

Street light needed on highway

Rod Klepper attended the Jan. 3 Bird City City Council meeting requesting a light be constructed at the east corner of Bird Ave. off U.S. 36. As cars approach the turn off coming from the highway, the light presently located in that area are not sufficient enough to light up the street. It is dangerous, he said, and he is especially concerned for the elderly people who are turning there at night. Lighting up the east corner could help preventing an accident, he said.

Brad Schneider, city manager, said he would talk to Midwest Energy and see if something could be worked out.

Fire equipment

Cody Beeson, volunteer fireman, reported the new fire equipment has been ordered and is starting to arrive. Much of it was ordered from several different companies so it will be awhile before it all arrives.

The firemen are trying to maintain at least \$5,000 of the funds received to use when they need to reorder small items that wear out such as gloves. In the future they would also like to be able to provide qualifying citizens smoke detectors, and to provide fire safety training for the citizens.

Drain fly treatment

Last year Bio-Stim products to treat the manholes in the city for the drain fly issues was ordered. Last month they received an email from Ehrlich Distribution stating the product ordered was only available for internal customers and they could not sell it to external customers such as Bird City who planned to do the treatment on their own. Jim Luck from Ehrlich Distribution said he would do some research to come up with a

different product to use.

At the present time the drain fly issue seems to be under control, so at this point, the council thought it would be best to hold off until later when the weather warms up to see if there is still a fly issue. Since the pipes are holding up at this point they could possibly clear up on their own.

Mayors report

Mayor Troy Burr talked with Chris Miller from Miller and Associates, to check on what he felt was necessary in replacing the complete city water system.

Mayor Burr and 18 other citizens attended the Good Samaritan Village and Long Term meeting in St. Francis. Work is being done on repairing the present facility. The roof has been repaired and by the end of February they hope to have one wing finished and are now working on the south side.

Maintenance help wanted

A maintenance worker quit and the city is currently running two ads for help. One for a temporary worker to help them out until they can hire a qualified worker for full-time work. See the ads in this paper. The hourly wages will be \$10 an hour to start and the permanent salary position will be based on the employees former experience.

Wage increases and bonuses

Year end bonus were issued to Brad Schneider in the amount of \$1,000 and DeAnza Ambrosier, city clerk, \$250. All employees received a wage increase in the amount of 8.5 percent and Phyllis Carson, city treasurer, received an additional \$30 per month to cover expenses for personal equipment.

Next meeting

Next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 7.



SWORN IN — Ernie Ketzner (middle) is sworn in by Deb Lindsten to serve another term as county commissioner District 1 (r) as Dale Patton, county commission District 2 looks on.

Times staff photo by Karen Krien

Department heads attend meeting

By Karen Krien

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Some of the department heads were present at the Monday Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting. Commissioner Dale Patton said he wanted to personally thank them for their efforts in difficult times.

You ratched your budgets back and it was appreciated, he said. The coming year may not look any better than last year and there will be challenges.

He asked them to think about what their priorities are for this year and how the commissioners can help them. He also asked them to think about how they can help

the commissioners make better decisions.

"We are starting the new year off on a positive note — we are a team," he said. "Think about how we will be able to help you in your department and you will be called back one on one to discuss your plans."

"We will try to let you know what direction the county is headed and, if things get worse, how can we save money. If there is money, we will need to know what to prioritize."

"You have been patient with us," said Commissioner Ernie Ketzner. "It was a tough year and I'm sure things will turn around. We need to keep our cool and communicate — we will get through this!"

They will be thanking all department heads personally.

Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, reported that the new Computer Information Concepts program is terrible — hard to read. Mary Morrow, register of deeds, agreed that felt like more training was needed. Deb Lindsten, deputy clerk, said that now that they have been working in the new system, there are a few questions and it would be good to know how the different offices work and how the transitions need to be done.

In other business

In other business:
• Justin Lohr, noxious weed supervisor, had a contract for treating

noxious weeds on state highway right of ways. The commissioners signed the contract. Mr. Lohr talked about the treatment of prairie dogs and some the regulations.

He was approved to go to several meetings.

• Deputy clerk Lindsten administered the oath of office to Ernie Ketzner, who was re-elected to another four-year term. He was also re-elected as the chairman of the board.

Next meeting

The next commissioners' meeting will be held at 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 31, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.



JIM MILLIKEN plays with the Denver Brass in a Holiday Concert.

Musicians perform in Denver

On Dec. 11, Cheylin band instructor, Rose Hengen, Jessie Smith and Nakita Schneider, from Cheylin High School and Annie Hengen, the band instructor from Oakley, accompanied Jim Milliken, St. Francis, to Denver where they played with the Denver Brass in a Holiday Fest Concert. This is a free Concert performed every year outside of the theater at the Denver Performing Arts Center.

Three years ago Mr. Milliken attended this concert with his wife, Ruth. Last year he joined the performance with St. Francis trumpet player, Logan Whitmore and this year extended an invitation for others to join him. He wants to make it possible for as many brass players from St. Francis and the Bird City area to join and participate with this group next year.

rising in ages of 7 to 84 years of age.

The group played 12 Christmas carols alternating with the Denver Brass playing three carols at a time. Rose, Jessie, Nakita and Annie felt very privileged to be able to sit in the front row right behind the Denver Brass when they performed as well as have lunch in downtown Denver with several trombone players. The Denver Brass is a highly recognized instrumental brass group. It is a recipient of the 2008 Mayor's Award for Excellence in the Art, musicians perform 175 -200 concerts and are heard by more than 70,000 people annually.

To be selected to perform in the Denver Brass group, musicians must be able to perform with



Smith



Schneider



Hengen

technical and creative excellence. All these musicians are connected with outstanding music schools.

It was a great privilege for this group of local Kansas musicians to be provided this opportunity. Rose, Jessie, Makita, Annie and Mr. Millikan are recognized for their musical talents and abilities. Jessie said it was a fun experience and she is looking forward to doing it again next year. Mr. Milliken said he is also looking forward to being able to have more brass players accompany him in the Holiday Fest Concert this year.

Society plans to continue providing care in St. Francis

The Good Samaritan Village advisory board and staff received encouraging news on Thursday when Randy Fitzgerald, the Society's director of operations for Kansas and Texas, reported that the Society plans to continue providing care in St. Francis.

Rehabilitation and skilled care for seniors in the St. Francis area, he said, will continue to be provided at Good Samaritan Society - St. Francis Village, starting in spring 2011.

The Oct. 19 fire caused extensive damage to the Village building and displaced 48 residents. All residents, he said, were successfully relocated to

area care centers or home by that evening. Fortunately, there were no injuries to residents or staff.

In the near future, the Village will begin phase one of the building recovery process which includes rehabbing 22 units for residents and kitchen renovations as well as new flooring, paint and communications systems.

Phase one, he said, is expected to be completed by March 1. In phase two, the center plans to finish 10 more units for a total of 32 by May 1. Decisions have not been made for plans after phase two.

"After a tragic fire, we are pleased to be reopening Good

Samaritan Society - St. Francis Village to continue providing care and services for seniors and others in need," Mr. Fitzgerald said. "I am thankful that the restoration of St. Francis Village has received such enormous support from community, staff and family members. I look forward to further discussion with the community to determine what will happen after phase two."

The Society, a not-for-profit provider of long-term care and senior services, operates more than 240 long-term health care centers and retirement living centers.

Program deadline announced

The cutoff date for submitting applications for the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) has been announced by Eric B. Banks, state conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for Kansas. Although applications may be taken at any time, only those applications submitted by Jan. 21, will be evaluated and ranked for funding for the Fiscal Year 2011 program. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical assistance for this program.

Grassland Reserve Program was reauthorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). In 2011, the program is funded at about \$44 million nationwide. Kansas received an allocation of \$1.2 million.

"Kansas has the finest, most productive native grassland in the world," said Mr. Banks,

"and Grassland Reserve Program offers a way for ranchers and farmers—the backbone of our economy—to ensure this unique natural resource remains a healthy and viable part of Kansas for years to come."

This is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance grasslands on their property through permanent easements or rental contracts (10-, 15-, or 20-year). For the 2011 program, priority will be given to enrolling land in easements.

The program emphasizes preservation of native and natural grasslands and shrublands, support for grazing operations, plant and animal biodiversity, and protection of grassland that is under multiple threats of conversion to other land uses.

Land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program

(CRP) with an expiring contract in the next 12 months is also eligible for enrollment in the Grassland Reserve Program. Enrollment options for this land are limited to permanent easements and 20-year rental contracts.

"I would encourage producers interested in preserving their grasslands to stop by a Department of Agriculture Service Center and visit with the Natural Resources Conservation Service or Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff to learn more about the program," Mr. Banks said.

For More Information

If you need more information about the program, please contact your local Service Center, listed in the telephone book under U.S. Department of Agriculture, or your local conservation district. Information also is available www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/grp/.