

Melvin Ross Mast
Dec. 29, 1923 - Feb. 26, 2013

Melvin Ross Mast, the youngest of 11 children, was born to William Henry and Carrie Mary McCann Mast on Dec. 29, 1923, in Litchfield, Neb. During the early hard years, the family moved to Towner, Colo. At the age of 6, Melvin's father died in a farming accident. From that time on, Melvin lived with various older siblings, graduating from Bird City High School in 1941.

Melvin volunteered for military service at the start of World War II. He completed medic training in Texas, and was then stationed at Camp Carson, waiting to be shipped overseas. While visiting his mother in LaVeta, Colo., he met Dorothy Lorean Hiler Bruce. They were married on Dec. 16, 1942, in Raton, N.M. Melvin served 32 months as an Army medic in the Pacific Arena, attached to the 31st. General Hospital in the Philippines. His immediate superior, Sergeant LeFever became a lifelong friend.

In December 1945, he was honorably discharged from service and returned to his wife in LaVeta. He was employed by the U.S. Post Service in Ogden, Utah, for two years. In 1947, the first of his three children was born and the family moved to Bird City. From 1947 to 1957, Melvin worked for a local farmer, Earnest Bressler, and spent a year working in the Molybdenum mine at Climax, Colo.

In 1958, he became the city manager and marshal of Bird City. Shortly thereafter, he also became a Cheyenne County Deputy Sheriff and served the area in those capacities from 1976 for Bird City and until 1988, for the sheriff's department. From 1976 through 1988, he was a heavy equipment operator for Cheyenne County.

During his time as city manager and marshal, he saw the need for emergency medical services in the Bird City area. Melvin and Dorothy, along with Earnest Bressler, Richard Friendly, Willard Moore, Merle Johnson, Ed Carson and Leonard Mast started the Bird City Ambulance Service in 1963, with a hearse donated by the Trickett Funeral Home. In 1973, the ambulance service expanded countywide. Melvin and Dorothy served as emergency medical technicians, instructors and directors of the service for 34 years.

After his retirement in 1988, Melvin and Dorothy continued to live in

Bird City. Melvin's years of service continued with active involvement in the American Legion as a Adjutant for many years. Promotion of the Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Show and many other community projects occupied his time as well.

Melvin was a bookworm and a history buff, loved music but couldn't dance, and was also an avid hunter and fisherman. He taught his love of animals and the outdoors to his children. But the joy of his life was spending time with his family and friends.

Melvin died on Feb. 26, 2013. He was preceded in death by his parents, all of his brothers and sisters - Lloyd, Clara, Roy, Ivy, Arthur, Ruby, Frank, Edna, Erma and Leonard, one son-in-law, David Moellenberg, and several nieces and nephews.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy, his children: Michael A Mast and wife, Irene; Debra J. (Mast) Moellenberg and fiance Robert Brenner; and Steven L. Mast and wife, Karen; grandchildren: Janet L. Mast, David M. Mast, Jeanne D. (Moellenberg) Stephens, Amy L. (Moellenberg) Schulmeister and husband Wesley, Danielle D. Moellenberg and April N. Mast; great-grandchildren: Levi Garner, Audrey Garner, Noelani Schulmeister, Garrett Dugdell, Morgan Stephens and Tayla Simpson, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Melvin was a man of many sides and will be forever missed by his family, friends and community.

A memorial service was held Tuesday at Immanuel United Methodist Church, Bird City, with Reverend Tom Bailey, officiant. Soloist was Chad Miller and pianist Brenda Johnson.

Escorts were children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren: Michael (Irene) Mast, Janet Mast, David Mast, Debra Moellenberg, Bob Brenner, Jeanne Stephens, Don Simpson, Morgan Stephens, Tayla Simpson, Dani Moellenberg, Amy (Wes) Schulmeister, Levi Garner, Audrey Garner, Garrett Dugdell, Noelani Schulmeister, Steve (Karen) Mast and April Mast. Burial was in the Bird City Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Cheyenne County Emergency Medical Service. Fort Riley Honor Guard performed a Military Grave-side Service

Second grader leads salute at meeting

By Karen Krien
karen.k@nwkansan.com

The Cheyenne County Commissioners opened the Feb. 28 meeting with Jayce Landers, second grader, leading those present in the flag salute.

The county has one emergency medical technician which is an "A-EMT," said Jannelle Bowers, emergency medical service director. Reid Raile can do nearly everything that a paramedic does. I think these people who get the additional training to help our residents in an emergency should be paid more per run. The commissioners agreed to raise Raile's pay per run where the advanced lifesaving measures were used from \$50 to \$75 per run.

She said there were three other emergency medical technicians who are planning on taking the A-emergency medical technician course at Colby Community College.

Mrs. Bowers said the licenses for ambulances are due in April. They will need to have mechanical inspections at Yost Ford. Cheyenne County, she said, had a letter and a phone call from the Kansas Emergency Medical Service commending the county on a perfect ambulance inspection. She said the inspection included everything from log books, to training officer's paperwork, to equipment.

Bridge construction

Dave Flemming, public works director, talked about the construction of the Hnizdil bridge, located southwest of St. Francis. He said the county may need to move a gas and a water line belonging to Lobo gas company. The commissioners signed a utility release with Prairie Land



Electric. Federal funds will be used on the project and it is necessary to have an engineer for the inspection. Out of five companies, only two responded. The local public authority, comprised of Mr. Patton, Brett Poling, commissioner, and Karan Thadani, county attorney, reviewed the engineer information. Penco Engineering was selected to oversee the project.

They have done an excellent job for the county in the past, Mr. Flemming said.

In other business

In other business: Mr. Patton asked for executive session to discuss personnel. Upon returning, no decisions were made. Attorney Thadani encouraged the board to work on the employee handbook.

Next meeting
The next meeting of the commissioners will be a special meeting to further discuss the lease agreement between the county and the Good Samaritan Society at 7 p.m. on Thursday (tonight) in the clerk's room in the courthouse.

The next regular meeting will start at 8 a.m. on Friday, March 15, in the commissioners' room.

Fire chief lists equipment needed

By Karen Krien
karen.k@nwkansan.com

After a hot, dry summer of putting out more fires than usual, George Harper, St. Francis fire chief, was at the Feb. 28 Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting. He listed the equipment that need replaced, re-certified or repaired.

He said the Bauer Air Compressor which they acquired in 2005 needed to be serviced. Because it is used to fill the Scott Paks, it is important that it is working correctly. Scott Paks needed to be re-certified and others replaced.

He said they needed to replace bunker gear which includes a coat which costs \$815, and pants, \$650

at a total of \$1,465. Mr. Harper would like to see the department replace two sets a year. He said he has applied for Forestry grants which pay for one-half the cost. The remainder of the cost can be split between the county and the city of St. Francis.

Two reel hoses are needed at a cost of \$900. The 1984 Dodge rescue unit needs to be replaced and there could be grants available for this unit.

He and the commissioners talked about attaching a grab bar behind the rural fire trucks as it would protect the lights and give the firemen a place to hang on when riding on the back.

Dale Patton, commissioner, said the county now has grant writers who could look into possible grants for the needed gear and equipment. Helen Dobbs, Cheyenne County Development coordinator, asked Mr. Harper to get her a list and she would see what she could do and she would also check into other grants with different entities.

Mr. Patton also asked Mr. Harper to contact Loren White, Bird City fire chief, and see if the departments could coordinate in getting the needed gear with grants.

Karan Thadani, county attorney, said he has diversion funds which could be put toward equipment.

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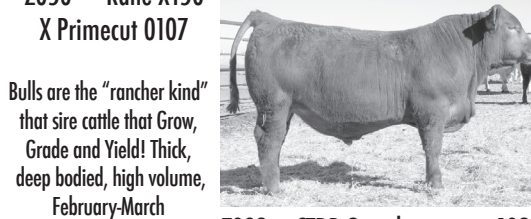
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