

# Hospital board asks for full 12 mills funding

By Karen Krien

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Les Lacy, hospital board administrator, board members, Kari Gililand, Jerry Toler, Mike Bandel and Jane Young, along with Mila Bandel, county health nurse, met with the Cheyenne County Commissioners at the Friday meeting. They had come to ask for the full 12 mills plus the 1-cent sales tax to support the hospital. Mr. Lacy pointed out several times that the people had voted in 1996 to allow the commissioners to raise that amount.

er. "We need to keep our hospital and our nursing home and we want to be as tight as we can in spending. We want to move forward but to move forward, we are going to have to raise taxes."

As you face these issues, Mr. Lacy said, remember the voters made this decision to allow 12 mills. We are here and we need it to repair financial issues. When they are repaired, we will look to back away. The future is uncertain.

Terry Miller, county clerk, said recently, he had received three requests on what the county pays for the hospital and the nursing home, indicating that there are other counties with funding problems.

Tom Keller, St. Francis, asked, in a worst-case scenario, what if the county can't fund that, what is the backup plan?

The board, Mr. Lacy said, would have to look at what services they will cut. If we are not able to sustain things, we will have a very minimum service, but it will also be the end of the hospital.

If we give everyone what they want, not including the road grader, Mr. Ketzner said, it will be an additional \$200,000 more.

Historically, Mr. Lacy said, we have not asked for any more than we need. The recession, critical mass and charity care are some of the things that has put the hospital in the position that the 12 mills is now needed. There are also new requirements and unfunded mandates, ongoing equipment and repair needs.

"I know that the county has a lot of challenges with the nursing home, road and bridge but the vote was done previously," Mr. Lacy said. "We have a long history of not asking for things that we don't need."

"If we want services, we are going to have to pay for them," said Ernie Ketzner, commission-



DEREK QUEEN pushes off in one of the races held in a swim meet. He is one of the Sainty Sharks.

## Team competes in championship meet

The Sainty Sharks hit the championship meet at the Lexington pool with strength and confidence. The team qualified 36 swimmers.

"That is fantastic," said Coach Margaret Poling. "We had to rearrange most of our relays be-

cause of a family emergency that took out three swimmers and we had one swimmer not show for the meet. This is so hard when others are depending on four swimmers for a relay.

"The temps were almost unbearable if you were just a spec-

tator but we had lots of people there to support our team and help get the swimmers into their events. We had only a few stumbles with line ups and even some of our alternate swimmers got worked in for a race or two."

Team awards, stroke awards, qualifying awards, championship placements and high point awards will be announced Sunday, July 24, at the annual awards ceremony.

"I will also try to find any ribbons that have not been previously distributed and hand those out," Coach Poling said.

Because of the high temps and weather, the Sharks will have

a potluck (instead of trying to cook hot dogs at the pool) at the First Christian Church. This will begin at 6 p.m. Sunday evening. Swimmers are to return their team suits at this time also.

After the potluck and awards, all the swimmers and supporters are welcome at the pool for an open swim. If a swimmer does not have a pass or a punch card the team will take care of the expense.

"It has been a successful season and I hope everyone has learned something new and hopefully had some fun doing it," Coach Poling said. "See you all Sunday. Please text me if you need more information, 772-7374."



RATTLESNAKES appear to be abundant this year. Shirley Ochsner, who lives northwest of St. Francis, found this rattler caught in the chicken wire. It was dead but certainly gave her a start! She has run on to several rattlers this year and cautions people to be careful. She went to the Equity Feed Store and the staff told her that sprinkling sulfur where there might be people walking is one way of keeping snakes away. 'I bought some and I will try it,' she said.

## TAX

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Mr. Lacy said that even if 22 beds at the nursing home are making money, it doesn't take in to account the things that could take place including repairs, equipment, costs and changes in Medicaid. Even at 32 beds, he said, there could still be problems.

"What the people need is a nursing home that is stable and long term in Cheyenne County," he said, "and this is exactly what we need to be voting on."

"Once the vote passes, then the commissioners will need to make the decision of owning the nursing home but, because of inadequate information from Good Samaritan Society, they need to be able to address the needs of the Village one step at a time."

History indicates that Cheyenne County residents will maintain vital services through county ownership, said Mr. Keller. Prior to 1953, hospital services in the county were provided by the private sector. When doctors would no longer provide hospital services, the county took control. In 1992, when the last private medical practice closed in the county, the residents again took control of providing primary care providers.

At one time, there were several long-term care facilities in the county. Today, there is one privately-owned, long-term care facility in the county. The Good Samaritan Society, the owner, is no longer committed to ownership of their facility in the future.

"Maintaining a long-term care facility in the county is important to our future," Mr. Keller said.

"What is our best option for maintaining long-term care in Cheyenne County?"

### Public meeting

There will be two public forums next week. Everyone is urged to attend so they can be well informed before they cast their vote.

The first forum will be held at

7 p.m. on Monday at the Legion hall in Bird City. On Tuesday at 7 p.m., there will be a public forum at the St. Francis high school auditorium.

## RELAY

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will not be as much entertainment in the band shell. Displayed in the band shell are the many baskets that will be auctioned off by the Western Auction crew.

The highlight of the night is always the luminaria service. The luminarias will be lit at dark and placed all around the park and band shell. These have been purchased in honor of those who have survived cancer, and in memory of those who did not. Each name will be read.

Those wanting to purchase a luminaria can do so at the park before dark or contact any member of the committee. Tammy Grice is the luminaria chairman and can be reached at 785-332-2910.


Help us fight back with your donations, Mrs. Loudon said.

For further information about Friday night, call Pat Rose at 785-332-5348.



# Light the way to a cure

Keep the fire of hope burning  
by purchasing a luminaria candle  
in memory of someone lost to cancer,  
in honor of someone still fighting,  
or in special recognition of someone who  
has beaten this dreaded disease.



## RELAY FOR LIFE OF CHEYENNE COUNTY

Friday & Saturday – July 22 - 23  
7 p.m. - 7 a.m.  
AT SAWHILL PARK IN ST. FRANCIS

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Complete this form and send it along with your donation to:  
The Saint Francis Herald, P.O. Box 1050, Saint Francis, Ks. 67756

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please join us for the luminaria ceremony at 9 p.m. or dark**  
**\$10.00 per luminaria please!**

In honor of       In memory of  
\_\_\_\_\_  
 In honor of       In memory of  
\_\_\_\_\_  
 In honor of       In memory of  
\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_  
*Makes Checks Payable To: The American Cancer Society*



## Check the Thresher and Pre-fair special sections in this issue