

Council and commissioners talk dump fines and fixes

By Nathan Fiala
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The St. Francis City Council gathered on Monday, March 26, at the city office. They met early with county commissioners Andy Beikman and Dale Patton and further discussed the fine levied against the landfill by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for violations, such as blowing trash.

Upcoming changes such as shorter hours, depending on wind, and separation of materials will be necessary to keep the landfill open for use. They also talked about needs and things to consider for the future of the landfill, like buying a compactor.

The commissioners left and the council started their meeting by addressing visitor and Cheyenne County Development Corporation coordinator Helen Dobbs. She gave an overview of what she had done recently, including making an appearance in Topeka for the bandshell funding. She also suggested the council pay for the top membership status in the western Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance next year to get more bang for their buck. She also talked about a neighborhood revitalization program.

Carol Redding, Bonnie Cram and Janet Carmen told the council of their plans for an art walk on Main Street on June 15, during alumni weekend. Mrs. Carmen said they already have five venues and are planning on this taking up two to three blocks on Main Street. Council members thought this was a good idea but said that Krutsinger Construction may be here working on the sidewalks of those blocks at the time.

Former St. Francis resident and artist Glenn Zwegardt wants to

gift the city one of his sculptures to be placed in Sawhill Park. Eddy Schultz would transport the piece from Salina and Mayor Scott Schultz said the other council members should take a look at the park and make suggestions for placement.

City superintendent J.R. Landenberger passed out some papers for actual history and budget for the last five years and said he would need time in executive session for personnel and wages.

City attorney Michael Day reminded the council that they had not yet made increases to electric rates as they had other utility rates previously. Mr. Landenberger suggested they mirror it to Prairie Land's rates.

A letter regarding property cleanup had been delivered to Kelly Lampe, and it had been noted that he had made substantial improvements over the weekend.

Council member Bruce Swihart gave the pool report, saying that Matt Whitmore had been hired as the manager. He said he would also need time in executive session to discuss wages.

There were three building permits: the Equity wants to put up a sign at the sale barn, which would also require state approval; Gene Dodd wants to put up a fence and Jennifer Landenberger wants to put up a fence. Both were approved.

For the superintendent report, Mr. Landenberger said the letters had been replaced on the berm in front of the emergency building and signs had been affixed to the light poles on the highway. Referring to a previous meeting, Mr. Landenberger asked if some money set aside for improvements at Keller's Pond could be used to put in a composite bench at the pond. The council agreed.

The city provides a truck upon request for people to use for personal projects and haul trash to the dump. Mr. Landenberger said this is a good thing to have available, and that it's used often, but that a charge should be added to cover gasoline and mileage.

As per last meeting's inquiry about putting in electric hook-ups at the roadside park, Mr. Landenberger suggested to not do this, as infrastructure would have to be added and there are businesses in town that already offer this.

City clerk Glorianne Milne said that she had received a rebate from the county for recycling. Joyce Russ had gathered business listings to post on the website and that they were now receiving emails from KREDA.

Police chief Shane Guggenmos reported that Wes Guggenmos had two weeks left of training and that police officer Darrel Thomas had caught some kids illegally fishing at Keller's Pond, and turned them over to the game warden. He also asked to rollover some of Officer Thomas' vacation time to next year, which was approved.

Mr. Guggenmos said that after the county had narrow banded their radios, some were unable to be converted and more radios will probably be purchased. He also made a request to purchase ammunition for the year. This has been done through the gunshop in Atwood previously but Mr. Guggenmos will also get a quote from Frontier Arms and report back at the next meeting.

For council comments, Dale Weeks suggested a sign pointing out the high school be added to the corner by Cooper's.

The council will next meet April 9.



FOREIGN EXCHANGE student Juliana Wendling gets help from teacher David Morrow on a writing assignment.
Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Brazilian exchange student adapts to food, climate

By Karen Krien
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Juliana Wendling, an exchange student from Brazil, arrived in St. Francis on Sept. 4 where she would spend the next nine months with her host parents, Jeff and Conny Paulsen.

Mrs. Paulsen said Juliana has been a joy to have in their home. They decided to have an exchange student after two of their daughters left, leaving one daughter still at home. Pria, she said, wanted to have someone her age and she and Juliana have become good friends.

Juliana comes from São Niguel Do Iguacu, located in the southern regions of Brazil. The town has a population of around 30,000 so coming to St. Francis was a big change. Her older brother had also been an exchange student but he was located in New York.

She recently turned 17 years old. In Brazil, she has already graduated. At the St. Francis Community High School, she is considered a junior.

She is taking psychology, physics, American history, English II, plyometrics, trigonometry, study hall and art. She said she liked all of her classes but especially liked the math classes.

School in Brazil is much different. The day starts at 7:20 a.m. and ends at 11:45 a.m. They do not eat lunch at school.

Each day of the week, there are generally five subjects studied but, throughout the week, there will be a total of 13 subjects. About once a month, there is a big exam, she said.

Juliana said she starts the year with the same students, many she has been with since she first began attending school. Unlike the students changing rooms in the United States, in Brazil, the teachers come to the classroom. I most likely, she said, will sit by the same students throughout the year.

Students, she said, wear uniforms to school. She has found going to the St. Francis school that she needs a lot more clothes than she needed in Brazil.

Summer is in July in her country. School starts in February, dismisses for the month of July, then resumes again in August, ending the school year on Dec. 1.

When asked to compare St. Francis to Brazil, she said the biggest comparison is the weather. Brazil is very hot, she said. During the summer months, the temperature is over 100 degrees and the low seldom drops to below 32 degrees.

Juliana had never seen snow and, while there was little snow in St. Francis this year, she was able to build a snowman. The snow, she said, was very pretty.

Another huge difference between her country and the United States is the food.

We eat mostly rice and beans,

she said. On weekends, we have barbecue which is meat cooked over an open fire. Dessert is puddings made with condensed milk and chocolate balls.

In the United States, she said, everything tastes different - the pizza, hamburgers - they do not taste the same as they do at home.

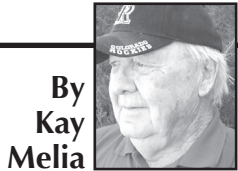
Before coming to St. Francis, she said she had never eaten marshmallows or brownies. She recently had some smores and said they were good.

Juliana's father is a farmer and raises soybeans and corn. The farm is about one and one-half hours from São Niguel Do Iguacu. During the farming season, he spends the week at the farm and comes back to town on the weekends. Juliana said that she, her mother, brother and sister also go to the farm to stay.

While Juliana is happy in St. Francis, she said she misses home, - she especially misses her mother. They keep in contact by phone, computer and Skype. On June 4, she will be going home.

In the near future, Juliana plans to enter college but is not positive as to what she will study. She hopes to go into architecture.

The Gardener



By Kay Melia

No, I have not yet planted my potatoes!

There. I have again answered what seems to be the gardening question of the day at my house or as I am downtown shopping or as I am just walking down the street. And when I inform people that I have not yet planted my potatoes, a rather quizzical look comes over their face, followed by a smile, and occasionally an outright belly laugh as if I am being less than honest about my actual gardening activities.

I will plant my potatoes early next week, barring a snowstorm or some other freak of nature. Seldom have I ever planted them before the 15th of April, and despite the fact that this has been one of the warmest early springs of all time, I have not been lulled into doing a lot of things differently in the garden than I normally would do.

Why? Why would I not take advantage of the warmest March on record, and quickly drop all kinds of seeds in the ground and get a good early start on harvesting fresh vegetables? Because I am constantly aware that the last average frost date in my backyard is May 6. And despite the magnificently warm temperatures, and the resulting warm soil temperatures, it is quite

probable that my backyard will play witness to a frost or light freeze before the real growing season arrives.

I planted potatoes last year on April 16. After more than two weeks of lounging around underground, they began emerging on April 30, and after they were all above ground, there came an early morning 33-degree reading, and the plants turned black. In another 10 days, they began growing again and proceeded to present me with a good crop in late summer. But according to my records, if I had planted those spuds in mid-March, they would have suffered three frosts or freezes before the true growing season, and chances are, yield would have suffered accordingly.

That's just the way Mother Nature works. We plant too early and we pay the price. We begin to feel the warm breezes gently wafting across the neighborhood and we grab a packet of seeds and our rototiller and get to work. We get overly anxious. After all, we have an average of over 150 frost-free days around here, so we can be pretty sure the crop will mature before next fall's first frost, even if we wait until June to plant some of our seeds.

But yes, some vegetables must be planted early, else they will be harmed by the heat before maturity. My peas, spinach, lettuce and radishes were planted on March 24, and even with a frost after they emerge, they can withstand it and thrive and produce a crop before it gets hot.

But potatoes? With too many "burn-backs" early in the season, production will likely be seriously reduced.

It will be after May 1 before I plant the warm season crops like cucumbers, beans, sweet corn, okra or squash, as well as tomato and pepper transplants.

Will there be a frost or freeze yet this spring? I don't know, but history tells us that it will probably happen. We'll see.



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THANK YOU

A big Thank you to all, for the prayers, for best wishes, for the get-well-cards, for the visits and morale boosting, during the past few months during the surgeries and recovery periods.

Hopefully, I am in the recovery period when day by day there seems to be improved activities.

Again many thanks. Phyllis and Rowland Roelfs

Support the Big Brothers Big Sisters Program

Look for jars with "Bigs" (high schooler) in participating businesses and schools. Money collected will go to the Big Brothers Big Sisters Cheyenne County. For more information, contact Bridgette Antholz, 785-332-3333.

Jar locations: Western State Bank, First National Bank (St. Francis and Bird City), Bankwest of Kansas, St. Francis Community High School, Bella's Market, Hometown Market and Cheylin Schools

*** Thank you * Thank you ***

A sincere thank you for all of your prayers and concerns before and since my operation. Also for your phone calls, personal visits, cards, gifts of food, acts of kindness shown to me while I recover. Thanks to Pastor Warren for being with my family during the surgery and for the home visit after I returned home. Special thanks to Marv and Anita for running our errands for us, and the yard work. Thanks to Tyler Raile, PA for getting me to the right people to take care of me. All is greatly appreciated.

Larry Brunow

Help Wanted

Job Description: USD 297 St. Francis Community Schools is seeking a fifth grade teacher and a kindergarten teacher beginning with the 2012-2013 school year. Proper Kansas licensure is required for these positions. Possible junior high and high school coaching positions may be available with these positions, but coaching is not a requirement for the candidate. If interested, please send credentials by mail or email to:

Rob Schiltz, Superintendent
St. Francis Community Schools
P.O. Box 1110
St. Francis, KS 67756
785-332-8182
rschiltz@usd297.k12.ks.us

Your credentials will be considered your application for this position.

The application deadline for this position is April 25, 2012. No applications will be considered if received after this date.