

Gymnastics taught by former gymnast

Ailysa Blair is seen in the Bird City City Council building working as the city clerk during the week. After hours, on Mondays and Thursdays, she is found in the elementary gym with from 15 – 35 pre-school thru fifth grade students, giving tumbling lessons from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Just a couple of the older ones have had previous lessons and are able to do a cartwheel or head stand on their own. With her patience and bright smile, the children are all eager to work with her, learning the beginning basics of tumbling, and maybe preparing for competitions.

Concerned with being able to give every student the one-on-one help in tumbling, she meets twice a week, and has her mother, Lanee Carpenter, assist her. This way, they can split the group into two smaller sections, and the two of them take each student individually across the mat, helping them out with doing

cartwheels, headstands or what ever they are working on.

Ailysa started tumbling and gymnastics at the age of seven, and was actively involved in competition until she suffered a foot injury at age 16. This stopped her from being in competition, but she stayed involved by becoming a judge at age 17.

Her mother was an Amateur Athletic Union certified judge in Nebraska, so it was easy for Ailysa to follow in her footsteps and remain active in tumbling and gymnastics by becoming a judge. It also makes it easy for her mother to assist her now.

Working together as a team in judging, and attending all of Ailysa's events and lessons, Lanee learned the fundamentals of instructing both gymnastics and tumbling, along with her daughter.

Ailysa was born in and raised in Bird City, and graduated from Cheylin High School in 2005. She recently married Anthony Blair,

the physical education teacher and a coach at Cheylin Schools.

During her high school years, Ailysa was on the cheerleading team and dance team. After graduating, she remained active in cheerleading by doing the choreography and serving as an instructor for the cheerleading summer camp. A couple of times a year, she also did the choreography for the dance team.

In the years Ailysa was in competition with tumbling and gymnastics, she won several trophies competing in state championships, Cornhusker Winter State games, and some tumbling events. She said her highest accomplishment was taking first place in an All-Around Gymnastics event.

Ailysa held her first tumbling event with her students during the half time of the Cheylin Alumni fund raiser basketball games, recently held in the Cheylin gym.



NATALYNN BURSCH runs to her gymnastics coach Ailysa Blair at practice above. Brady Ketzner, Matthew Hendricks, Dylan Ketzner, and Joia Chmielewski are in line for gymnastics training (left).

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

Winners honored at dinner

By Tim Burr

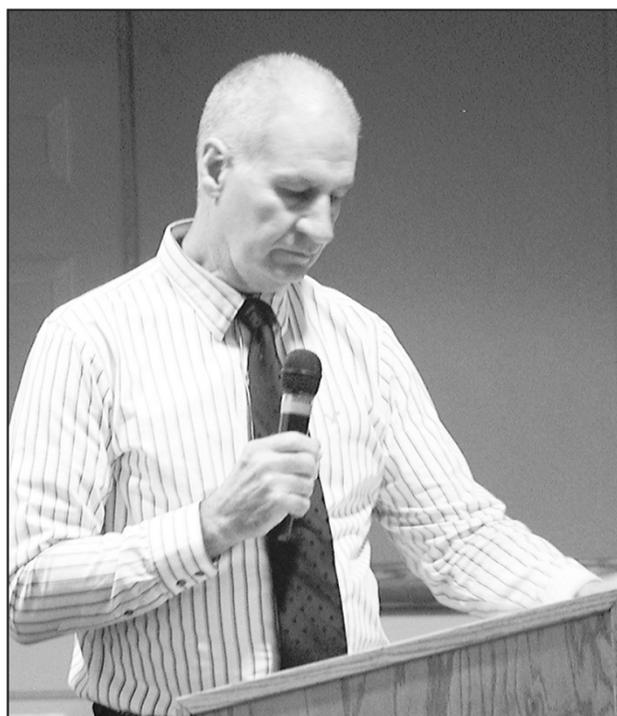
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Monday evening, at the Legion Hall in Bird City, the Cheyenne County Conservation District held its 64th Annual Meeting and Producers Appreciation Supper. The meeting, well attended by over 120 people, began with a meal catered by Dennis and Linda Whitmore, and sponsored by Cheyenne county banks The Bank, Bankwest, First National Bank, and Western State Bank.

Roger Orth, Chairman of the board, called the meeting to order. Reports were presented by board members Chris Hingst and Spencer Schlepp.

Mark Keller, board member, conducted the election of board members. Clint Bursch had chosen not to run for his position, so Dylan Loyd was elected to that position. Spencer Schlepp was re-elected to his position on the board.

The key note speaker was Eric Banks, State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Mr. Banks, who had recently suffered a stroke, and was still recuperating, had a little trouble pronouncing Cheyenne county, did state that he was proud of the Cheyenne county office and the accomplishments of the district. Mr. Banks spoke of the future of the NRCS, and the challenges it will face maintain-



MARTIN BURTON from The Bank presents The Kansas Bankers Soil Conservation Award to Mark and Jacky Roesener at the banquet.

Times staff photo by Tim Burr

ing the level of services required while dealing with the expected cuts in funding.

The Kansas Bankers Soil Conservation Award was presented to Mark and Jacky Roesener by Martin Burton of The Bank in Bird City. Roger Orth presented the Home Garden Award to Brian Holzwarth. Eric Banks presented awards to Bernadette Luncsford, District Conservationist. Mr. Banks also recognized the Cheyenne County office, including Danielle Holzwarth, District Manager, and Cale Rieger, Con-

servation Technician. Ms. Luncsford gave special recognition to Hal and Susan Griffin, Doyle Easter, and Warren Cico, for their contributions and cooperation with the district throughout the year.

Poster contest winners from Cheylin and St. Francis grade schools were recognized, and certificates were presented to those winners present. The meeting was concluded with door prizes being distributed by Clint Bursch and Spencer Schlepp.

County has first baby in 2014

By Amanda Miller

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On Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2014, the first baby of the year in Cheyenne County was born to Derek and Allyse Ross of St. Francis.

Collin Samuel Ross was born at the New Beginnings Birthing Center at Goodland Regional Medical Center.

The first baby of the year weighed 6 pounds, 11.3 ounces, and was 20 inches long. Collin's older brother, Carson Victor Ross, welcomed him home.

His grandparents are Doug and Marla Ross and Rod and Carla Lampe of St. Francis.

Collin and his parents will receive prizes from St. Francis merchants, as well as gifts from the hospital, including: Owens True Value, a gift; The Flower Shop, gift basket; First National Bank, a gift; Western State Bank, a gift; Saintry Liquor, bottle of champagne; United Methodist Thrift Store, \$20 gift card; and a year subscription to *The Saint Francis Herald* or *Bird City Times*.

The first baby of 2013

In 2013, the first baby did not wait long to arrive. Krissiana Grace DeJong was born on Jan. 3, 2013, to Chad and Lisa DeJong of Goodland. Dr. Rebecca Allard delivered Krissiana at the Cheyenne County Hospital.

Krissiana was born at 7:47 p.m. She weighed 6 pounds, 8 ounces and was 18.5-inches long. She has one sister, Katie, and two brothers, Kaleb and Korban, who welcomed her home.

Happy Birthday to Krissiana DeJong!



COLLIN SAMUEL ROSS was the first baby of the year. Parents Derek and Allyse Ross and brother Carson welcome him home.

Times staff photo by Amanda Miller