

Commissioners interview board candidates

By Karen Krien
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When the Cheyenne County Commissioners met on Wednesday, Feb. 15., there were two candidates interviewed for a seat on the hospital board. At the end of the meeting, the commissioners reviewed the interviews and re-appointed Jane Young.

Interviewing were Mrs. Young and Randy Smedstead. Mrs. Young has served on the board for four years. Being on the board takes a while to learn. The longer I am on the board, the more effective I will be. Right now, we have a good and diverse board with different vocations and representations, Mrs. Young said.

Dale Patton, commissioner, asked how the Good Samaritan Village fire had impacted the hospital and how the hospital is doing now that the Village is nearly back to full capacity?

Mrs. Young said the fire had affected a lot people in both St. Francis and Bird City. Projects were put on hold and the staff was put on a wage freeze.

Club Clip

Lawn Ridge 4-H Club

The February meeting of the Lawn Ridge 4-H Club was held on Feb. 13 at the clubhouse. President Taylor Archibald called the meeting to order. Bradley Hansen led the flag salute. Roll call was answered by, What are you giving for Valentine's Day? Bailey Merklin read the minutes. Valerie Wurm gave the teen leaders report, Natasha Wilson gave the 4-H council report and Penny Archibald gave the leaders report.

Under old business: The wild-cat's basketball game was discussed. We will leave St. Francis at 9 on Saturday.

Under new business: The model meeting was discussed. We will have model meeting practice on March 1 at 7:15 at the courthouse and March 5, after our next meeting at the club house. Model meeting will be held at the Methodist Church on March 8. Penny reminded everyone about County 4-H Days.

Bailey gave a project talk on her fiber arts project. She has already started on her project for the fair. Taylor gave a demonstration on how to make Parliamentary Trail Mix. With help of the club, we made motions, had discussions and voted on what to put in the trail mix she made.

Valerie read the announcements. Seth Grice led the 4-H Pledge. Bradley moved to adjourn the meeting. Refreshments were served by the Grice family. Valerie Wurm, acting reporter

Handy Tips

- Flies or bees bothering you? Spray them with hair spray and they will take a quick dive.
- Sealed envelope - put in the freezer for a few hours, then slide a knife under the flap. The envelope can then be resealed.
- Use empty toilet paper roll to store appliance cords. It keeps them neat and you can write on the roll what appliance it belongs to.
- For icy door steps in freezing temperatures: get warm water and put Dawn dish-washing liquid in it. Pour it all over the steps. The mix won't re-freeze.
- Crayon marks on walls? This worked wonderfully! A damp rag, dipped in baking soda. Comes off with little effort (elbow grease that is!).

Everyone wants the services, Mrs. Young said, and people are willing to do what they have to keep the services and business.

She gave a good report of Great Plains Health Alliance, the company which leases the hospital.

Andy Beikman, commissioner, said he had heard that a lot of the county's money is going to Great Plains. Do you feel like the board has input and the company is not totally in control of the hospital?

Mrs. Young said that Jackie John, area director for the company, attends the meetings and is there for input. Great Plains does the accounting and services for many hospitals including the Cheyenne County Hospital, she said, and is a good support system for the hospital.

"It would be hard to operate without them," she said. "We have a good hospital, good quality of care and the director of nurses is a compliment of how the hospital is run."

"We are fortunate to have these facilities and services in northwest Kansas."

Randy Smedstead

Mr. Smedstead said he had worked for the federal government for 36 years as a building technician in post offices, most of them in Alaska. He was a building technician in 19 office, noting that in Alaska, the postal service owns the buildings so they care about how they are kept up. He understands maintenance and what it takes to maintain a lot of the equipment.

He was an airplane mechanic in the Air Force and was a cook in the Army. While in Alaska, he was involved with special education programs, bringing students into the post office to train them in recycling.

After spending 13 years in Alaska, they moved to Cheyenne County to live in his wife Dorothy's grandfather's house.

He has worked as a maintenance person at the Good Samaritan Village. After his daughter's accident, he spends much of his time at home. He also teaches guitar and music to 36 students.

I have always had an interest in the hospital, Mr. Smedstead said. I know nursing care equipment and think I would be a valuable board member to help answer questions on what would make the hospital equipment better.

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VILLAGE RESIDENTS enjoy a game of UNO. Playing left to right are Alice Isrenhagen, Lavera Berringer, Dorothy Schield and Florence Peacock.

Influenza still active in Cheyenne County

Influenza (flu) is still very Active in Cheyenne County and throughout the U.S., said Mila Bandel, Cheyenne County Health nurse.

This influenza, she said, is hitting more of the younger adults to middle-aged adults. There have been fewer kids getting the flu unless they have been around parents who had this flu.

"This is why good hand washing and respiratory precautions are a must," she said.

The Center for Disease Control has reported the United States is seeing the latest flu season in nearly three decades. According to the influenza surveillance report "FluView," flu activity in the United States increased for the week ending Feb. 4. The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza nationally rose to 10.5 percent from 7.6 percent the prior week.

This is the first time this season that the percent of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza has surpassed 10 percent, which is generally a marker to indicate that flu season is beginning. The Center for Disease Control recommends that if you haven't gotten vaccinated yet, you should get your vaccine now.

There are everyday prevention actions that people can take to help slow the spread of germs that cause respiratory illness, like the flu.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. This will block the spread of droplets from your mouth or nose that could contain germs. If a tissue is not available, use your arm to cough or sneeze into and not your hand.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-

based hand rub.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Germs spread this way.

- If you or your child gets sick with a respiratory illness, like flu, limit contact with others as much as possible to help prevent spreading illness. Stay home (or keep your child home) for at least 24 hours after fever is gone except to seek medical care or for other necessities. Fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.

How it spreads

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through the coughing, sneezing, or talking of someone with the flu. Flu viruses also may spread when people touch something with flu virus on it and then touch their mouth, eyes, or nose. Many other viruses spread these ways too.

People infected with flu may be

able to infect others beginning one day before symptoms develop and up to five to seven days after becoming sick. That means you may be able to spread the flu to someone else before you know you are sick. Young children, those who are severely ill, and those who have severely weakened immune systems may be able to infect others for longer than five to seven days.

If you get the flu, there are prescription antiviral drugs that can treat your illness, Mrs. Bandel said. Early treatment is especially important for the elderly, the very young, people with certain chronic health conditions, and pregnant women. Make an appointment with your health care provider for proper treatment.

Flu shots are still available. Contact the Cheyenne County Health Department for more information at 785-332-2381.

National FFA Week



FFA MEMBERS — Back row: Lyn Wiley, Matthew White, Larimie Jenkins, Thomas Douthit, Dylan Peter, Paul Nelson, Matt Tygart, Shakotah Blanka, Dylan Wolaver, Gus Jardine; middle row: Allison Grice, Gaten Cooper, Gavin Cooper, Casey Keller, Dallas Reed, Jandy Dunn, Tony Meyer; front row: Bailey Merklin, Laura Brunk, Jenna Hill, Kyla Bandel, Mariah Beikman, Valerie Wurm

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