

# Student listed in top 10 percent

Shawn Bala, a St. Francis Community High School freshman, was listed in the top 10 percent of almost 70,000 students nationwide who participated in the 2010-2011 Letters about Literature Essay Contest. He was in the ninth through 12th grade division.



Bala

He wrote a letter to an author whose book changed his life. The essay will now be headed to a panel of national judges for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

It is awesome that St. Francis students can compete so well at the national level in writing, said Lisa Gibson, instructor. What a great honor for this young man!

Dear Robert C. O'Brien,

Have you ever been out alone in a place without anyone? I have never ever been in that situation, until I read your book *Z For ZACHARIAH*. It changed me in many ways which I never thought a book would. It changed my outlook on life.

I show more respect now to people that I use to avoid. I'm glad that I do that now. I spend more time outdoors enjoying nature than just being indoors all the time. I also spend time with my loved ones since I know they are not going to be around forever. I live everyday like it's my last one, which your book taught me to not take for granted the smallest, simplest things in life.

Your book also taught me responsibility. If I was the last person on the earth, I would need to keep the plants that are left alive and help them thrive on. While I was reading your book, I felt like I was a part of it. Every page was a surprise to me and I couldn't wait to see what was next. I put myself in Ann's shoes and lived through her everyday life, how hard it must have been.

This book challenged me in some ways like how to solve a simple problem that others make harder than it really is. For example, whenever Ann tried to make electricity, she took the time to wait for Mr. Loomis to recover from his illness.

There are some things in the book that could have been changed to make it better in my opinion. For instance, like having more people survive the bombing and have a little more communication between Ann and Mr. Loomis. Another thing would be the ending; I did not like it that much. I was disappointed by it. Other than that everything else is pretty well organized and excellent.

Your book has taught me to live my life at the edge everyday of my lasting life, to not plan for the next day ahead while I'm still in the present. Live my life one day at a time, I will never have that very same day again in my life. The date may come back around, but it will never feel the same.

Your book inspired me so much. It's not easy to put it all down in words, if you know what I mean. I never wanted the book to end, to tell you the truth. I hope there is a sequel for it. I guarantee I will read it.

I enjoyed your book also because it demonstrates the virtue of self discipline and many others. There are many more ways I was inspired. I was once a loner, a very quiet one. I used to be a troublemaker, but I realized causing trouble would get me nowhere in life. I relate to the part where Ann is leaving Loomis and he realizes he did wrong.

This book opened me up to communicate with more people. That was something I never thought I could do. Your book also brightened me up, instead of my personality being cold and blue; I am now friendlier and more open. Now all I can say is good job! I will be looking forward to a sequel!

Sincerely,  
Shawn Bala



BONNIE STRAUB took advantage of the nice weather and was outdoors doing some trimming on her tree.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

# Annual horseman day set for April 16

The fourth annual High Plains Horseman Day is scheduled on April 16 at the Logan County Fairgrounds in Oakley, beginning with registration at 8:30 a.m. Sessions include: Jumping-Form over Fences, Trailering-From Nose to Tail Lights, Animal Chiropractic Care, Feed Supplement Savvy, and Introduction to Ranch

### Horse Versatility.

Do you know what it takes to get the rider and the horses safely down the road to the next horse show, roping, or trail ride?

Driving a horse trailer requires some special precautions. The extra weight will make stopping and starting distances longer and you will not be able to accelerate as quickly as if you did not have the trailer, especially if you have a downsized vehicle. So drive at least 5 miles under the speed limit and stay a good distance from the vehicle in front of you. Change lanes gradually and always use your turn signals.

Use a lower gear when traveling up or down steep grades. On long grades, downshift the

transmission and slow to 45 mph or less to reduce the possibility of overheating.

Always consider the horses in the trailer. Give them time to prepare for stops. Don't accelerate quickly, and make sure the trailer has cleared the turn, straightened out, and the horses have regained their balance before you return to normal speed. Travel over bumpy roads carefully.

If you hear or feel anything that isn't normal, stop and check it out.

Carry an automobile emergency kit with you and an emergency kit for the horses. A human emergency kit is also a good idea.

Carry a cell phone or CB.

These are just a few of the tips Kansas State Research and Extension Agent; Scott "Bronc" Barrows will share at the 2011 High Plains Horseman's Day program. For more information or to RSVP for the High Plains Horseman's Day program contact the Thomas County Extension Office at 785-460-4582 or check online at [www.thomas.ksu.edu](http://www.thomas.ksu.edu).

# Help your transplant to get a healthy start

A transplant solution is a starter solution – and also a root stimulator.

No matter what it's called, however, it's simply a weak fertilizer solution. Gardeners can either buy it or make their own, said Ward Upham, horticulturist with Kansas State University Research and Extension.

The solution's sole purpose is to help spring transplants get a good start in the garden.

At best, if applied in late spring or summer, it won't make much difference, Mr. Upham said. At worse, it could make warm soil's nutrient supply too high.

"Transplant solution is helpful early on because plants typically struggle to get the nutrients they need from cool soil. Often, their leaves develop a purplish tinge, signaling a phosphorus deficiency," he said. "Because a solution's

nutrients are dissolved, though, getting transplant fertilizer near plant roots is sort of like offering Cheerios to a baby."

He suggests that gardeners who want to make their own start with a fertilizer that contains more phosphorus (P) than nitrogen (N) or potassium (K). Good formulations could have a 5-10-5, 10-20-10 or 11-15-11 printed on their bag. To turn that fertilizer into a starter solution, they then should:

1. Mix 2-3 tablespoons of the fertilizer in a gallon of water several hours before use.

2. Use about 1 cup of solution for each transplant

"The fertilizer won't dissolve completely. But, enough will go into solution to get plants off to a strong start," he said.

For more information, contact the Cheyenne County Extension Office at 785-332-3171.

## The Gardener

Kay Melia

[vkmelia@yahoo.com](mailto:vkmelia@yahoo.com)

Today, I want to talk to you about onions. (You can tell right away that I'm an old retired broadcaster, because while I'm actually writing, I tell you I'm talking.) But before I get too far into this onion discussion, I want to make a point that I've been trying to make for more than 30 years.

The point is this: If you want to harvest those wonderful long, slender green onions, sometimes called scallions, you should plant the little onion sets or bulbs. But if you want to harvest the big sweet storable slicing onion, you must plant the onion plants, the ones that have green tops and come in bundles of 60 to 75 plants per bunch. They are secured in bundles with twine or rubber bands. That's the long and short of it. The onion sets are grown for the long slender green onion, and the onion plants are grown in order to produce the big round slicing onion. Failure to expect anything different than that will result in disappointment almost every time.

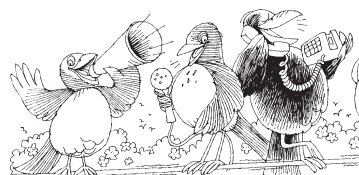
Right now, this morning or this afternoon is the time to plant onions. Either kind. Get you a pound or so of onion sets at the garden center, nearly always available in white, yellow, or red colors. Work the garden soil deeply and press the little sets deep down in the cool

earth, which will help them produce a longer "white" part of the onion when harvested. After all, that's what you planted them for in the first place.

When you plant the plants, just stuff them into the soil only about an inch deep, just deep enough that the bulb end is covered. Be sure to plant them at least 4-inches apart so that there will be plenty of space between them when they get their full growth. And here's the second most important aspect about growing any kind of onion. Never let them get dry. The day after you plant them, water them thoroughly so that the dormant roots will properly seat themselves in their new home. Again, never allow the soil around them to dry out. Onions detest competition, so do every thing you can to keep them weed-free throughout the season.

There a number of varieties of onion plants that perform very well in Northwest Kansas., the most popular of which is one called Candy, the most planted variety in the nation. Candy produces large yellow sweet onions that store well for only 2 or 3 months after harvest. Walla Walla is another large sweet yellow variety that does exceptionally well in this area, but will keep only a month or two. A long-storing yellow onion adapted for this area is the Big Daddy, but one that is known to be relatively pungent. Pungent onions just naturally store longer than the sweet ones.

Alright, lets all go out and plant some onions. Keep 'em wet, keep the weeds out of 'em, and talk to 'em once in awhile. Just don't try to write to 'em.



# Looking for a larger paycheck?

This could be your answer.  
The Saint Francis Herald/  
Bird City Times, is looking for a  
full-time advertising manager.

This person will represent the  
newspapers and the Country  
Advocate.

The job would include  
telephone calls plus calling on  
advertisers in person, and could be  
done on a flexible work schedule.

Pay based on generous commis-  
sion (guaranteed base for first  
three months). Ability to work  
with the public important.  
Experience helpful but we will  
train.

Send resume to:  
[karen.k@nwkansas.com](mailto:karen.k@nwkansas.com)  
or pick up an application  
at W. Washington,  
St. Francis.  
785-332-3162  
EOE m/f/h



# The Saint Francis Herald

— and —

# Bird City Times

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Thursday, April 7 (14)

### QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT

|                      | 01/01/2011    |                |                | 03/31/2011   |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
|                      | BALANCE       | RECEIPTS       | EXPENDITURES   | BALANCE      |
| General              | -\$470,310.88 | \$1,579,402.60 | \$758,642.63   | \$350,449.09 |
| Road & Bridge        | \$87,331.18   | \$652,024.54   | \$250,695.93   | \$488,659.79 |
| Bridge Building      | \$16,681.85   | \$34,177.74    | \$5,965.00     | \$44,894.59  |
| Noxious Weed         | \$969.82      | \$18,669.45    | \$6,318.76     | \$13,320.51  |
| Noxious Weed Special | \$8,731.70    | \$0.00         | \$0.00         | \$8,731.70   |
| Rural Fire           | \$328.30      | \$25,139.98    | \$5,663.88     | \$19,804.40  |
| Hospital             | \$56,593.57   | \$220,715.82   | \$249,741.39   | \$27,568.00  |
| Motor Vehicle Fund   | \$0.00        | \$11,003.75    | \$7,105.35     | \$3,898.40   |
| Attorney Fund        | \$753.50      | \$56.00        | \$0.00         | \$809.50     |
| TOTAL ALL FUNDS      | -\$298,920.96 | \$2,541,189.88 | \$1,284,132.94 | \$958,135.98 |

A detailed statement of expenditures is available for public inspection at the county clerk's office.  
Copies of such statement shall be available upon request. K.S.A. 19-228

Terry Miller  
Cheyenne County Clerk