

Board members discuss improvements for fair

By Karen Krien

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The Cheyenne County Fair, held Aug. 4-7, is over for another year and fair board members met Thursday to discuss what could be done to make it better next year and to talk about the money taken in and the bills to be paid.

Lacy Reed, board treasurer, said it was early to know exactly what the board's balance was. First of all, the meeting was earlier than it generally is after the fair, and when she came to the meeting, she had a pile of bills on the table that had not been turned into her. The bank statement, she said, had just come that day and she was worried that there might not be enough money to pay the bills but, she said, there was money coming in for trophies.

She said money was made on all the grandstand shows including team roping, horse vs horsepower, the talent show and demolition derby. As usual, the derby, held Saturday night of the fair, brought in the most money. Until all the bills are in and the deposits made, the end balance will not be known.

This year, the fair board voted to give duffle bags (two sizes) instead of some of the trophies. The board agreed that the bags were a success with both 4-H'ers and adults. However, they did cost a little more money. There are trophy sponsors who will be bringing in money to the extension office which will help with the expenses. Otherwise, the fair board comes up with the remaining balance for trophies.

This year, there was also the expense of getting the stage ready for the talent show. The stage hadn't been used for years so lumber and some of the iron needed to be replaced but now the stage is repaired and ready for next year's performances.

Clay Zimelman, board member, asked what the board was going to do about paying the bills? It was agreed to pay the bills as long as there was money. It was pointed out that there is likely to be enough money and, until that was known, this shouldn't be a huge concern.

At the end of the meeting, Mrs. Reed announced that she was resigning from the position as treasurer as of Dec. 31. Dick Bursch, board president, said when

the final figures are known, he will call a special meeting.

Extension report

Linda Elfers, assistant extension agent, introduced Marty Fear, the new extension agent. Mr. Fear did not start until after the fair so Mrs. Elfers gave the report covering the fair from the extension's point of view.

The fair, she said, went well and she appreciated the support of the fair board. She also said the duffle bags given at the fair were a hit. Deb George (who did the embroidering on the bags), was good to work with and had done a nice job.

Her one complaint was she still couldn't open one of the barn doors.

She and the board clarified that rabbits and poultry, were considered livestock. The 4-H'ers are allowed to sell a livestock project and another (food, art, photography, etc.) project at the premium sale.

The 4-H horse club fun day was Sunday (Sept. 5) and Drew Flemming had worked the arena. Mr. Flemming, a member of the board, reported that the ground was extremely hard and he didn't have the equipment to work it properly. Mr. Zimelman said he knew where the disk was and he would work it before Sunday. Mrs. Elfers said she plans to walk the arena before the show and make sure there are no car parts left from the demolition derby.

Mr. Fear briefly outlined what he has been doing the past few years. I have a huge passion for working with youth, he said. They are our future. At the last place he was, he said he had revitalized the county's livestock judging team and was looking forward to working with the 4-H'ers here.

President's remarks

Mr. Bursch recognized Mr. Flemming for his organization and leadership in keeping the grounds maintained during the fair. Ordinarily, after the fair, the board has to make several work evenings to get everything put away and ready for the winter months. This year, people were assigned to different projects and it was done quickly and efficiently.

There were three thank you notes read.

Mr. Bursch said the fair book had several mistakes. The one about the starting time for the carnival on Saturday, he said, has been made year after year but, when the book is being made ready for printing, no one thinks about it.

John Finley, board member, agreed to read the book and mark it for mistakes and, if there are areas where there is confusion, this should also be marked so it can be rectified next year.

The rest room building at the ballpark needs a roof. Mr. Bursch said it was not insured when the hail storms hit the summer of 2009. It was noted that the etiquette signs reminding people to watch what they said, had been noticed.

Executive session

A 30-minute executive session was called to discuss personnel. After coming out of session, the only decision made was to disconnect the telephone at the exhibit building. The board decided that almost everyone has a cell phone and having the phone there was costing approximately \$500 a year. That \$500 could be used elsewhere.

Other items discussed in executive session included:

- Having Baxter Black as one of the fair night entertainment. Mr. Bursch said there had been several people ask if the board had thought about it. The matter was tabled until the next meeting.

- Deciding if the tables and chairs should leave the fairgrounds. Each year, there seems to be less tables and chairs. The board was uncertain if they were loaned out and not returned or if there were other reasons. Mr. Bursch will talk to the extension personnel, as many of the tables and chairs belong to the extension office.

- People unhappy with the judging at the demolition derby. Mr. Zimelman said that no matter who is judging, there are complaints. He noted that there might be less complaints if the board hired judges from out of town. No decision was made.

Next meeting

There will be a special board meeting which will be announced at a later date. The next regular meeting is set for 8 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 7, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.



CHEYLIN JUNIOR HIGH GIRLS listen to the coaches during time out. Front row: Kelsey Miller, Haleigh Rucker, Elsa Burr, Ana Marie Crespini; back row: Alexis Frink, Coach Audrey Vap, Coach Tammi Carmichael and Jacky Chacon.

Commissioners pass budget

By Karen Krien

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One person showed up for the budget hearing at the Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting on Tuesday. After discussion, the budget passed as was published in *The Saint Francis Herald* and *Bird City Times*.

Elmer Kellner, St. Francis resident, was present to ask questions about the budget. He said he had not come to protest, only to learn more.

The commissioners explained that taxes had been reduced in 2008 and, had they saw the problems in 2010, they would have not reduced them so the tax increase would have been more gradual. Those paying school and city of St. Francis taxes will probably also see an increase.

The hardest hit with the tax increase, said Dale Patton, commissioner, will probably be commercial businesses and houses in St. Francis. Agricultural

land has been blessed, Mr. Patton said, because the valuation has gone down. Farm houses and outbuildings have increased some in taxes.

Mr. Kellner asked just how much the taxes would increase?

It is hard to tell, Mr. Patton said, it could be around 20 percent, some less and some more. If the valuation increases, then taxes could go down.

Sometimes, I wonder if there are things on the budget that should be taken care of somewhere else, Mr. Kellner said. However, I can honestly say I think this county has been very frugal.

Today, Mr. Patton said, we can't project the budget. The federal and state government doesn't give us what they say they will and it is hard to budget.

"It is a challenging job," Mr. Kellner said. "I appreciate what you are trying to do."

Because of lower natural gas prices and decreased production,

the state assessed valuation on gas production decreased by \$9 million.

There had also been a \$340,000 mistake in calculating natural gas taxes. This money had already been figured into the budget so, all of a sudden, the county was short.

After several days of figuring, the commissioners came up with a \$4,736,524 budget which is \$132,899 higher than last year's.

Courthouse department heads are on a strict budget. This includes the county road and bridge department. Dave Flemming, supervisor, was told to fix the old grader, as there would be no new one this year. If people really want more cuts, Mr. Patton said, we can cut half the county crew and cut back on grading and mowing. The road and bridge department makes up 25 percent of the budget. The general fund is 59 percent and 16 percent goes to bridge building, noxious weed, prairie dog and hospital.

Annual highway treasure hunt is only a week away

By Karen Krien

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The 400-mile long yard sale is only a week away and, already, people are getting ready as the travelers, bargain and antique hunters seek out the sales in St. Francis and Bird City.

The U.S. 36 Treasure Hunt, which runs along U.S. 36 from the Colorado border to the Missouri border, will start Friday, Sept. 17, and run to Sunday, Sept. 19. There are around 25 people listed on the vendor's map which can be obtained in St. Francis at the mailbox on 300 S. Benton, at the extension office in the courthouse and at Hilltop General Store; and, in Bird City, at Hometown Market.

There are several locations which are not listed on the map but they will be having sales, too. Look for signs.

The Northrups will have their lot at 300 South Benton available for vendors. The lot is generally full of items and people looking to buy.

Rodney Neitzel, Hilltop General Store, U.S. 36, will once again have vendors. Kathy Vandike and Barb Holzwarth will be selling cinnamon rolls and other baked goods; a high school group will be selling hot dogs, there will be two or three garage sale booths. To add to the variety of the items for sale on the lot, the General Store will have fall garden items including pumpkins, potatoes, peaches, cantaloupe, watermelon and squash.

"We're expecting lots of people again," said Linda Elfers, coordinator.

Some of the items listed on the local vendor's map include: antiques, farm primitives and just plain garage sale stuff. This year, there is even more items included a car, lawnmowers, baked goods, Depression glass, Christmas decorations, clothing, a chain saw, photographic frames - just a little bit of everything.

This will be a good time for restaurants and other organizations to advertise treasure hunt specials.

Everyone needs food, Mrs. Elfers said.

Maps

Maps for St. Francis and Bird City vendors will be available next week, free of charge. There are also statewide maps showing vendors in the different towns down U.S. 36 available at the extension office but there is a charge for the state maps. They will be available at the Extension office in the basement of the courthouse after Labor Day.

Mrs. Elfers said that it is too late for vendors to be added to the map. However, she suggested people check out those vendors on the map and see if they can bring their items to that location.

Look for more information in upcoming issues of *The Herald* and *the Times*.



Upcoming Promotions

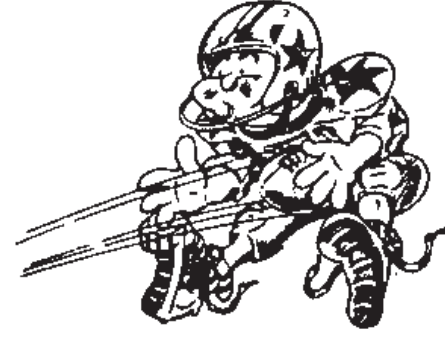
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