

PTA holds fun night on Friday

The St. Francis PTA is hosting an evening of family fun starting at 6 p.m. on Friday at the grade school.

The StarLab will be there and children and adults can learn about the stars, planets and constellations. StarLab is a portable giant dome planetarium with the inside designed to display bright images.

Tours through the dome will be conducted by Charlene Fiedler. The dome holds 20 to 25 people at one time and the tour takes about 30 minutes. As people come to the grade school, they will need to put down the time slot they wish to enjoy the dome.

However, the dome is not the only attraction for the evening.

Outside, people will be able to look to the sky with telescopes manned by Bruce Swihart, Jeff Olofson and Kaye O'Brien.

The freshman class is selling sloppy joes plates as a money-making project. Everyone is encouraged to take the night off from cooking and support the

freshmen class in their project.

While people are waiting for their turn in StarLab, Mary Beikman's art students will be helping with a number of art stations activities and there will be no cost.

Kids can make constellation tubes, play-dough aliens, chocolate fountain astronauts and moon rocks. There will also be a "moon walk" (similar to cake walk) where participants will have a chance at taking home cakes, cupcakes and cookies.

We are hoping everyone will plan on coming and having a great evening, said Tracy Neitzel, PTA president.

This is just one of the PTA activities throughout the year. The Methodist Thrift Store helped pay for materials and supplies and the baked goods will be donated by PTA members.

Other PTA members are Jenni Cravens, vice president; Mandy Stienmetz, secretary; Susanne Todd, treasurer; Jackie White, membership chairman; and Kary Meyer, legislative chairman.



GIRL SCOUT COOKIE SALES have begun. **Hadleigh Hilt** points out the best tasting cookies to **Tim Burr**. To order your cookies, call a Girl or Brownie Scout before Feb. 6.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Vote for a couple

By Karen Krien
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Do you know a special couple? A couple who deserves to be recognized? Someone you love?

Well, people will be able to clip the ballot in this week's issue of *The Herald* on Page 10A, fill it out and take it back to one of the participating businesses. Ballots will be printed in *The Herald* this week and next week. There will also be copies available in businesses.

This year, two deserving couples will be honored with bouquets furnished by The Classic Rose and The Flower Shop.

On Monday morning, Feb. 13, the ballots will be counted and the winners will be announced in that week's *Herald*. The winning couples will be awarded a bouquet from the floral shops, photographed and featured in *The Herald*.

Last year's winners were Albert and Bessie Burr.

Rules are: 1) The couple must be married 50 or more years; 2) must live in Cheyenne County; and 3) previous winners are not eligible.

This is an easy contest. There are no essays to write, no mush notes to print and it doesn't cost a thing. The participating merchants are taking care of that.

When taking the ballot into one of the stores, be sure and thank them.

Participating merchants are: Donna's Gift Palace, The Flower Shop, The Classic Rose, Sainty Liquor Store, Owens True Value, Stuart's Jewelry, Video Kingdom and *The Saint Francis Herald*.



VILLAGE RESIDENT WRITERS, Linda Hilt, left, and Alice Isernhagen, were working on some of their poems and stories. They will be autographing the book, 'Memories and Musings,' at the Good Samaritan Village open house on Feb. 12.

Herald photo by Janet Carman

Volunteers help residents compile book of memories

Nursing home residents now have their memoirs and poems published. The books are on sale and, at the Good Samaritan Village open house on Feb. 12, there will be a signing.

Starting in October 2008, on the third Wednesday of each month, residents of the Good Samaritan Village, St. Francis, gathered in their sun-filled great room for a writing workshop. Some moved down the hall in wheelchairs, others with the aid of walkers and one or two on the arms of friends to greet each other. Next, with the canaries and finches warbling in the background from a glass-enclosed cage, they spent an hour

sharing memories and composing their own songs: poetry.

Then these writing sessions were interrupted by a fire in October 2010, causing all the residents to be relocated to other care facilities in neighboring towns. Now, a year later, the Village has nearly completed a rebuilding program, some of the people have returned and the writing has resumed.

These sessions, said Lucille Rossbach, one of the people organizing the writing workshop, opened with my asking individuals to briefly share memories on a certain topic. Sometimes I would share a memory of my own or read an inspirational poem or two.

Next, I passed out scratch paper and fat ballpoint pens and said with encouragement, "Now it's your turn to write." Minutes later, they were no longer just residents gathered around the table. They were writers, poets and memoirists.

Those helping residents in the writing workshop were volunteers from the Rough Writers, a community group of writers organized by Mrs. Rossbach about five years ago. The volunteers helped scribe for those residents not physically able to write due to failing eyesight, trembling hands or painful joints.

"At times, we would solicit more

See MEMORIES on Page 6

Store closes for a few hours, reopens later that afternoon

Bella's Market, St. Francis, closed for several hours on Tuesday because the company failed to file certain state sales tax reports. It reopened at 3 p.m.

There have been many questions and some fair criticism over the operation of the grocery store, said Sam Mancini, owner.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Mancini said, in January 2011, the main bank that Bella's Market uses was shut down by the FDIC. That immediately cut off service to Bella's, other than some basic check cashing.

"This put a severe financial strain on the company," he said.

"Bella's had nothing to do with this closure," Mr. Mancini said. "We were simply an unwitting customer to the bank.

As a result of losing the bank's services, Bella's loans and line of credit were suspended and we immediately had to take a cash-constraining operations approach. It lacked significant cash reserves – as have most businesses in the last three years.

Most significantly, Mr. Mancini said, this meant running inventories lower than we would like to at all of our stores. We found a new bank to work with in October and subsequently began rebuilding inventories in our store.

Our store managers have done a good job of managing this situation, he said, however, from time to time, our orders have fallen short. We continue to work on this and will continue to improve it.

As a result of the turmoil last year, the company failed to file timely sales tax reports.

"This resulted in the state taking customary actions to insure we complied," he said, "As part of our agreement with the state on Tuesday, the state of Kansas, sales tax division came to the store because the report due on Jan. 25 was not filed on time.

"Our company was wrong to file the report late and we sincerely apologize.

We are committed to the city of St. Francis. We will continue to rebuild the inventory in the store and we will continue to improve operations at the store.

"We have a committed and re-



CLOSED SIGN – Marge Schorzman had come to shop at Bella's on Tuesday and found the closed sign on the door. The store reopened in the afternoon.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

liable manager - one that we are proud to have on our team."

Mr. Mancini stressed the store is not closing and they have never been solicited to sell the store by any party.

"We would not sell the store if we were solicited," he said. "We are absolutely committed to St. Francis and will do everything in our power to insure that."

"We are not behind in any other

payments and have never had any problems with any other tax compliance or payroll tax in Kansas.

"However, we need your support and patronage," Mr. Mancini said.

Any questions or suggestions, Mr. Mancini encourages people to call him at 303-758-5449 ext. 207 or submit a message through the website at www.bellasmarket.us