



EMERGENCY PERSONNEL and medical staff removed patients from the Cheyenne County Hospital Tuesday around noon when a gas leak was discovered. Patients were moved to the St. Francis high school gym until the scene was safe for them to return.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Gas leak causes evacuation

By Karen Krien

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At 11:52 on Tuesday, 911 dispatch alerted firemen that there was a gas leak near the hospital and patients were being evacuated. Ryan Murray, emergency manager, reported a semi truck delivering supplies to the hospital had backed into a gas meter in the alley. The gas leak had allowed gas to enter the hospital building through the ventilation system.

Because of the active gas flow leak, said Shawna Blanka, public information officer, all patients had to be evacuated.

Within minutes, three patients and a patient receiving out-patient care were outside of the hospital and loaded into ambulances.

The patients, wrapped in blankets and with intravenous equipment attached, were unloaded in the high school gym. The thermostat had been turned up so

patients would not be cold.

A temporary chart table was set up, hospital and clinic staff along with emergency medical technicians were getting patients settled and bringing in necessary equipment including cots. Students were busy bringing in chairs and tables incase they were needed, and were going on errands. The kitchen staff had also prepared lunch for patients and others gathered in the gym.

In the meantime, the firemen had arrived at the alleyway of the hospital. Travis Jensen with Midwest Gas Company, had turned off the gas but the smell of the gas was in the air.

Firemen and gas company officials surveyed the hospital and surrounding homes, Mr. Murray said. By 12:30 p.m., the area had been cleared of any danger and patients were returned to the hospital. All gas service had been restored to

the hospital and homes.

The emergency evacuation happened when the weather was relatively mild, around 35 degrees, and when there were only a few patients in the hospital. Had it happened several weeks ago, the hospital beds were full and the weather was bitterly cold.

Firemen and emergency medical technicians, along with the medical staff, acted quickly in the emergency.



WILLIAM CHERRY didn't know it but his opponent was about to turn him on his back at the Benkelman tournament Sunday afternoon. William did OK as he ended up placing third in the 4 and under division.

Herald photo by Shawna Blanka

More plans finalized for 125th celebration

By Karen Krien

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Around 20 people attended the third planning meeting for St. Francis' 125th celebration. The activities are to be held the week of June 11 in conjunction with the St. Francis high school alumni banquet.

The 125 committee agreed to not interfere with the alumni banquet and meeting held between 6 and 8 p.m. at the high school. The alumni letter will include a list of activities during the week so those alumni coming back will be able to know what is going on.

One of the highlights of the weekend will be Glenn Zweygardt's one-man art display of sculptures. Zweygardt, a former resident and the son of the late Gus and Martha Zweygardt, has his sculptures located all over the world. He will leave some of his sculptures in St. Francis for a limited time so people will be able to enjoy them. He also plans to donate one piece to St. Francis in honor of his parents.

One of the purposes of the meeting was to try to pin down some of the times and days for activities so a list of events can be included in the alumni letter which will be sent out in April. Another purpose of the meeting was to let people know that an account has been established although Kary Meyer, chairman, is continuing to work with the county attorney and the Internal Revenue Service. They agreed that there would be three signatures on checks written on the account. Even though people at the first meeting had been encouraged to donate \$25, there was only \$200 in the account.

People can donate by making checks out to "Celebrate St. Francis." Mrs. Meyer will also apply for a New Generation Fund grant. The New Generation Fund board awards the interest to groups but they need to apply. The 125th celebration could receive up to \$2,000.

Mrs. Meyer also contacted the Kansas Country Living magazine which has a listing of different

activities within the state. Tammy Grice had also contacted the KWCH television station.

Mrs. Grice reported on several projects including the posters which Allison Grice will design and print through the Northwest Kansas Technical College in Goodland. She said Deb George, who does custom design on shirts, hats and bags, will work with her in getting T-shirts at a low price as well as other memorabilia for the celebration. Mrs. Meyer said any items leftover after the celebration can be sold at Majestic Service.

Alumni pays for music

Scott King has agreed to bring his music to St. Francis on both Friday and Saturday. The alumni will be paying for Mr. King, who has agreed to work for a lesser price.

Friday

Some of the Friday events include the Art Walk from 4 to 7 p.m. on Main Street. There will be art and music during the three hours.

The barbecue starting at 6 p.m.

Travis Jensen, who is in charge of this event, is still seeking donations of meat, preferably bottom flat beef. He had talked to Mike Callicrate who said he would sell the meat at a good price. The beer garden, if the city council approves, will also start at 6.

The beard contest will start at 8. Prizes were briefly discussed.

Margaret Poling will organize a co-ed softball tournament. They discussed places to hold the tournament.

No parade

Saturday, the lack of interest in the parade was discussed and it was decided to scrap that entertainment. People had indicated that they would rather see a bigger fair parade.

Games will still be held for kids, the historical society will hold their annual brat feed at the museum, there will be a sand volleyball tournament, food vendors, and music with a street dance set for that evening. Businesses are urged to stay open during the day.

See 125th on Page 8A

Possible delay for newspapers

Because of changes in the Postal Service system, some copies of today's paper may be delivered one to three days later than you're used to, especially those outside of St. Francis and Bird City.

Because the service planned to close the Colby mail-sorting "plant" Tuesday, mail from the 677 Zip code is being trucked to North Platte, Neb., and either sent on its way or sent back a day or two later.

We are working with postal officials to minimize the impact of

this change, said Publisher Karen Krien, but the bottom line is some papers may reach readers later than normal.

If your delivery changes, please let us know when you were getting the paper and when it came this week. Where possible, we'll make adjustments.

Contact *The St. Francis Herald* at (785) 332-3162 or email karen.k@nwkanas.com, or Circulation Manager Sheila Smith at (785) 899-2338 or s.smith@nwkanas.com.



SARAH WHITMORE plays her flute with the band.

Student performs with All-State Honor Band

One of the highest achievements a high school music student may earn is to be selected for the Kansas Music Educators Association State-Wide Honor Band, Orchestra or Choir. Participants in the honor groups are considered to be the finest student musicians in Kansas. St. Francis Community High School senior, Sarah Whitmore, was a member of the 2013 All-State Honor Band.

Sarah traveled to Wichita on Feb. 21-23 for the honor band in-service workshop, which is attended by music educators from across the state. The concert band rehearsed Thursday through Saturday morning, and then presented a concert at the Century II Concert Hall on Saturday afternoon. The honor band was under the direction of Paula Crider, retired professor emeritus of the University of Texas.

This was Sarah's second year

to perform in the All-State Band. Sarah has participated in numerous honor bands and has received many music awards and recognition throughout her high school career. While her intended college major is English, she plans to continue her musical endeavors with a minor in music at Kansas State University or Fort Hays State University.

Sarah is a student of Debbie Fiala, St. Francis high school music director.

Students are selected via a rigorous audition process that begins at the district level. Sarah had auditioned for and performed with the Northwest Kansas Honor Band in Hays in December. The next step was a live audition in Salina on Jan. 5. Over 100 flute players from across the state took part in the auditions and Sarah was one of 10 selected for the 1-2-3-4A Concert Band.