



ST. FRANCIS FIREMEN trained with the Kansas Fire and Rescue grain equipment rescue equipment on Saturday. Firemen, in a mock exercise, prepared to pull one of the men out of a grain bin using special equipment. There were three trainers with the Institute and 13 St. Francis firemen participating in the training.

Herald staff photos by Tim Burr

Firemen train for grain bin rescue

By Karen Krien

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The Kansas Fire and Rescue Training Institute truck rolled into St. Patrick's Day, at the Cheyenne Center for Creativity at 109 N. Quincy, St. Francis.

George Harper, St. Francis fire chief, reported 13 St. Francis firemen and some of the staff from the St. Francis Equity and Wheeler Equity participated in the training

which started in the morning, despite the extremely cold temperatures. The first part of the training was classroom training taught by three trainers with the institute. They learned what to do and not do while extracting someone who has been trapped inside a grain bin and how to cut the bin to let the grain out without collapsing the sides of the bin.

They then moved outside

where the institute truck was set up to give them hands-on training in rescue and releasing the grain. The 35-foot trailer includes a grain bin, grain hopper and equipment to pull the person from a bin.

Most entrapments occur when someone uses poor judgement and enters a grain bin when grain is being removed. Of those trapped in the bin, only about 3

percent survive, said Pat Owens, fireman.

People who become trapped inside a grain bin can suddenly find themselves engulfed by grain. As they try to escape, the grain is like quicksand and it is impossible to pull themselves out and it is also difficult for someone to lift them out without specialized training.

Chief Harper said that the grain around the person is so heavy that

when they are pulled out without special equipment, it can pull joints out of their sockets.

St. Francis firemen took turns putting themselves in a position of being in a grain bin (the grain was only up to their waist). The special equipment tube, which was placed around them (or in a real life situation, the victim), allows the grain to be sucked out of the tube and frees the victim.

Bartlett Grain has rescue tubes and both the St. Francis Equity and Wheeler Equity have tripods to use in case of an accident.

The Wheeler Equity furnished the food for the lunch. It was prepared and served by Doug Ross from the St. Francis Equity. Chief Harper reported the trainers said it was one of the best meals they have had while training.



CUTTING THE WRONG way can cause a grain bin to collapse. George Harper, fire chief, left, practices the right cuts. Above, firemen place tubes around the victim before sucking the grain out.

Couple sings Irish music

Music of the Emerald Isle will be performed from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., on Sunday, March 17, St. Patrick's Day, at the Cheyenne Center for Creativity at 109 N. Quincy, St. Francis.

Former St. Francis residents Mike and Ione Slattery of Hays, will present an Irish seisiún, a unique program of Irish pub songs, poems and humor, at the newly opened Center.

Ever since the Slattery's retired from teaching careers in May 2011, they have been pursuing their interests in Irish ancestry and music. According to the Slattery's, in Irish culture, people use music as a way to celebrate and bring people together.

Ione, a St. Francis native, met Mike in St. Francis where he began his teaching career after graduating from Fort Hays State University. Mike, a native of Wright, taught in St. Francis

from 1973-76. Ione, the daughter of Dr. Ernest and Bonnie Cram, graduated from Indiana University with a degree in ballet. Ione taught dance during their first year of marriage.

In 1977 they both accepted teaching positions in Valley Falls. Ione taught elementary music and Mike taught junior high social science and physical education and health for grades seven through 12.

When Mike received a Fulbright Scholars Award from the Council for International Exchange of Scholars, the couple took teaching jobs in England. During the 1979-80 school year both taught in Chatham, Kent, England, approximately 30 miles southeast of London. Mike taught at Fort See IRISH on Page 7

Commissioners nearer to signing nursing home lease

By Karen Krien

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The Cheyenne County Commissioners met in special session on Thursday evening to discuss the Village lease with the Good Samaritan Society. After going through the lease, paragraph by paragraph, they agreed that, if the Society agrees to the few last changes, they will plan to sign the agreement at the March 29 meeting.

In October 2010, there was a fire at the Good Samaritan Vil-

lage in St. Francis. The facility was closed for about three months while renovations were made. When it opened, the nursing home which, before the fire, could handle 48 residents, was only able to take about half that. Later, the kitchen and dining room were opened and three private rooms and some offices were finished. Today, the nursing home can take 34 residents.

Following the last of the renovations at the nursing home, the Good Samaritan Society, which

owns the nursing home and apartments, offered to sell the home and apartments to the county for \$1 with the agreement that the Society lease the nursing home for the next five years. The county taxpayers also agreed to provide up to 6 mills or approximately \$200,000 a year to help keep the nursing home open.

The commissioners have been looking into other nursing home costs per resident and leases, trying to make sure that the lease they

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