

Don't miss the show



THE OLD CABOOSE at the Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Show is a favorite among the kids
Times staff photo by Sydney Busse

Open house set for July 15 to celebrate new apartments

An open house will celebrate the completion of 5th Street Apartments, two 3-bedroom single-family homes and four duplex 2-bedroom units as a result of a cooperative effort between the City of Bird City, the State of Kansas, Northwest Kansas Housing, Inc., a Community Development Organization (CHDO) based in Hill City, and Bird City Century II Development Foundation. The open house will be Tuesday, July 13 through Thursday, July 15, 10am - 6pm at 504 South Penn in Bird City.

All units and homes come

with the following appliances: stove, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher, garbage disposal, garage door opener, water softener, and a washer and dryer. The landlord, Northwest Kansas Housing, Inc., will provide lawn care for the duplex units, and with the help of the tenant, will provide lawn care for the homes. The single-family homes are approximately 1500 square feet with future plans for a finished basement and 2-car attached garage. The duplex units are approximately 1200 square feet with attached single car garages in between the units.

All homes will be available to moderate-income renters that meet the 50-60% of Cheyenne County median income level, and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information on this project, including applications, you can contact Loyce Schamberger at Northwest Kansas Housing in Hill City, 785-421-2151. All applications are accepted, received and approved / denied by the owner, Northwest Kansas Housing, Inc. Application packets are also available at City Hall in Bird City and Bird City Century II Development Foundation office.

Budget requests discussion held

By Karen Krien

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It is budget time for the county and the Cheyenne County Commissioners, at the June 30 meeting, had several organizations requesting that they be remembered in the next year's budget.

However, Roger Jensen, with the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Center, said the center may not need to request additional money. On the other hand, Les Lacy, Cheyenne County Hospital administrator, requested \$650,000, up from the \$610,000 they received last year. Jeanne Dunn, Cheyenne County District Conservation, said the district had taken a 7-percent cut from the state. She said she had no health insurance and the raise in the proposed budget reflected compensation for the benefits she will receive. The budget increased from \$15,500 to \$20,500.

Values drop

Cheyenne County Appraiser Bruce Webb reported the county valuation decreased by nearly 20 percent. The vast majority of the valuation was lost in natural gas wells.

The drop was due to the price of natural gas and production of natural gas. The natural gas valuation decreased by \$8,458,224.

Ag land values are dropping. The commissioners commented that it is now to the point that farmers are almost laughing. However, Mr. Webb said that while the farmers are getting a pretty good deal now, the pendulum will swing and the taxes on this land will eventually be back where they should be.

The commissioners grimly looked at the fact that there was still almost \$9 million of valuation gone. They will need to decide if they should drastically cut back spending or have a mill levy increase. The county, they said, is basically funded by ad valorem taxes...priorities will need to be set in next year's budget.

Hospital's budget

Mr. Lacy said he and the board came to the commissioners asking

for additional funds only when they are needed. Kari Gilliland, county attorney and member of the hospital board, reported that the hospital employees 53 people and that is big for a town the size of St. Francis.

Losing a major entity like the hospital would affect many. There is also the tax valuation to consider with or without a hospital.

Andy Beikman, commissioner, said he would like to see the hospital where it is funded as it needs to be, then they can consider a 3-percent raise each year.

He also noted that he found a problem with the billing system of the clinic and hospital. Mr. Lacy made a note of his complaint and will check into it.

Sheriff's report

Sheriff Craig Van Allen said he had talked to the St. Francis Chief of Police, Shane Guggenmos about helping with law coverage for the city of St. Francis. He said they had asked that the officers cover weekends. Sheriff Van Allen said he had told him the officers would cover the Fourth of July weekend but had concerns because there are several city ordinances that the sheriff's officers are not authorized to enforce.

The commissioners asked what kind of ordinances? Some of the ordinances, he said included picking up loose dogs and illegal fireworks. They can stop someone for making U-turns because that is a state law but not J-turns as that is a city law.

If they are to cover the town every weekend, then that could incur additional expense. However, if they were covering just when they needed help, he wasn't sure if that would add that much expense.

The commissioners discussed the fact that the people in the city are paying city taxes as well as county taxes for law coverage.

The commissioners agreed they needed more information before they made any decisions.

Sheriff Van Allen was given permission to purchase new radar check equipment.

Road and bridge department report

Dave Flemming, road and bridge department superintendent, had a bid for a new road grader. He discussed trading in either a 2009 or a 2008 grader. He asked that the commissioners look hard at purchasing one, maybe two graders. Mr. Flemming will look into possible financing.

He noted that the Cheyenne County Wildlife organization had paid \$5,084 for the labor and fuel to help clean up Keller Pond. The total cost was \$10,000.

A road closing near the Rawlins-Cheyenne county line was discussed. Mr. Flemming said there are still two people who use it.

In other business

In other business:

- The matter of a controlled burn violation was mentioned.

- Attorney Kari Gilliland said that Mark Jamison, as part of his sentence, will be paying for his medical bills accumulated while in jail. He will not be released from parole until the bills are paid.

- The commissioners agreed that county residents can bring a deer carcass to the county landfill. Because of the Chronic Wasting Disease carried by deer, there will be a fee for those out-of-county people bringing deer to the landfill. The fee will be determined at a later date.

- The handicap door on the west side of the courthouse will be looked at and possibly adjusted by Dependable Glass, Goodland.

- The "no smoking" law comes into effect on July 1. Signs will be posted that there will be no smoking within 10 feet of the courthouse doors.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 8 a.m. on Thursday, July 15, in the commissioners' room.

County clinic wins statewide award

Cheyenne County Hospital won this year's Community Connections Award for the Cheyenne County Clinic. An awards presentation will be held at 9 a.m. on Tuesday in the conference room in the clinic basement at 221 W. First Street. There will be representatives from the hospital and the Kansas Hospital Association present.

The clinic, funded in part by a state grant and local resources, provides primary care to uninsured and underinsured individuals, as well as to those with public insurance.

Patients assisted for this program are identified through the hospital's charity care program, financial assistance program and through the providers at the clinic. Patients managed under

this program are contacted by a case manager who identifies health needs based on grant goals, community health measures and chronic disease issues.

Primary care visits, indicated diagnostic testing and imaging and limited pharmaceutical support are provided. The goal of the program is to increase access to care for a challenged segment of Cheyenne County residents minimizing the utilization of the emergency room, acute care and other more expensive avenues of care.

"Combining resources to fund a project such as this is a fine example of the hospital's mission to improving health through access to quality care," said Tom Bell, president and chief executive officer of the Kansas Hospital Association. "It is programs like

this which exemplify the ideals of the Community Connections Award, and we are pleased to recognize this program at Cheyenne County Hospital for their ongoing effort to make their community a better place to live."

The Kansas Hospital Association established the Community Connections Award to recognize hospitals that have distinguished themselves through efforts to improve the health and well-being of their communities. Cheyenne County Hospital is one of six hospitals in Kansas to be recognized for their hospital-based program.

Emergency Management Coordinator Wanted

Cheyenne County is currently looking to fill the position of Emergency Management Coordinator. Candidate should be a resident of Cheyenne County. The successful candidate will provide coverage for Rawlins, Cheyenne, and Sherman Counties, with the base office being based in Cheyenne County at the Emergency Building. Rawlins and Sherman Counties will supply satellite offices. Experience preferred, but not necessary. Salary will be determined by qualification. Applications will be accepted until July 29th, 2010. You may pick up an application and job description in the Cheyenne County Clerk's office, 212 East Washington, Saint Francis, KS.

Has your 11 to 18 year-old had his or her recommended vaccines?

Take advantage of our "Summer Vaccination Event"

July 28 - 30, 2010
Cheyenne County Health Department
8:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
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at
785-332-2381
Mila Bandel, RN - County Health Nurse

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Watch the paper for the date of our open house