



Work on Legion continues

Work continues on the American Legion Hall and appears to be moving quickly.

Last week Justin Chessmore, and Greg Griffin from Griffin Plumbing in Colby were cutting out concrete and digging trenches for the sewer lines.

Later in the week the crew was putting up the metal stud partitions.

Monday, the concrete truck was pouring concrete to close up the openings cut out by the plumbers.

NORMAN DORSCH is checking out the Rio Construction workers, Luix Witchita and Luis Grimaldo who are framing the interior of the Legion Hall.



Denver band performs in St. Francis

The Denver Brass 5 quintet will be in St. Francis on Sunday at the St. Francis high school. There will be a workshop for students and other interested people as well as a concert in the late afternoon.

At 4 p.m. the Denver Brass quintet will perform a concert entitled "Denver Brass 5: Fanfares & Flourishes." Formed in 1981, the Denver Brass are 14 professional musicians who dedicate themselves to enhancing the quality of life of audiences by presenting fresh and exhilarating shows that feature all musical styles.

Tickets are available at the door and also at Bankwest, First National Bank, Western State Bank, Milliken Law, Kite and Day, Frewen Insurance, Dr. Tim Poling and from Music Club members.

The high school auditorium holds 330 people. Jim Milliken, who arranged for the event, estimates that there will be at least 90 students attending from St. Francis, Cheylin and neighboring towns.

That will leave 240 seats for those coming to enjoy the concert,

Mr. Milliken said.

Mr. Milliken, local attorney, is a strong promoter of music and has taken many St. Francis and Bird City students and adults to play in the annual Christmas Brassfest hosted by the Denver Brass in downtown Denver. Earlier in the afternoon, the Denver Brass will present "Unlocking the Door to Performance Excellence" at 1 p.m. The workshop will be held at the St. Francis high school auditorium, 100 S. College.

Although the workshop is geared to kindergarten through grade-12 students, adults are welcome and encouraged to attend. Adult attendees will not be playing instruments.

The students coming for both events are invited to a picnic in the park at 2 p.m. It will be served by members of the planning committee made up of the Jim and Ruth Milliken, Kari Gilliland, Rose Hengen, Sondra Bracelin and Louanne Isernhagen.

For more information, call 785-332-3421.

Commissioners refuse to lift ban

The county commissioners at their Thursday meeting said they had several people asking about raising the burn ban which was established over a month ago. Some areas of the county had received some rain but the majority of the county was still extremely dry.

Dave Flemming, road and bridge department supervisor, said some, especially farmers, were wanting to know if, when there was a little moisture and the humidity level was high, if there could be exceptions for farmers who needed to burn?

The commissioners discussed the fact that early morning could have those conditions but by late morn-

ing, the wind could come up reversing the conditions.

Andy Beikman, commissioner, said he didn't want to put the responsibility on the dispatcher who would make the decision on burning. Is it worth it to burn a little and end up burning down someone's home? It is something we need to think about, he said.

They talked about having the farmer fill out a permits which would require them to take all responsibility and, if the fire did get away, they would take care of all costs.

No decision was made.

Budget is approved with \$500,000 increase

By Karen Krien

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The county budget hearing was held at 9 a.m. on Thursday during the regular Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting. Present for the hearing were Elmer Kellner and Helen Dobbs.

Cheyenne County has suffered losses, said Dale Patton, chairman. Those losses have especially been on personal property because of rulings made by the state of Kansas. For instance, he said, compressor stations no longer have to pay personal property taxes because they lease their equipment. When everything was totaled, that cost the county \$764,000.

Kansas state legislators have allowed these entities to have all these personal tax advantages, Mr. Patton said, noting that ag producers are also blessed because taxes are going down on ag ground.

The county lost \$565,308 from natural resources, principally gas, however, taxes on oil production was up \$207,035. We lost a total of \$502,000 in revenue, he said. There was also less sales tax but Mr. Patton didn't have the number.

Whatever the state takes away money, said Andy Beikman, commissioner, we have to make up on the local level.

Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, said the reason for the increase in the budget was the county's health insurance. There were more health cost claims, he said, and

we can't continue to have an audit that shows us running behind because we don't budget enough money.

This year, Mr. Beikman said, we were advised to budget the maximum amount, which we did. This way, we won't go in the hole. The auditor continually says that the county budgets too close, consequently, we robbed equipment reserve to cover the health insurance shortage.

The bottom line shows that in 2012, to fund the budget, \$3,347,960 was needed. In 2013, the county will need \$500,000 more so taxes needed will be \$3,897,615.

Recently, Mr. Patton said, a senator in eastern Kansas, suggested that the state take away all counties mineral rights. Cheyenne County collects \$134,000 in mineral rights. Mr. Patton said he wrote the senator asking him to combine sales tax from all the counties and dividing it 105 ways so all counties would get a share. He also sent an e-mail. There was no response to either correspondence.

Mr. Kellner said when he had reviewed the budget, he noticed that there was nothing budgeted for the Good Samaritan Village — is that right? he asked.

Mr. Patton said that is right because, at this point of time, we are still negotiating. There is nothing specific in the budget.

Until we have a signed contract, he said, we don't know what to budget.

It was noted earlier in the meeting, that the Good Samaritan Society had questioned "mills" and what they were and how they worked.

The Society, Mr. Patton said, needs to understand that the money they received will be an appropriation and that it is not mandatory to give them 6 mills.

Mr. Kellner then questioned the money given to the county historical society and service for the aged (senior centers in both cities). Historically, he said, money budgeted to these entities has been there for years but I was wondering if it is worth it — should we, the people pay for it or maybe they should match the funds given.

Mr. Ketzner said that if one person enjoys and uses the facility, then it is worth the money given.

We give money to a variety of entities such as High Plains Mental Health, child advocacy, prevention of domestic and sexual violence... we try to be compassionate. It is your money and if you don't think it is right, let us know.

After 25 minutes of discussion, the commissioners approved the budget which was printed in the Aug. 30 issues of *The Saint Francis Herald* and *Bird City Times*.



BILL WHITLOW is hooking up the wiring to the emergency siren system, so it will be compliant to the Federal Communications Commission for Narrow Banding.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

New warning siren installed

The Bird City warning system at the fire station his now been upgraded to be compliant with the Federal Communications Commission for Narrow Banding.

Last year when the new emergency siren systems were upgraded, the FCC found the original system was not compliant. All the communities not compliant must do so by January 1, 2013.

Last Friday; Bill Whitlow, Josh Burke and Rick Elliott, working for Prairie States Communications in Imperial Neb., were at the Bird City Fire department replacing the siren controller, to meet the specifications of the FCC mandate.

Ryan Murray, the Cheyenne County Emergency Manager was assisting this upgrading to improve the warning system for Bird City.