

State inspector visits county landfill

By Karen Krien

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A Kansas Department of Health and Environment inspector had made a surprise visit to the Cheyenne County Landfill on Wednesday, Aug. 29. Adam Peter, landfill supervisor, reported on the inspector's visit when the Cheyenne County Commissioners met on Thursday, Aug. 30.

He said some of the road and bridge department crew had helped put the construction lumber pile into the landfill on Tuesday and the landfill area had been cleaned up. Mr. Peter said the wind was blowing with gusts at 30 miles per hour so, at 2:30 p.m., he was just getting ready to close the gates (there is no dumping when the wind is blowing 25-30 miles an hour) when the inspector drove up.

She asked him what he was doing and he told her he was closing the landfill because of the wind and she approved. She also approved of the way the waste was being handled. She suggested that the roads be watered down when the wind was blowing.

Karan Thadani, assistant county attorney, said a letter to a landowner about acquiring additional land for another landfill trench had been sent but there had been no response.

Mr. Peter and Dave Flemming, road and bridge supervisor, had prices on several compactors for the landfill. Two were new and one was used.

The commissioners asked Mr. Peter which one he liked best?

I would rather drive a new one, he said, but, I would use it only about 5 hours a week and I think the used one for \$140,000 would work just fine and would cost the county a lot less money. The one thing that worried him was it only had a 60 day guarantee.

The commissioners have determined that a compactor is 33-percent more efficient than the loader. With a compactor and good recycling by residents, there could be another 14 to 15 years left before it will be necessary to transport trash which will be extremely expensive.

The county landfill has had a number of violations in the past year or so and now stands at the top of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's list. If the violations are not cleared up, the landfill could be closed.

It was noted that the landfill design had not been completed by Penco, an engineering company.

The plan as supposed to be done in August. There had been no follow up with the engineering company.

The commissioners approved and encouraged Mr. Peter to attend some upcoming training meetings. He said the Kansas Department of Health and Environment official

had told him that they preferred him to contact them by e-mail. He said the recycling center in Colby had a number of refurbished computers which he would be willing to look into if there could be some internet installed at the landfill. The commissioners didn't

know how good the reception would be and told him to look into a Smart Phone.

Mr. Peter asked for 10 minutes executive session to discuss personnel. When coming out, no decision was made.



DESPITE THE DROUGHT, Linda Schneider raised this 17 pound cabbage by watering it sparingly and still has another head growing bigger in her garden.

U.S. 36 treasure hunt set to start Sept. 14

By Karen Krien

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People are gathering their items and making plans for the 400-mile long yard sale held along U.S. 36 from the Colorado border to the Missouri border.

The U.S. 36 Treasure Hunt will be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 14, 15 and 16.

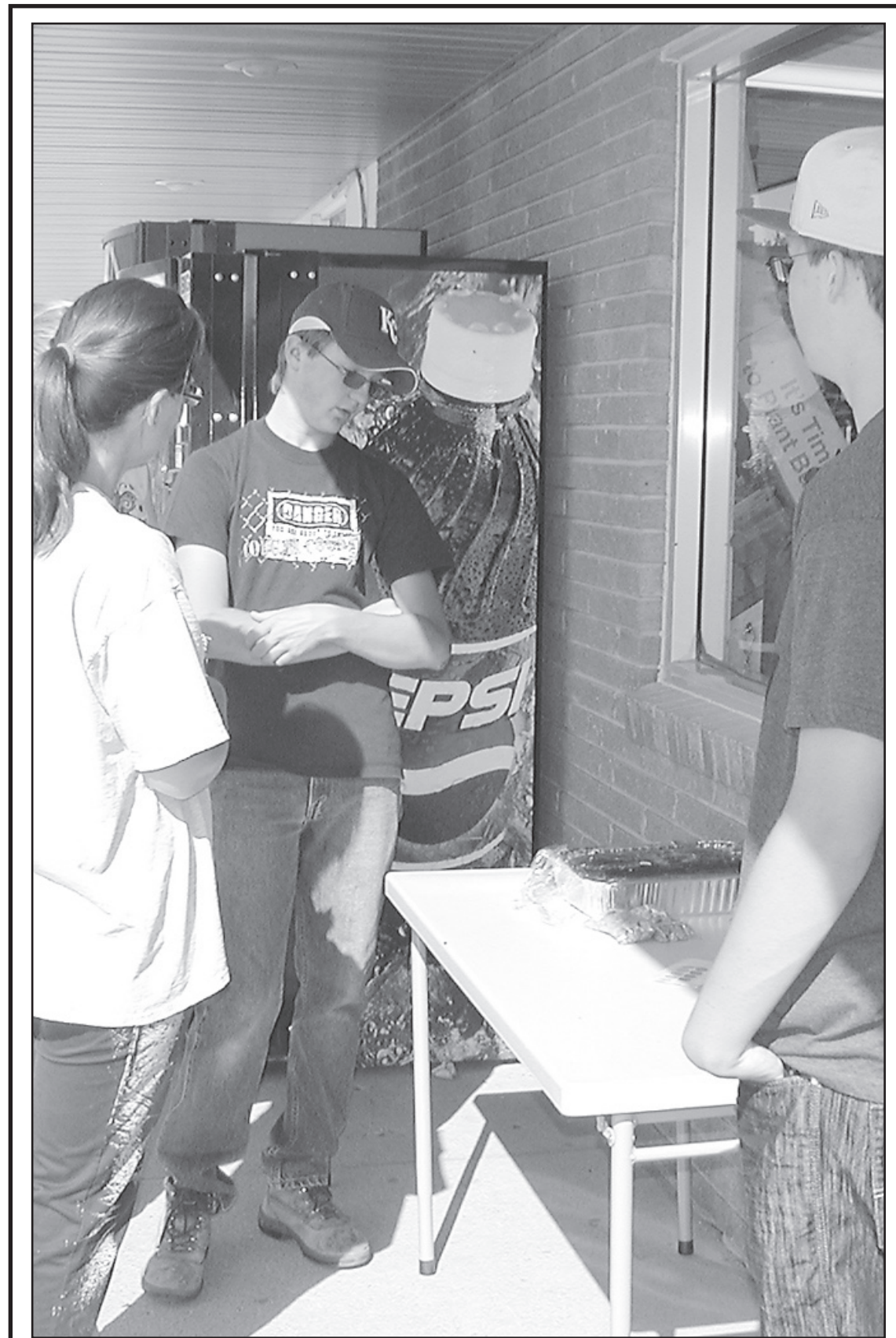
The county map of St. Francis and Bird City vendors has been put together and is published on the web site, www.us36.com. Maps can also be picked up at

Majestic Truck Stop, Cheyenne County Extension office or Scott Northrup lot at 300 S. Benton.

Next week, there will be a special place on the classified page for garage sales being held that weekend. Call by 5 p.m. on Monday to place an ad.

For more information, contact Linda Elfers at 785-332-5155 or e-mail her at lelfers@ksu.edu.

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



TRISTAN ARCHER and Jacob Brubaker are showing Kelly Kayten and Kollbie Leach what's left at their class bake sale.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez.

Visitors at county commissioners meeting ask about tax program

By Karen Krien

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There were several people attending the Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting to discuss the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Program which the commissioners recently agreed to support.

Sean Straub, St. Francis resident, with Bruce Webb, appraiser, told the commissioners he didn't find out about the program until after he had started putting up a new building. Mr. Webb said that in Item No. 6 of the program, it said that the builder will notify the appraiser. Mr. Webb was wondering if he could accept the application. Mr. Straub wanted a waiver so he could get the property tax relief.

Helen Dobbs, Cheyenne County Development coordinator, said, as of Thursday, the attorney general had not approved nor signed the county's application.

Consequently, the program hasn't gone into affect. She expected the attorney general to approve the application but couldn't say for sure, noting that Colby, who had also applied about the same time, hadn't been approved yet.

As far as Mrs. Dobbs was concerned, people could pick up applications and as soon as the attorney general approved the county's application, the starting date would be retroactive to the date when the commissioners approved the program.

In other business

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- There was a brief discussion before approving the warrants that \$1,884 had been spent on jail care.

- Ryan Murray, emergency manager, and Jannelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, asked for an executive session to discuss personnel. Mr. Patton, upon coming out of the

session, said no decisions would be made.

- Elmer Kellner, county representative for Resource Conservation and Development, handed out information from a recent meeting he had attended. He said they had discussed "Coordination" which basically gives county and city entities more control over different situations, rather than letting the state and federal government come in and dictate what will be done.

Mr. Patton said information had been sent to the schools and the cities but there appeared to be little interest.

Next meeting

The commissioners try to meet on the 15th of each month and the last working day of the month. The 15th of September falls on a Saturday so the commissioners agree to meet on Friday, Sept. 14, at 8 a.m. in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.

Dry weather creates conditions for wildfires to easily start and spread

The Kansas Wildland Fire Prevention and Education Team is urging citizens to adhere to local burning restrictions and take precaution when using equipment that can create a spark. The team is a national multi-agency group of wildfire prevention specialists established to raise awareness of the severe threat of wildfire the state is experiencing due to the drought conditions.

"Kansas is experiencing a unique and extreme level of wildfire activity this year compared to previous years," said Tim Phelps, public information officer with the team. "Extreme caution and conservative judgment should be used when conducting any outdoor burn where restrictions are not currently in place or using equipment that can cause a spark - like brush mowers and hay balers."

Droughty conditions are making the landscape particularly vulnerable to the ignition and spread of fire. Since March, Kansas Forest Service officials

have estimated that more than 41,000 acres have burned across the state, making it one of the worst years for wildfire on record. Last week alone there were seven fires resulting in over 8,000 acres burned. These fires are burning hotter and are more difficult to control making suppression by firefighters more dangerous.

Making matters worse is the fact that these wildfires are resulting in greater property loss than in previous years. According to the Kansas Forest Service, there were 26 structures lost due to wildfire so far this summer. Compare that to the fact that no structures were reported lost over the past seven summers, and the severity of the situation really comes to light. In addition to structural losses, burned hay fields can now be considered property losses since the likelihood of regrowth is low due to extreme drought conditions.

Many counties across the state have burn bans in place or are not issuing burn permits because

of these extreme conditions. As always, citizens should check for local restrictions or burn ordinances issued by county or municipal governments prior to conducting any outdoor burning. Where restrictions are not in place, the Council is recommending that citizens delay any outdoor burning until their area receives a significant amount of rainfall.

Field equipment, such as brush mowers and hay balers, should be equipped with fire extinguishers in case the equipment strikes a surface that could cause a spark and ignite the dry vegetation.

According to the National Weather Service, much of Kansas is currently experiencing extreme or exceptional drought conditions. Relief does not appear to be coming anytime soon as there is very little chance of precipitation forecast through the Labor Day weekend and into next week. Even a slight chance of a rain shower will do little to ease the drought or reduce the threat of wildfire.

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