Schofield served in the United States Army from 1960 to 1966, and attended college on the GI-Bill. Currently he holds the position of superintendent of the Marais des Cygnes Massa-

cre State Historic Site and Mine Creek Battlefield State Historic Sites in Linn County.

Before joining the Kansas State Historical Society, Dr. Schofield retired from 43 years of federal service that included 25 years as the historian and cultural resource specialist at Fort Scott National Historic Site. He is a frequent lec-

turer at universities and a public speaker on Westward Expansion, Kansas History and the Civil War.

He has been actively involved in Civil War Battlefield Preservation for more than 30 years and is one of the founders of the Mine Creek Battlefield Foundation that was established in 1999. To date the foundation has

raised more than \$1,000,000 and purchased 306 acres of battlefield land. The objective of this foundation is to assist the state of Kansas in the preservation, protection and interpretation of the Mine Creek Battlefield.

He will also make presentations at local schools and at Ye Olde Country Church, St. Francis, for the His-

torical Society that same day.

**Thursday evening**

For those who might miss Kansas Day activities, Dr. Schofield will be at Ye Olde Country Church, St. Francis, that evening at 7. He will speak to the Historical Society about the Kidder Massacre and Fort Wallace. Everyone interested is urged to attend this presentation.



**DEREK VANDIKE (L) AND DEVON JANICKE qualified to represent Cheyenne County in the free-throw contest**

Winners of the Knights of Columbus free-throw competition held in St. Francis on Jan. 18, are prepared to move on to the district competition to be held at 1 p.m. Sun-

day, Feb. 1 in Colby.

The winners at Colby will move on to the regional competition in Quinter.

Cheyenne County participants

that will be held on Sunday in Colby.

*Times staff photo by Betty Winston*

qualifying for district include: Sydney Sundstrom, girls age 10; Derek Vandike, boys age 10; Kyla Bandel, girls age 11; Devon Janicke, boys age 11; Brianna Cooks, girls age

12; Cade Bracelin, boys age 12; Walker Janicke, boys age 13; Keegan Sherlock, boys age 14.

There were no competitors in the girls age 13 and 14.

## Board hears about inspection

**By Karen Krien**

*karen.k@nwkansas.com*

The state fire marshal had inspected the hospital on Thursday, the same day that the Cheyenne County Hospital Board met. The marshal's comments made up part of the meeting.

The kitchen is in need of some wiring improvements to comply with code deficiencies.

Although this was a different fire marshal inspector, he still noted the need to make improvements in the kitchen area. Some of the wiring needs to be done now, rather than wait for the comprehensive project to meet these codes, Les Lacy, hospital administrator, said.

He and the board discussed different options and, in the end, decided to do a little more planning before proceeding with a major project. He said that Bill Wilger, maintenance, will soon have the building in back of the hospital remodeled and have his area moved into it. That would give Mr. Lacy a better idea of the room available and other options that might work.

The new fire marshal had another matter which he felt needed attention and that was the east entrance/exit. He said the ceiling height was too low. Redoing this doorway has been on the long-range planning list but, the board had delayed it because there were other issues they felt were more important.

Mr. Lacy pointed out that one option was to demolish the concrete cap over the lower step and put a metal cover on at the appropriate height. This could likely be done fairly inexpensively.

**Airport closed**

Mr. Lacy said Ron Loudon, member of the county Airport Authority Board, had told him that, in October, there are plans for the airport to be closed for rebuilding the runway. The renovation will take about five weeks and during that time, different arrangements will be made to fly out patients for further treatment.

The board talked about bringing in helicopters. Mr. Lacy said helicopters used to land in the grass to the west of the hospital but there is supposed to be 300 feet from the nearest residence.

Helicopters still land at the airport and the ambulance meets the crew there. Patients can also be transported to the Goodland airport to meet a medical flight.

Mr. Lacy pointed out that they have had some notice so they will be able to work out whatever arrangements would be needed.

**Morale issue**

The matter of the morale issue with the hospital staff which was brought up in the interview for the hospital board position. Mr. Lacy agreed that at times, there may be a problem but he didn't see it as a severe problem. The board was encouraged to talk to the administrator if they hear of problems.

**Numbers up**

Mr. Lacy said the number of visits at the Cheyenne County Clinic in St. Francis is holding stable with 503 reported in December. In Bird City, there were 83 visits in December.

He pointed out that the number of ancillary surgeries was increasing. There was a total of 82 in 2008 which was over the 2007 total by 26. Endoscopies had a total of 103

which was over last year by two.

The big surprise to Mr. Lacy's budget was the number of babies born last year. He had budgeted for eight births but, instead, there were 24 babies born in the hospital.

**Primary Care Clinic Grant**

New grant applications are out for the Primary Care Clinic Grant. The current grant was originally for \$75,000 and is being cut to \$70,900 by the Governor. This grant helps with the cost of un- and under-insured patients and provides funds for Case Management Services. Mr. Lacy will be writing this grant.

**The future of CT**

A communication from the American College of Radiology outlined the changes that will be necessary in certifications and equipment to continue to do some types of CT images in the future. At some point the hospital will need to upgrade the CT machine to be able to continue to provide this service in the community. It was noted that there are some types of images that are not done locally due to the limitations of the equipment.

**Funding**

Funding the depreciation fund was discussed. Mr. Lacy said that, historically, the hospital has needed funds in January but, not this January. He said that he would like to suggest that, for this month only, depreciation not be funded. Traci Neitzel, board member, said that she would agree to the arrangement this month but she wanted to make sure that this wasn't continuing. We don't want to get out of the habit of funding it, she said.



**AFTER A WEEK OF TEMPERATURES in the high 60s, Pedro Gutierrez has fun throwing snowballs at his brother, Yordi Gutierrez and Ivan Kemp (upper right.) Temperatures are expected to rise again this weekend.**

*Times staff photo by Linda Schneider*

## Senior citizens get tax help

For those who are 60 years and older in the Cheyenne and Rawlins counties, there is free help with preparation and filing Federal tax forms, State of Kansas and Food Sales Tax Refunds, and the Kansas Homestead Refund.

The McDonald Area Develop-

ment Endowment Foundation, Inc. of McDonald in partnership with the Internal Revenue Service will be available at the following Senior Citizen Centers host locations again this tax season: Bird City, Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to noon; St. Francis, Tuesdays 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.,

McDonald, Wednesdays 9 a.m. to noon; Atwood: Thursdays 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Appointments are appreciated and walk-ins are welcomed.

Call Johnene Cheney at (785) 538-2526 for appointment or more information.