

Administrator gathers Village information

By Karen Krien

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At the Wednesday Cheyenne County Hospital Board meeting, the hospital administrator reported on talking with the Kansas Department of Health and Aging about the Good Samaritan Village and a brief chat with Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services.

When the Oct. 19 fire shut down the Good Samaritan Village, it affected the hospital's income. Since he was in Topeka on other business, Les Lacy, administrator, stopped in to talk with Greg Reeser with the Department of Health and Aging regarding some of the hurdles the home will face as it gets back into operation. He said that the Good Samaritan Society had already had similar conversations with him. The state, he said, is very interested in helping the nursing home get back on its feet.

Mr. Lacy is on the long-term task force which will be looking at plans to improve the facility, offering more services. At the present time, there will be little information known until the insurance companies meet again on Dec. 6.

Mr. Lacy talked to Mrs. Sebelius about how the Federally Qualified Health Center and Critically Access Hospitals may not work well together in frontier areas. He pointed out that there is a potential new model that could work. She said Mr. Lacy could send her the information and she would send it on to Mary Wakefield, with the Center for Medicare Service.

Department head reports

Candi Douthit, RN, is the obstetric and education manager. She said there had been 24 babies delivered at the hospital so far this year and more were expected before the first of the year. Last year, there were 23 babies born at the hospital.

We are drawing from Rawlins County and the Brewster, Edson and Goodland areas, she said.

The hospital has five trained obstetric nurses and one more is almost to that point.

Grants had been written for new equipment including an oxygen blender. A stronger breast feeding program is needed. A grant has been written to hire Lori Raile to work in the program.

As far as education, she said the staff can get training on the ITV series. The trainings can be recorded and watched later. Much of the certification can be done in Cheyenne County but some is done in Hays. Eagle Med also gives training for free.

She talked about how the obstetric nurses go off site for training where there are many babies born each day.

Mila Bandel, RN, county health nurse, said there are four objectives which include: 1) identifying the health needs of families and the community, then develop and implement programs to meet the needs; 2) provide health education to prevent disease; 3) act as a coordinator of health services for clients; and 4) participate in community health planning.

The department operates on grant funding as well as \$10,600

from the county; and \$35,761 from the hospital. Grants total \$34,164. Grant funds are used to purchase all IT equipment, vaccine, bioterrorism and MCH equipment, office supplies and pays a portion of the salaries. Right now, there is one full-time employee (Mrs. Bandel) and a part-time administrative assistant (Brenda Weverka).

She talked about immunizations, noting that 86 percent of the school-age kids have their immunizations. In the last year, the number of immunizations given through the county health office was 740.

On Oct. 1, a flu clinic for influenza vaccine was held. The department gave 72 shots that day and incorporated the clinic into a point of dispensing for the emergency preparedness department.

Christmas bonuses

The hospital staff Christmas party is scheduled for Dec. 11. The board discussed if Christmas bonuses should be given and how much. Last year, employees were given \$75 and the board discussed giving this amount. However, Kari Gilliland, board member, pointed out that the money paid on employees' insurance had been cut, making a hardship on some. She suggested that, instead of \$75, they be given \$100 and the board agreed. The \$100 will be given in Chamber Bucks.

Next meeting

The next hospital board meeting will be held at 3 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 30, in the clinic meeting room.



A ROBIN enjoys the mild temperatures so far this winter. Times staff photo by Norma Martinez.

Woman retires after 32 years

By Karen Krien

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After 32 years of working for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Joan Gienger, district conservationist, is retiring.

Mrs. Gienger worked for the agency for two years before coming to Cheyenne County, St. Francis. She said she knew that the conservationist was looking for a different job so when the position opened, she applied and was hired.

That was 30 years ago and she has seen a lot of changes in that time. One of those changes came with the Food Security Act of 1985 which tied farm payments to the treatment of highly erodible land. It was a whole new way of doing business for the farmers, she said, adding that she was fortunate to have a good board, especially when there were challenging times like this.

In 1978, all contracts and plans were written by hand with pens and made in triplicate forms. Today, this work is done with computers.

At first, there were just two cost-share programs available to farmers. Now there are eight or more cost-share or easement programs available. It is easier, Mrs. Gienger said, to sell non-traditional environmental treatments when we have more financial opportunities to help the farmer.

Mrs. Gienger said she has always had a good staff in the office, both Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation District employees. They all had strong work ethics; they knew what needed to be done and did it without me having to micromanage.

One of the highlights came with the county joining with seven other counties to form the Western Prairie Resource



JOAN GIENGER, district conservationist, works at her desk at the Soil Conservation Office. Time staff photo by Karen Krien

Conservation and Development Area (RC and D). A lot of good things have come out of being part of this organization, she said.

Mrs. Gienger had heard of the organization and thought it would be a good fit for Cheyenne County. She contacted some of the key leaders and pursued the plan. It took four years to get it going and, through the organization, 49 local projects have used its resources. Some of the projects include St. Francis recycling center, living snow fences, and funding for the Swinging Seniors' gas. It also provided information for building the grandstand at fairgrounds and the grade school playground equipment, as well as holding workshops for fundraising and holistic management.

Mrs. Gienger didn't always want to be a district conservationist. She knew she wanted to go into something where she could use biology. She was given three options: teaching, nursing and pharmacy. She was in her junior year and in pharmacy at the University of Kansas when she realized this what not what she wanted to spend her life doing. Instead of studying for a medicinal chemistry test, she began listing the things she liked and which ones could be made into a career. Through this list, she determined that she was headed

the wrong way and decided to go into agriculture.

She had grown up on a farm and knew what was involved. She changed from Kansas University to Kansas State University and the first semester, she found that, for the first time, she really liked going to school.

When Mrs. Gienger started, she was the first female district conservationist in Kansas. Her daughter, Jody, has gone on to be another first, being the first female soil scientist in Kansas. She is with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the state office in Salina.

After retiring, she has plans to keep busy. She likes to grow plants and cook food. She plans to have a bigger, better garden during the spring and summer. In the fall and winter, she would like to start a subscription food service, offering muffins or entrees (the list is bound to grow) to local people. The food will be home-grown and locally produced.

In her spare time, she wants to be able to spend more time with her grandchildren and would like to do more charity or volunteer activities.

An open house has been planned for Mrs. Gienger on her last day, Friday. The celebration will be held from 2 to 4:30 p.m. at the Agriculture Service Center on west U.S. 36, St. Francis.

Weather observer reports less snow so far this year

By Norma Martinez

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Last year on Oct. 22, Cheylin students slept in two hours longer due to the heavy overnight snow. Troy Burr, weather observer reported that within 24 hours they had 1.49 inches. The total amount of snow for October was 11 inches and the precipitation for October was 3.62 inches.

The temperatures revealed a wide range with the minimum of 18 degrees on Oct. 10 and highest of 86 degrees on Oct. 18. Wind gusts of 46 miles per hour were recorded and wind chill factor was at its lowest on Oct. 10, at 6 degrees.

Last year, the Cheylin Cougars football season ended with a 28-8 loss against Golden Plains because of blizzard-like conditions. The harvesting of corn, sunflower and milo was late because the ground was too wet to drive through.

This year the October weather was entirely the opposite. The Cougars finished the football season playing in temperatures in the 70s. Many farmers and ranchers finished their harvesting earlier than ever before. Their fear is for the winter wheat as it is too dry. November produced only a couple of days of light flurries and is just beginning to produce wind-chill factors with degree

weather in the lower 20s.

Last week was the start of pheasant season and the hunters really wanted snow to group the pheasants up. Reports from hunters who had bird dogs are they had a successful hunt in spite of the dry weather.

As the fog lifted it brought out a bunch of late migrating robins. According to "Birds of the Kansas City Region" by Harry Harris, the robin is an abundant migrant, very common summer resident and rather rare but regular winter resident. That says this flock could be staying around because they like the name of the town "Bird City."

Local resident makes DVD of city's 125th celebration

Bird City's 125 celebration took place last summer and there were many people who would have liked to have been there but just couldn't make it. Others that were there couldn't be everywhere and missed some of the events.

Candy Glasco, local resident, was there and she likes to take pictures. In fact, she said she takes a lot of pictures so she can remember special times and keep memories alive.

"I started taking pictures of all the Bird City 125th celebration and the activities during the months leading up to event on June 11, 12 and 13," she said.

She wanted to compile them on a DVD so she could share them.

As she went through the pictures, she found that there were events that she didn't have pictures of so she called on others who had also taken photos.

"I couldn't have made this DVD if it were not for the help of Ted Glasco, Tiffany Glasco, Jim and Cindy Leach, Darci Schield and Sydney Busse who shared their photos with me. My son, Terry, put the pictures on the DVD," she said.

The DVD consists of a few pictures of what some people were doing but, unfortunately, there were not a lot of those who put so much time and work into cleaning and fixing up the town to make it

pretty for the weekend.

The DVD does have all three days of activities in chronological order including the Cajun boil, street dance, triathlon, bed races, car show, parade lineup and grand parade, flag ceremony, bi-plane flyover, historical play, sand volleyball tournament, turtle races, horseshoe tournament, 3-on-3 basketball tournament, blind golf cart races, beard judging contest, rifle and belt buckle auction, barbecue, Sunday church service and the potluck.

"There are lots of pictures of people in attendance," Mrs. Glasco said. If you were there, then I might just have a picture of you.

"I wanted the DVD to be special and full of memories for all to remember this fun-filled historical weekend. To complete the DVD, I show what Main Street Bird City looked like in 2010... all the businesses, schools, churches and surrounding area."

The DVD takes hours to put together, Mrs. Glasco said, but I hope people will enjoy it as much as I have, watching it over and over, and reliving the special weekend.

To get copies of the DVD, contact Mrs. Glasco at 785-734-2797 or lcg@eaglecom.net. Look for an ad on the classified page in next week's Times.



CANDY GLASCO looks at the DVD she made during the 125th celebration this summer.