

Bird City water rates increase

By Karen Krien

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At the Oct. 3 meeting of the Bird City City Council, an ordinance to increase water rates by over 80 percent was passed. The matter of water rates has been on the council table for several meetings.

Mayor Troy Burr, at an earlier meeting, said he had given a lot of thought to the city's water rates. The council's first concern is to generate enough funds to pay the city's expenses. That alone will take a 40-percent increase.

At a public meeting held on Sept. 26, those attending were told that most of the water works were installed in the 1920s. Since 2008, employees have repaired around 25 water leaks to service lines, i.e., lines extending from the water main to water meters of homes and businesses. So far, the city has not had a main line break.

The city's sewer system was installed before 1956. The present system, Mayor Burr said, appears to be in pretty good shape and is not a concern at the present time.

Considering inflation and the cost associated with each broken line repair, the Water/Sewer Fund has had a short fall over the last two years.

"The time has come when we need to address this short fall before it becomes a serious problem," Mayor Burr said. "It's time we address the issue and receive some input from the community and give them an understanding of what's going on."

He went on to explain that it's not only the age of the system that is a consideration but also the ev-

er-increasing cost of labor, materials, repairs, and the need to hire contractors with more advanced equipment. Also, every time city employees have to dig up a street there is the additional cost of repairing the asphalt as well.

Despite the rising cost of maintaining a compliant water system for its residents, the city has not increased water and sewer rates since 2006. The city, Mayor Burr said, has been covering the shortfall by using reserve funds.

At the public forum meeting, David Blau, Miller and Associates consulting engineer, was there to explain the plans for helping the city apply for and receive grants for replacing the water system. This will require that the city's water rates meet the state average level in order to maintain the current system, cover current expenditures and provide enough funds to maintain future improvements.

When the final numbers are tallied, the minimum Bird City residential bill, including water, sewer, recycling, etc., will increase from \$30.24 to \$55.44, an increase of \$25.20.

The new base rate will be \$33.60 per month per meter for a minimum usage of up to 5,000 gallons per month. Water usage over 5,000 gallons during the billing cycle will be charged a rate of \$2.80 per thousand gallons plus the minimum base rate.

The new sewer rate is \$19.60 per month.

Residents will see the new rates on their next billing.

For more information or answers to questions, contact DeAnza at City Hall at 785-734-2616.



KIDS A COOKIN— Destiny Clemans, Abby Miller and Kaylenn Hendricks stir up some food during the after school 4-H program.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

Speaker to be at theater Sunday

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Audrey Kalivoda will be at the Cheyenne Theater at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 29, to purchase her newest DVD "Kansas, the Center of it All." The program will begin at 2 p.m. and a reception will follow at the St. Francis Public Library.

The DVD, Ms. Kalivoda said, is all about this great state of Kansas. Among the interesting information is genealogy, places to go and things to do.

Ms. Kalivoda had the DVD at the Kansas Sampler Show in the spring. She found that school teachers were picking it up to use in their classrooms and librarians were going to have it on their shelves.

A Kansas native, Ms. Kalivoda now lives in Nashville, Tenn. She is a photographer/videographer who has captured the rugged beauty of the Arikaree Breaks in far Northwestern Kansas. The canyons cover much of Northern Cheyenne County. "Kansas Can-

yon Lands" includes scenery, wildlife and Tobe Zwegardt, a historian and artist born in 1916 who has spent a lifetime learning about this diverse area. He shares that knowledge with others.

Many people may already have purchased this DVD and will want to add the newest one to their collection.

Never one to let grass grow under her feet, Ms. Kalivoda has already started working on the next DVD entitled "Following the Parker Trail." To get the real

feel of the journey, she will be making a three-day wagon trip across the prairie.

While she is in St. Francis, she plans to make another trip out to The Breaks to update her photos. She is looking forward to meeting old friends she made during other trips out to Northwest Kansas as well as meeting new people.

The program is presented by the Cheyenne County Historical Society.

Benefit potluck, concert planned

People from the Bird City, McDonald, and surrounding communities are urged to mark Sunday, Oct. 30, on their calendars. All are urged to attend a community potluck and concert from noon to 2 p.m. at the American Legion Hall in Bird City.

Proceeds will help Don and Barbara Krantz of McDonald with their extensive medical expenses, including emergency surgeries and Flight for Life. Thrivent Financial will provide supplemental funds.

St. John Lutheran congregation of Bird City is hosting the community potluck. "The Ransom Notes" of Louisville, Colo.,

will provide music throughout the potluck.

"The Ransom Notes" is a trio of young musicians whose last name is Ransom. They entered the bluegrass scene in 2008 and have continued to emerge as a highly sought-after group, having performed at festivals and venues from Aspen, Colo., to Washington, D.C.

The Ransoms are friends of Pastor David and Lucille Rossbach. When the youngsters heard of plans for a benefit for the Krantzes, they immediately volunteered to travel to Bird City and lend their support with a free concert.

Time for annual holiday craft fair

It is craft time in Bird City again. Be sure to stop by the American Legion Hall at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 29, to purchase your holiday gifts and goodies.

We are sold out again this year with 27 vendors, said Barb Gerdes, coordinator. It is a great way to find new friends and crafters.

Most of the consignors, she said, are back for another year. Several new faces have been added this year, as well. There are vendors coming from Colorado, Southwestern and Central Kansas and Nebraska, along with the local crafters.

Among the local crafters is Lily Ruth Edmonston. Some of the regulars are Kathy Hertel and her daughter, Lyn and granddaughters, Amanda and Amy. Kathy has her knitted dish cloths and crochet afghans. This year she will be putting together sets with her towels making them great gift ideas.

New items are woven rugs, cloth/insulated hot pads, jewelry, hair bows, shadow boxes and wreaths. Along with these are the popular cloth books by Lily Ruth, baked goods by Barb Cooper and homemade jams and jellies by Linda Schneider.

Also coming is Romona Herman and her double-knit rugs and Kate Koeteuw is coming all the way from Denver with some shadow boxes. The shadow boxes can be made to order with your own pins, medals or any memorabilia. She can do wonders with any memorabilia item.

Opal Zimmerman from Quinter comes every year with her dish towels and scrubbies, and says she just enjoys the people. Maxine Wright from Atwood will have bags and Nonie Daily will have baked potato bags. There will be a good variety of items to choose from.

Most all the booths this year contain handmade items.

"I have tried to keep it as much



BARB GERDES hangs a flier up for the annual holiday craft fair.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

crafts as possible," Mrs. Gerdes said. "There is a lot of variety that the vendors bring into the community. It is a great time to get ideas for Thanksgiving and Christmas without having to spend a lot. It also shows off all the talent we have in this area.

"We will once again have the Kids Korner. It is a great way for kids to find 'their crafts' and keep busy while mom shops."

The Kids Korner, Mrs. Gerdes said, has gone over really well in the past four years of having it. The kids can glue, color, use markers and make all kinds of things. All of which is theirs to take home.

The cost of the Kids Korner is \$5 and they can make as many crafty things as possible. The cost goes to the workers for keeping an eye on the kids as well as replenishing the supplies for next year.

In addition to the great items on sale, Mrs. Gerdes wants everyone to know that Tina Sager will have lunch available for the shoppers' convenience. The food is always a good way to socialize for lunch. Mrs. Sager puts on a lunch meal. Every year there are breakfast burritos or cinnamon rolls for those who come in early to set up and soups for lunch.

Also, outside the building will

be a trailer with popcorn. This will be something new and different for the show, since we can't move the trailer inside.

"I try to keep everyone as comfortable and happy as possible," Mrs. Gerdes said. "I have had a lot of help from others, like, Leah Rambat and Jesse Smith with the Kids Korner, also my daughter and granddaughters."

She even gets her husband in the act by helping put up the tables the day before.

Anyone who has put on a show knows it is a lot of hard work but very satisfying when it is all done.