

Rains greatly needed

By Karen Krien

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The rain last week was greatly needed in Cheyenne County and the northwest Kansas area. Reports ranged anywhere from 2 to 8 inches in the county.

It was the perfect kind of rain, said Jeanne Falk, Sunflower District agronomist. It was a slow rain that soaked into the soil.

The wheat fields, practically overnight, turned a lush, green color. Little purple and yellow flowers are blooming in yards and along the highway.

In some areas, outside Cheyenne County, there was some frost damage reported but Ms. Falk said she didn't think there was any damage to the wheat and, if there was some, it was minor. The wheat in the county was not that far along, she said. Freeze damage happens when the crown or growing point for the plant is out of the ground.

Earlier, there may have been a few brown wheat mites but, a dry weather bug, the mites do not survive in wet conditions.

With the arrival of warm weather, farmers are getting their corn planting equipment ready. Ms. Falk reminds farmers to not get in a hurry to put the seed in the ground.

Farmers, she said, tend to keep pushing up the date to plant. Some of the hybrids can take cooler ground temperatures but it is better to wait until the ground is around 55 degrees at the 2-inch depth.

Last week's rain and cooler temperatures have kept the ground temperature down and there is a slight chance of rain again during the week. However, the National Weather Service is predicting a high of 85 degrees by today (Thursday).



BIRD CITY SENIOR CENTER is getting a new spring look! Volunteers like Rosanna Underwood (above) showed up for a paint day at the center.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Replace old and worn out appliances

By Karen Krien

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The Cheyenne County Development co-coordinator told the commissioners that there are grants available to help people in the county.

Co-coordinator Chuck Kribs, at the Wednesday, April 15, county commissioners' meeting, told about the Appliance Replacement Program that will help residents replace appliances including water heaters, furnaces and air conditioning, as well as refrigerators and other appliances. However, they must be at least 10 years old. They will be replaced with Energy Star-qualified appliances.

Mr. Kribs said he had talked to dealers in the county about selling and installing these appliances. This is, he said, an opportunity to keep business in the county and give people additional work.

Applications can be picked up at the Development office in St. Francis or at Century II in Bird City.

There is another weatherization program where grants can add up to \$6,500 and can be used for siding and insulation, just to name a few of the improvements. The details for this grant are yet to be worked out.

Mr. Kribs said that there is a "rumor" and he is not trying to get a maximum security prison built in Bird City. However, he had talked to sheriff, Craig Van Allen, about a facility for transient prisoners waiting for trial. This detention center would house about 60 prisoners for \$65 each a day. Prisoners would stay a maximum of 47 days until they are transferred.

Mr. Kribs said there are grants which would pay for such a facility. It may or not be a good deal, he said, it is still in the early stages of investigation.

Incentive plan

Rodney Neitzel, St. Francis, was at the meeting to talk about the county's incentive plan. Mr. Neitzel owns Hilltop General Store and recently purchased P and L Meat Market with the new name, Uptown Meat Market and Deli. He plans to employ three people which will meet incentive requirements.

Mr. Neitzel was interested in the lease and sign assistance through the incentive plan. The commissioners agreed that he

could receive a maximum of \$1,000 per year toward leasing the building. The money would be received at the end of the year.

The commissioners were unable to give an answer on the payments for signs as the incentive plan was unclear. After discussing, they decided that the county would pay for a percentage of the signs, up to a maximum of \$500.

They talked to Mr. Kribs about he and Diane Kribs, the other coordinator, about clarifying and possibly re-writing the incentive plan. They would also like to meet with Development Corporation board members about incentives.

There were several businesses which applied a year or so ago but they did not follow up on getting the incentives. There are indications that others may be applying for incentives.

Airport runway

Dave Yost, Cheyenne County Airport Authority chairman, said the bid for the runway construction came in well below the expected amount which was good news. The total cost will be \$1,461,200. This is about one-half million less than projected. The county's portion will be about \$73,000, which is \$10,000 less than what the Authority had expected to pay.

The construction is expected to start around Aug. 15 and should take two to three months to complete. The hospital administrator has been told that the runway will be closed during that time.

In other business

In other business:

- A wage agreement was signed for Lucinda Straub as 911 dispatcher.

- A highway permit allowing Murfin Drilling Company to bore 4 feet under a county road was signed.

- Ambulance insurance adjustments for \$2,744 were approved.

- Janelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, reported that the new ambulance will be delivered around May 20.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the commissioners will be at 8 a.m. on Thursday, April 30, in the commissioners' room at the courthouse.

Cinco de Mayo, a day to celebrate!

By Linda Schneider

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On Sunday, May 3, Bird City will be celebrating Cinco de Mayo's 147 years with an afternoon of family fun and authentic Mexican food. (See ad)

For all of its 233 years of independence from Great Britain, the United States has welcomed citizens from nations around the world to its coastal shores and national borders. Some come for a visit and some come to stay.

What is unique about America is the wide diversities of cultural and traditional ethnic populous of the 50 states and yet is united on its stance for freedom of expression.

During the growth of the population from the influx of people many brought with them talents from their homelands to share with future gen-

erations. It is because of this America can boast of having the finest craftsmen and women of the world.

In addition to their talents and skills, they brought some of their native country's history in celebrations and holidays to remind their children of where they come from and to commemorate the idea that United States is the land of the free.

On May 5, Americans with Mexican ancestry will be celebrating Cinco de Mayo, Spanish for "Fifth of May." This is a holiday that is not widely celebrated in Mexico, but in the United States and other countries it is a day for a celebration of Mexican heritage and pride.

Many confuse Cinco de Mayo with Mexico's Independence Day on Sept. 16, which is a national holiday. Both are battles of significance in the fact they were victorious. The

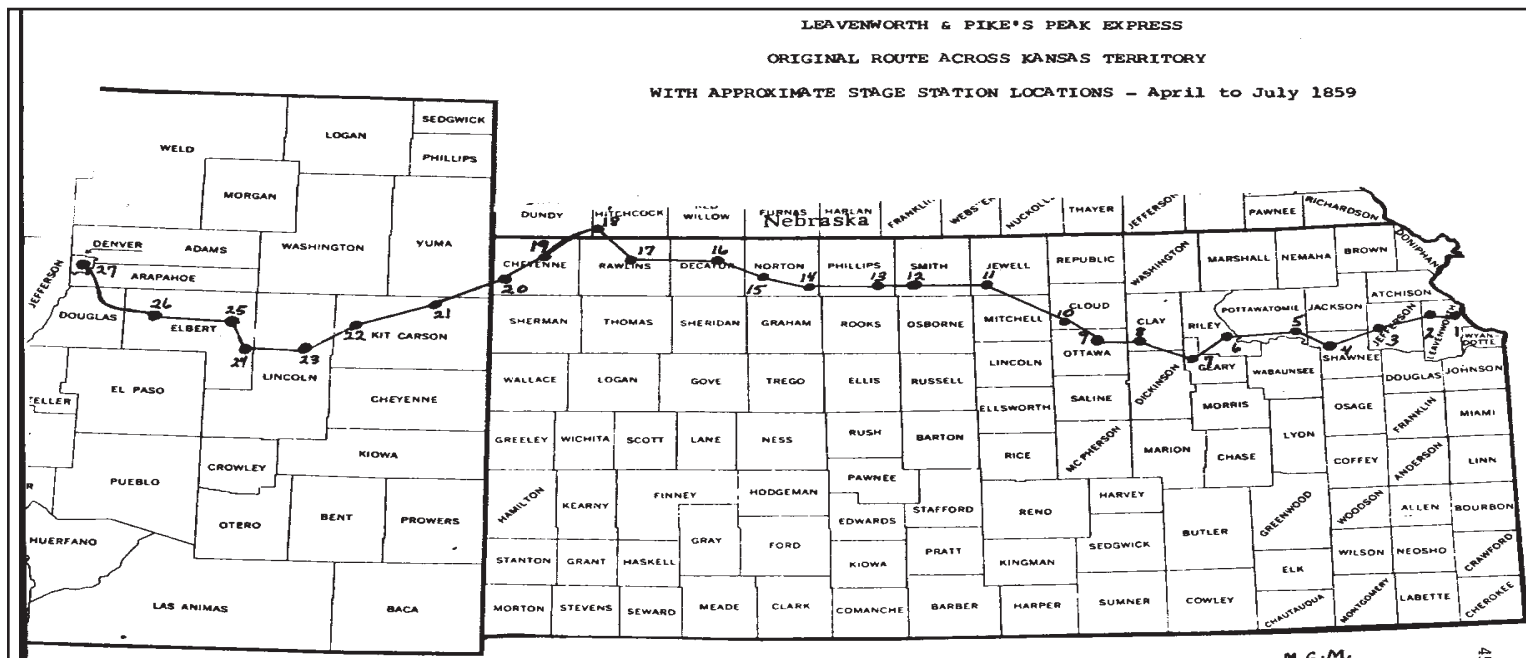
smaller battle which took place on May 5, 1862, in the state of Puebla, Mexico, had the most unlikely outcome since the Mexican Army, under the leadership of Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguin, was outnumbered by the French Army two to one. Furthermore, the well-equipped French Army had not lost a battle in 50 years.

The battle prevented the French from occupying Mexico; however, the victory was short-lived and a year later, the French returned to occupy Mexico. Eventually, the French were persuaded under U.S. pressure to withdraw from Mexico and they did, 5 years after the battle at Puebla.

For the United States, Cinco de Mayo is of special note for being the last time an army of



foreign power has invaded the Americas. With California being the first state to celebrate Cinco de Mayo in 1863 with a parade, many large cities have followed with their own unique ways of celebrating with emphasis on authentic Mexican food, beverages and entertainment.



Program for stage coach route presented

When John Jones and William Russell organized the Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Express Stage Company in 1859, they helped expedite the rush for gold in the Rocky Mountains of Kansas Territory with Denver City as the destination.

This year, 150 years after the start, local historians Fred Magley of St. Francis and Jeff Reinert of Atwood have put together a short program from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 9, at the Ludell Schoolhouse.

This program will be of interest

to the public, said Mr. Magley. And, horse riders are welcome!

"We intend to give this short program so that history of the Leavenworth and Pike's Peak Express is not lost," said Mr. Reinert.

Plans for the program includes poetry readings by Dan Fields and Helene Landenberger—with others welcome. People in Decatur, Rawlins, Hitchcock, and Cheyenne counties may notice that all five stations are marked, and with considerable effort, he said.

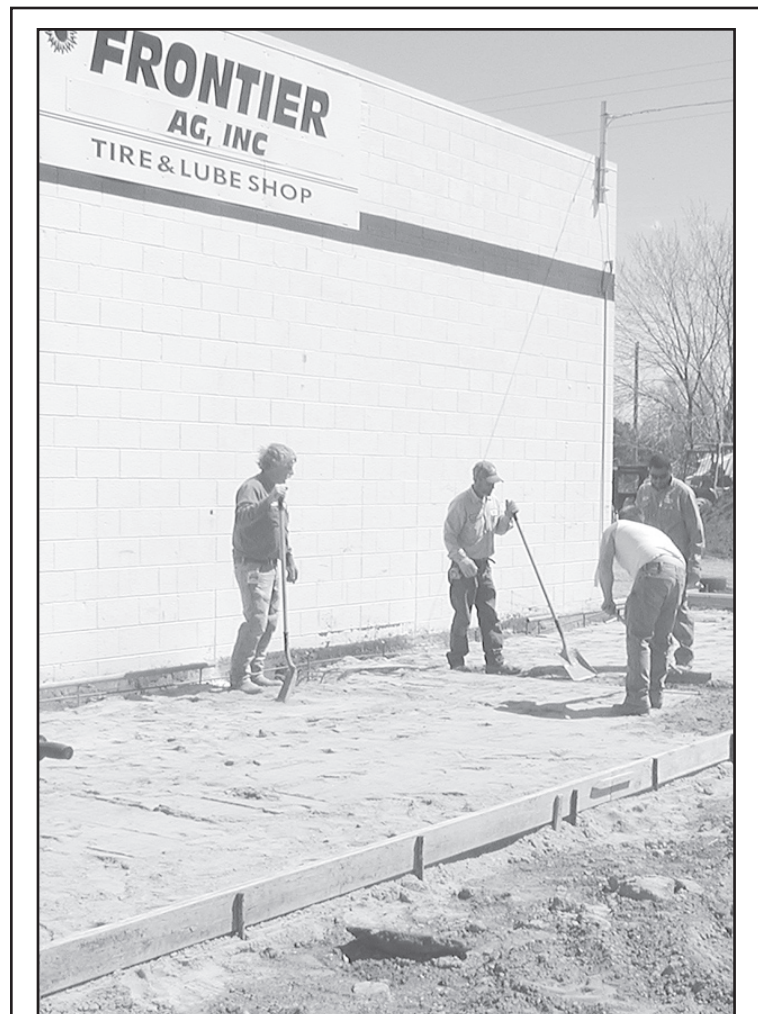
Even though the route which ran from Leavenworth to Denver only operated about 18 months, it helped begin settlement of points west of Junction City, and is part of the colorful history in northwest Kansas and southwest Nebraska.

Research has been done, and locations of the 27 stage stations can still be found, and with a little imagination, stage "ruts" are still visible today.

Twenty-five years ago, an ac-

tive group of historians conducted a successful re-enactment of a stage and mail run across Kansas Territory. Local historians will present this year's program as a follow-up of the successful re-enactment during May of 1984, called "Operation Mailbag."

"With the help of several county historical societies and interested individuals, we hope to present an interesting program," Mr. Reinert concluded.



MALSOM ENTERPRISE of Goodland has a crew working to expand Frontier Ag Tire Shop. The work will take about three weeks to complete.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider