



MATTHEW HENDRICKS AND WHITNEY CHURCHWELL enjoy a dive into Bird City pool following the last day of the summer reading program "Dive into Reading."

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Rising cost of insurance discussed

At the Thursday meeting of the Cheyenne County Hospital Board, Dr. Mary Beth Miller and Dr. Rebecca Allard shared concern with the employee health insurance because of the recent 22-percent increase in cost.

The employee's portion of the cost jumped from \$560 to \$711, an increase of \$151 even after the hospital increased its' portion of the benefit to \$400 per month.

Dr. Allard said the plan was a 50/50 versus an 80/20 plan for co-pay and that the prescription coverage was difficult to use.

Dr. Miller said she is concerned that for some employees, daycare and insurance use most of their checks. Several employees have been able to find family coverage half as expensive as what the hospital has available.

Les Lacy, hospital administrator, reported that the Blue Cross Blue Shield contract was a 5-year contract and this coming year is the last year. He reminded the board that there had been premium holidays in November in three previous years, one year there were two months of premium holiday. He reviewed documentation that utilization of the insurance had increased by \$500,000 in 2008 and by almost \$1,000,000 in 2009.

The board shared a concern regarding the increase. They asked the administrator pursue other ways to benefit the staff and ease this load, then bring some options to the next board meeting.

Editor's note: The above article was taken from the unapproved hospital board minutes.

Cheylin graduate goes to Ogallala

Sydney Busse will be participating in an Ogallala Commons Internship this summer, splitting her time between Bird City Century II and Rawlins County Economic Development in Atwood. Ogallala Commons Community-Based Internships provide four to eight weeks (sometimes six months to 12 months) of paid supervised work for a motivated high school or college-aged youth in community and economic development, right in their hometown. Through partnerships with rural communities, the program creates internships that allow youth to work with and learn about the wealth and potential, as well as the challenges and difficulties of their hometowns.



Busse

and fostering a sense of place. In addition, interns get the chance to interact with other program interns spread across four states through a Facebook group and a Midsummer Interns Tour.

If you read the "Chatting with Cathy" column in the June 11 issue of the Bird City Times, you already know about some of the projects Sydney will be working on, including work with the High Plains Food Cooperative, Atwood Farmers' Market, and entrepreneurship in Bird City. Sydney will be a student at Baylor University, studying in the college of arts and sciences. This internship will provide her with a unique opportunity to view rural life through new eyes while honing leadership and entrepreneurial abilities.

Since 2007, internships created through this program and its community and institution partners, have added value to the careers of two dozen young people. These internships have also added value to more than 20 communities and institutions in the midwest. Based on these successes, it is believe there will be even more young adults wanting to create internships and make a lasting contribution to their hometowns. No matter what a young person chooses as a career field, internships are becoming an essential stepping stone between college and a future job.

Ogallala Commons offers opportunities for leadership development and building knowledge about opportunities and community issues related to Rural America.

For more information on internships, visit www.ogallalacommons.org or contact Simone Cahoj at 785-626-0666.



IT'S THE LADIES' TABLE during the summer reading program at the Bird City Library.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

Summer reading program a success

The Bird City Library just finished another successful summer reading program.

For the entire month of June, approximately 25 preschoolers through third grade students attended the "Dive into Reading" at the library.

Meeting at the library every Friday morning, the kids enjoyed crafts and stories from this year's storytellers, Teryn Carmichael and Whitney Churchwell. In addition to the fun, kids were encouraged to learn how to check out books and return them

the following week.

Last Friday was the final meeting for the group and everyone was invited to meet at Van Doran Park and from there to the Bird City pool for a swim party.

On hand to oversee the ac-

tivities were the summer reading coordinators Amy Hendricks and Tammi Carmichael.



Lucky dog gets new home

Her new name is Gracie, but for approximately a month she had no name, and the black and white dog lived in a ditch just north of highway 36 living off rainwater and food brought by local residents.

Darla Deeds of Bird City, called Bird City city office to report an abandoned dog. Mrs. Deeds told DeAnza Ambrosier, city clerk, that her son, Adam, had found the dog living in the ditch and was feeding her.

It was apparent to Adam the dog had been dropped off or had wandered from her home, but she would not leave the area. It seemed that she was waiting for her owners to return, but they never did.

Instead of calling the Cheyenne County Sheriff to pick the dog up, Mrs. Ambrosier called her husband, Shannon, and asked if they could take care of the dog.

"I felt sorry for her waiting so long for her owners to come back," said Mrs. Ambrosier.

Mr. Ambrosier was not sure about caring for the dog; however, after 30 minutes he called his wife and told her he went and looked at the dog and thought she was nice, even as he was driving away, the dog started to cry.

At lunch, Mr. Ambrosier picked up his wife and took her to meet Gracie. It was obvious to both of them Gracie wanted to be loved. They left some food and intended to return after work to take her home.

In the meantime, someone had called Deputy Cody Beeson to report the abandoned dog. While Shannon and DeAnza were finishing their workday, Deputy Beeson picked up the dog, with no dog pound or housing for the animal, he was preparing humanely to dispose of her.

However, this was one lucky dog and Deputy Beeson happened to meet with Craig White, Bird City city maintenance, who told him Shannon and DeAnza Ambrosier were planning to take the dog home.

Deputy Beeson called Mr. Ambrosier and arranged for him to pick up the dog at his farm.

The first thing Shannon and DeAnza did was name her "Gracie," because it was by the grace of God she was able to come home with them.

They know they have a lot of work to earn Gracie's trust, but with each passing day, she is becoming more comfortable.

Gracie also has a new friend, Jaxon, the family lab who enjoys running around the farm and having dog fun with her.



DEANZA AMBROSIER AND JAXON, welcome Gracie (right) into the family.