BANNER ANNOUNCING CHRISTMAS EVE services went up Monday. Pastor Jeff Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

# County employee health care cost goes over budget

By Karen Krien karen.k@nwkansas.com

celebration sponsored by Center

Church Association was held at the

Bird City senior center on the eve-

ning of Dec. 7. Members sat down

to hobo stew and finger foods prior

to the singing of carols and Christ-

Billy Pope Duncan addressed

the members with teachings from

the Christmas story found in Luke

Chapter 2. Poems and reading

were delivered by Gerald Wright

"Santa's Surprise Party;" Rose-

There were 65 at Sunday School.

Mary E. Allen gave the special

number. Garret Hulburt and Isabel

Prentice gave their birthday offer-

ings. Speaker on Sunday will be

Phil Mitchel with a pot luck lunch

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Harms vis-

Elaine Crider and Betty Rogers

visited Bessie Dent Wednesday

morning. Paul Leven visited in the

Ellen Mansfield went to Greeley with Gary and Sharilyn Mansfield

ited Mr. and Mrs. Bill Strangways

to follow.

mas devotional sharing time.

**Association holds** 

country Christmas

The annual Country Christmas mary Powell, "Story of the Three

**Beecher Island News** -

Excellence in

helps keep you

Joint Replacement

in McCook.

Debbie Stevens wasn't about

to let a congenital hip condition

with one of Community Hospital's

visiting orthopedic surgeons, who

advised her of the outstanding

joint replacement care right here

Community Hospital's Orthopedic Package included classes to learn about pain management, and

therapy strategies to help Debbie

After surgery, Debbie had physical

therapy at the Community

Hospital Rehabilitation Center.

Now she enjoys swimming, golf,

speed her recovery.

and so much more!

slow her down. She conferred

Health insurance for the county and continues to cost the county employees has been an issue for and taxpayers. At the last meet-

Kings;" Irma Deeds, "The Man

in the Very Front Row;" Marsha

Magley, "Joseph's letter to his

Special words and greetings

and best wishes were given by Ar-

nold Jr. and Sandra Magley, Carol

Duncan, Lucille Wright, Hollis

Dapron, Shirley Watson, Marcea

The wonderful fellowship time

closed with prayer, love and best

Saturday. They went on the Holi-

Mr. and Mrs. Pete Osmus re-

turned home Tuesday from vis-

iting the Matt Osmus family in

Mrs Bill Strangways on Friday.

day home tour on Sunday.

wishes for a Merry Christmas

Weaver and Merna Dautel.

the insurance goes over budget Corporate Plan, went over the options for the county.

employee's out-of-pocket costs \$3,000.

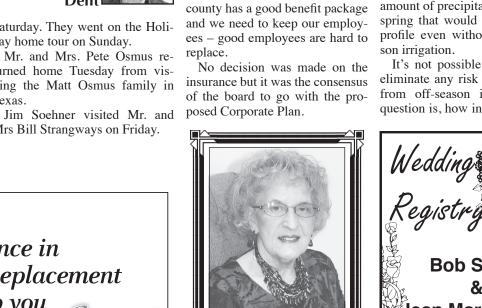
Dale Patton, commissioner, had looked into a state insurance but, he felt that they would be just as well taking the Corporate Plan again, especially with the \$36,000 savings. Insurance, he said, is just high and, now with the new health reform regulations, it will probably be higher in the future. If we make this step now, I think it is a

Andy Beikman, commissioner, said he felt the county should have a policy in place where current employees who stay with the county, they will have the opportunity to have their insurance grandfathered in. When new employees come on, they will know up front that they will possibility not have the same insurance benefits. The county has a good benefit package and we need to keep our employees – good employees are hard to

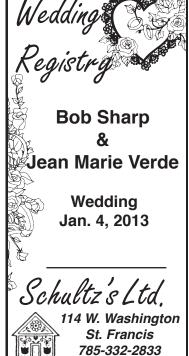
No decision was made on the insurance but it was the consensus of the board to go with the pro-

Mr. Carson had sent a new quote for the commissioners to go over at the Monday meeting. The quote would save the county about \$36,000 but the responsibility of the employees would go up. The would go from \$700 to \$1,500 and, the family out-of-pocket expense would go from \$1,200 to

step in the right direction.



### Florence Antholz is celebrating her 80th Birthday! Her children request the honor of your presence at a reception Dec. 30 · 2-4 p.m. Prairie Developmental Center, 208 S. 4th, Atwood. Cards may be sent to her at: 601 Vine, Atwood, KS 67730



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**Across the County** 

Tri-State Cow/Calf Symposium Jan. 8 in McCook Marty tion Center in Denver. Robb will provide participants with an Drought will be the focus for the economic update of the droughts impact on cattle numbers and Beef Cow Genetics Advances

> production year. "Three concurrent educational sessions will be available with an industry panel reprethroughout the day as well and participants will have the opportunity to pick and choose which topics they want to attend," said Brian Strauch, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension

ation outlook for the upcoming

Aaron Stalker, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension beef nutritionist, will discuss Beef Cow Nutritional Impliis held in cooperation among cations During and Following Drought; Rick Rasby, Exten-Research and Extension and the Feeding and Grazing Cornstalks University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Alternative Rations During Drought; and Richard Randle, This year's program will open Extension beef cattle veterinarwith some remarks from the new ian will be talking about the re-University of Nebraska-Lincoln cent decline in conception rates Extension dean and director, and some preliminary results of for the symposium, contact the Chuck Hibberd, on his visions a University of Nebraska-Lincoln survey.

The keynote speaker will be James Robb, director of the educational sessions include: low-county@unl.edu or contact Livestock Marketing Informa- Good Beef Production Practices, Strauch at brian.strauch@unl.edu.

County Extension Agent

provide a current market/situ- and Economic Implications of Herd Management Decisions

> during Drought. The symposium will conclude sented by various producers and university researchers.

The free symposium is sponsored by McCook National Bank, AmFirst Bank-McCook, First Central Bank-McCook. Furnas County Livestock Association, Farm Credit Services of America, Ag Valley Coop, Adams Bank and Trust, Frenchman Valley Coop and DuPont.

Registration is required by Jan. 2 to secure proper quantision beef specialist, will discuss ties of drinks, rolls and the noon meal, as well as handouts from presenters. Vendors are welcome. Contact Brian Strauch at 308-345-3390 or 877-674-6947

For more details or to register University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension office in McCook at Other topics of the concurrent 877-674-6947 or email red-wil-

## Ag Talk with Jeanne

### **Efficiency of Off-Season Irrigation**

Some irrigators with mediumto-fine-textured soils like to make use of their available water supplies during the off-season by making an irrigation application before the crop is planted. This allows them to make sure the soil water profile is in good shape before the growing season begins, in hopes that this will help their irrigation system better keep up with crop demand during the growing

Successfully Managing the

Cow Herd in the Course of

2013 Tri-State Cow/Calf Sym-

posium and Trade Show Jan. 8.

Registration will begin at 8:30

a.m. central time with opening

remarks beginning at 9 a.m. and

the program concluding around

4:30 p.m. at the Red Willow

County Fairgrounds Commu-

nity Building in McCook. The

symposium is held in conjunc-

tion with a trade show featuring

regional vendors. Attendees will

have time throughout the day to

The symposium is an every

other year effort between Colo-

rado, Kansas and Nebraska and

Colorado State University Ex-

tension, Kansas State University

for the future of Extension.

visit displays.

Extension services.

In this way, "off-season" irrigation applications can be a form of insurance. This does not apply to sandier soils with low water-holding capacity, however. Off-season irrigation applica-

tions are almost always less efficient than in-season irrigation applications, but that's a tradeoff that some irrigators are willing to accept. Water applied during the off-season can be lost due to drainage from the soil profile or through evaporation. This applied water may also become unnecessary if there is an unusually heavy amount of precipitation during the spring that would have filled the profile even without the off-sea-

It's not possible to completely eliminate any risk of inefficiency from off-season irrigation. The question is, how inefficient is offseason irrigation likely to be under various situations? And how can producers maximize the efficiency of these applications?

There are three main factors that determine the efficiency of off-season irrigation on medium- to fine-textured soils: 1) The amount of precipitation that falls between the time of the off-season irrigation application and the time of use by the crop; 2) The amount of time between the offseason application and the time an application under those conof use; 3) The amount of water in the soil profile at the time of the off-season application.

efficiency of water applied during the off-season, however, is most efficient, should be considthe amount of available water ered only if it is likely that inin the soil at the time of the off- season irrigation won't be able season application. Efficiency to keep up with crop needs.

Agronomy Specialist begins to drop off dramatically when the percent available water in the soil profile is greater than 60 percent at the time of application. If the soil profile is at 70-80 percent of available soil water, ir-

rigators would want to seriously

consider whether an off-season

application is wise, especially in

the fall. The efficiency of such

ditions is very low.

It should be repeated that inseason irrigation applications The greatest effect on storage are always the more efficient. Off-season irrigation, even at its

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