

## FFA Week celebrated



IT WAS DRIVE YOUR FARM VEHICLE TO SCHOOL DAY on Tuesday for the FFA members at Cheylin, and Hudson Louderbaugh (sitting) thought he would bring the family combine. Wonder what his parents, George and Dixie, thought when he asked for the keys to drive himself to school.

Times staff photo by Linda Schneider

## Deadline set for accepting applications

The deadline for the US Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency (FSA) to accept applications under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is March 15 for coverage for 2010 coarse grains such as feed.

Crops eligible for these benefits are limited to those not insurable in the county and are produced for food or fiber. Included as eligible crops are forage crops for livestock such as cane, feed, silage, sudan, millet and peas (mechanically harvested or grazed).

Interested producers who may wish to participate in the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance program must visit their local Farm Service Agency office to complete an Application for Coverage and pay the service fee by March 15. Administrative service fees are collected in order to help offset the cost of implementing the program and range from \$250 per crop per administrative county not to exceed \$750 per producer per administrative county with an \$1875 maximum fee for multi-county producers.

"Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance program coverage has become very important with the addition of the SURE (Supplemental Revenue) Program," said Angie Berens, Director of the Farm Service Agency Office. "A producer must have all non-grazing crops of economic significance covered by insurance in order to be eligible for the Supplemental Revenue SURE program, which is one of

the new disaster programs. We would hate to see someone with a loss ineligible for supplemental revenue program because they didn't pay for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program or crop insurance coverage. h

After the crop has been harvested, it is very important to turn in your production, much like you do with regular crop insurance. This helps to prove your yield and could increase benefits in the future. In the unfortunate event that a producer does suffer a loss on their particular crop, a Notice of Loss must be filed with the local Farm Service Agency office within 15 calendar days after the disaster occurrence, or the date the loss becomes apparent to the producer.

Producers are responsible for providing accurate and complete loss and production information. This includes timely certifying the unit's planted acreage and production with the Farm Service Agency. In general, acreage reporting deadlines are June 1 for small grain crops, and the earlier of Aug. 1 or 15 days prior to the onset of harvest or grazing for all other crops.

This coverage entitles eligible producers to a payment of 55 percent of an average market price for the commodity if a natural disaster caused a 50 percent production loss or greater of an eligible crop.

Contact the Farm Service Agency Office at (785) 332-2183 before March 15 for more information.

## Storm watchers class scheduled

The National Weather Service in Goodland and Cheyenne County Emergency Management are holding the annual storm spotter and safety class in St. Francis. This year's training will be held Wednesday, March 3, at the high school cafeteria, 100 S. College, at 6:30 p.m.

The class is free of charge and intended for all age groups interested in High Plains severe weather.

No weather background is re-

quired. This program is conducted only once a year by weather service meteorologists, so consider attending this fun and educational training in St. Francis. Classes will discuss thunderstorm formation, organization and evolution, associated clouds and their meaning, thunderstorm hazards, safety, and what and how to report.

For more information, contact the Goodland National Weather Service at 785-899-7119. A complete listing of the 2010 Spotter Training Schedule across the Tri-State Area is available on the Goodland National Weather Service web page: [weather.gov/goodland](http://weather.gov/goodland)



THE UNOFFICIAL REPORT for snowfall in Bird City over the weekend and early Monday, was 4 inches that measured .32 inches of moisture. The cold weather didn't stop Hal Sager from doing his morning business.

## Commissioners look at emergency building's heating bill

By Karen Krien

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Once again, the Cheyenne County Commissioners, at the Feb. 16 meeting, were looking at the list of bills for the St. Francis Emergency Building. The January gas heating bill was \$1,111 which was only \$400 less than the entire courthouse gas bill. It was also noted that both the emergency preparedness director and the emergency medical service director, who have offices in the building, were gone during the last two weeks of December so little heating was used in those offices.

The county has fire trucks, ambulances and the two offices in the building. Last year, they agreed to pay for three-fourths of utilities because they use the building. The estimated costs (this was the first year since the building had been finished) found the county paying \$9,000 and the city of St. Francis paying \$3,000 last year. When the year ended on Dec. 31, there was an ending balance of \$7,162. The commissioners thought this was more money accumulated than necessary so proposed that the

county pay \$375 and the city of St. Francis pay \$125 per month. However, the mayor had replied stating that even though there was \$7,162 in the account, the insurance and the building sign had not been paid and there was a concern that there were problems with the heat boiler. The commissioners did not think the insurance and boiler were considered part of the utilities agreement. The county insures their vehicles and the boiler was part of the city's building.

With the high cost of the January heat bill, the commissioners wondered if the city council's concern over the boiler problems was connected with the high heat bill?

The clerk was asked to send a letter to the St. Francis council to see if there were some heating issues. They also offered to up the monthly amount from \$375 to \$450 and the city would pay \$150. They thought that this would give the fund enough money to pay the utility bills.

The matter will be addressed at a future meeting when there is more information.

**Insurance and the airport**

A great deal of time was spent with the commissioners going over insurance costs with Kelly Frewen and Roxie Neitzel. Dave Yost, Airport Authority president, and Robert Grace, Grace Flying Service and airport manager, were concerned about the coverage of the Cheyenne County Airport — they wanted to know just what was covered and who was responsible. Everyone agreed that there were some gray areas but they also felt that the questions should be addressed now, before something should happen.

Clerk Terry Miller was asked to check with the Kansas Association of Counties' attorney for a definition of "airport authority" and see if the county's airport qualifies as one. The matter was tabled until there is more information.

**Emergency medical service report**

Jannelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, and Gary Winters, emergency medical technician trainer, Kanorado, talked about a training class for technicians which would start shortly. Mr. Winter's contract

for \$7,700 was signed. Mrs. Bowers has applied for a grant which will pay \$915 for each of the five students taking the class.

The class will be held at the Emergency Building.

Insurance write-offs for \$2,354.63 were signed.

Mrs. Bowers talked about the funding cuts made on ambulance runs. A local ambulance run is \$411. Medicaid will pay only \$137 and Medicare will pay only \$254. Supplemental insurance, if there is any, will pay \$63. Medicaid cuts have been made and for each local ambulance run costing \$411.22, Medicaid will only pay \$137.25. Medicare will only pay \$254.27 and supplemental insurance, if any, will pay \$63.57.

**Communication department report**

Jennifer Padgett, communication director, talked about installing a new radio console for \$22,861. She has a grant for \$13,260, but \$9,601 is still needed. There is some money in the communication budget but \$7,000 is still needed. The E-911 funds raised by taxes col-

lected on phones can be used but there isn't that much money in the fund — possibly later in the year, there will be enough. The grant, she said, is good until the end of the year.

She said Terry Rieger had been hired as a 911 dispatcher, starting at Level I.

**Mower bids**

Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, had three bids for a mower. Yost Farm Supply, St. Francis, had a bid of \$8,162; Goodland Greenline, Wheeler, \$10,000; and Ag Power Equipment Company, Goodland, \$9,600. The Yost bid was accepted.

Mr. Flemming was given approval to get bids for sealing the old Wheeler Road (Road O).

Danny Schlittenhardt, county noxious weed and prairie dog department, is retiring. Mr. Flemming and Robert Simminger, independent noxious weed and prairie dog contractor, talked about contracting the job of getting rid of noxious weeds and prairie dog instead of replacing Mr. Schlittenhardt. No decision was made.

**In other business**



In other business:

- The commissioners agreed to maintain the policy of not paying an employee the cost of health insurance if the employee chooses not to participate in the county's health insurance plan.
- The commissioners decided to not pay the Kansas County Commissioner Association dues of \$165.

**Next meeting**

The next meeting will start at 8 a.m. on Friday in the commissioners' room in the courthouse, St. Francis.

*Editor's note: Part of the above article was taken from the un-approved minutes of the Feb. 16 commissioners' meeting.*