



THE ST. FRANCIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S Accelerated Reading program got off to a wet start Friday afternoon. The temperature was around 100 degrees and the cool water was enjoyed and was fun for the kids who are now into their second week of school. Herald staff photo by Tim Burr

## Burn ban adopted at Friday's meeting

By Karen Krien

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The county commissioners, at the Friday meeting, adopted a burn ban effective today, Aug. 30.

Ryan Murray, county emergency manager, and George Harper, St. Francis fire chief, had advised that the burn ban be adopted. The ban will be rescinded after there has been sufficient rain to justify it.

All entities involved including law and landfill, would be notified of the ban by the 911 dispatcher.

### Fair board

Dick Bursch, fair board president, said before the fair, their board had been short two members and after the fair, five board members, Karol Lohman,

Sean and Jenni Cravens, Adam Peter and Mark Mills had resigned.

Mr. Bursch had seven people who had agreed to join the fair board. The commissioners approved the following new members: Danielle Holzwarth, Troy Zwegardt, Isaac Sturgeon, Blake Krien, Chance Hobrock, Margo Douthit and Josh Johnson.

Updating the commissioners, Mr. Bursch said the 4-H premium sale at the fair was one of the biggest sales ever and the board had made the first payment on the roof covering the livestock arena. Mr. Thadani noted he had seen the thank you to Wheeler Equity in the special after fair section.

Next year, Mr. Bursch said,

the Thursday night grandstand entertainment will be Baxter Black.

### Hearing

The public hearing to approve the Cemetery District 2 budget was held with no one protesting. The district asked for the same amount as last year, 1 mill, and will receive \$47,000 in ad valorem taxes.

### Ambulance report

Jannelle Bowers, ambulance director, said she and Reid Raile, emergency medical technician, had stood by at the fire, handing out water, sports drinks and snacks to firemen at the fire on Thursday. Most of the time, the emergency technicians are paid a flat rate but because this fire lasted from 2:30 to 11 p.m., she wondered if

additional money could be paid. The commissioners approved the request.

Mrs. Bowers then asked for 10 minutes executive session to discuss financial matters of a third party. Then additional 10 minutes to talk about personnel. Mr. Patton announced that no decisions would be made on either sessions.

### In other business

Scott Strom, representing 360 Energy Engineers, asked that the commissioners let him and his company walk through the county buildings including the courthouse to see where they would recommend energy saving, thus, cost saving improvements.

For instance, he said, the light

fixtures in the courthouse are extremely outdated. They are not giving out good light, in a year or two, it will be impossible to get parts to fix them and even bulbs.

Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, said no one had ever approached the commissioners concerning ways of conserving energy. The walk through the buildings will not cost the county, Mr. Strom said. No decision was made as to whether or not to pursue the study.

### In other business

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The commissioners approved a wire transfer to CorporatePlan, the county's health insurance provider, for \$40,000. A brief discussion followed, noting that

next year, there will be a cap set for health insurance and bids will be sent out to different insurance companies.

Helen Dobbs, Cheyenne County Development director, updated the commissioners on promotion material she has been distributing.

Terry Miller, clerk, was given permission to attend an abstract meeting.

### Next meeting

The commissioners meet on the 15th and the last working day of the month. The next meeting the 15th, falls on a Sunday. They agreed to meet on Friday, Sept. 13, at 8 a.m.

## St. Francis farmer earns \$1,000 on maximum yield

Three Kansas wheat farmers, including one from St. Francis, have each earned \$1,000 by winning their respective regions in the 2013 Kansas Wheat Yield Contest.

Chuck Downey, St. Francis, won the western region by getting 70.05 bushels per acre from the Syngenta variety SY Wolf. This is the second yield contest win for Chuck, who farms and ranches with his wife, Megan and her father, Walter Douthit, who owns much of the land Chuck farms. Walter has been supportive of Chuck's efforts to improve wheat yields over the years, which include improving crop health by using micro-nutrients and fungicide.

Moisture is often the limiting factor in Cheyenne County, where he achieved the 70.05 bushel per acre yield. Downey says his contest field received less than five-inches of precipitation from planting to harvest.

The contest field is silty clay loam that last year had been in wheat. He planted the crop Oct. 12, applying 1.03 million seeds per acre. The seed was treated with Cruiser Maxx and Cruiser 5FS to ward off disease and insect threats.

The contest field received 24 gallons of 28-0-0-5, using streambars. At Feekes 5 (final tillering stage), Downey sprayed 6

ounces of zinc, 5.5 pounds of magnesium sulfate, Coron and Ele-max, plus the herbicides Barrage and Ally, plus the fungicide Tilt. At Feekes 10.1 (beginning of heading stage), he applied another round of zinc, magnesium sulfate, Coron and Ele-max, plus the fungicide Twinline.

In all, Downey made four post-emerge passes across the field to apply crop protectant products. That's more than most farmers would make, but Downey makes sure the investment has a chance to pay off. "It is important not to put the inputs on the crop until there is yield potential," he says. "Each time I put more money into the crop, I make sure there is enough potential return on investment to pay for it."

Although 2013 wasn't a year in which diseases were of utmost concern, Downey applied two shots of fungicide anyway. The applications kept the plant greener longer, which he believes prolongs the grainfill period, adding bushels to the field.

"The herbicide tends to delay harvest, which can be nerve-racking when storm clouds begin to gather in the west," he said. "I have sandy soils that tend to be ready to cut earlier, so by using fungicide on our heavier soils I can spread out harvest a bit."

### Other winners

Ron Ohlde, Palmer, won the central region with a yield of 93.57 bushels per acre with the Westbred variety Cedar; and Leland Johnson, Westmoreland, won the eastern region with a 78.7 bushel per acre yield from the Kansas Wheat Alliance variety Everest.

"The yield contest highlights success stories of how Kansas farmers are maximizing yield potential and producing high quality wheat for the marketplace," said Justin Gilpin, chief executive officer of Kansas Wheat. "It also serves as an educational opportunity for producers to learn new management strategies for improved wheat production."

Kansas Governor Sam Brownback will present prize checks and plaques to the winners at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. The brief presentation will take place at 2:30 p.m. Sept. 14, at the Kansas Wheat Exhibit inside the Pride of Kansas building.

Cash prizes of \$1,000 come from Kansas Wheat and BASF, the lead corporate sponsor of the Kansas Wheat Yield Contest. In addition, the Kansas Wheat Alliance, Westbred and Syngenta will provide \$500 cash awards to each winner. Other sponsors include Bayer CropScience and Plains Gold.

## City council meets with county commissioners to talk about concerns

By Douglas Sloper

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The Saint Francis City Council met with the Cheyenne County Commissioners at 7 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 26. Commissioners Dale Patton and Brett Poling attended and reported that the county budget was down approximately 9 percent from last year. This was done by capping health care costs and cutting other expenses.

Mr. Poling asked the council about the grocery store situation. There was much discussion about how much city and county sales tax is being lost as a result of the failing grocery store. Concerns were also expressed regarding St. Francis residents becoming more comfortable with going out of town to buy their groceries and once a store is started up again, it could take a long time to get people to shop at home again.

Councilman Roger Jensen applauded the cooperation between the county and the city regarding the recent road millings and the landfill. Mr. Poling pointed out that landfill supervisor Byron Moberly has been doing an excellent job staying on top of issues at the landfill. Mr. Patton pointed out that keeping the landfill functioning has been a priority and was impressed with the city recycling efforts. He said that there have been other towns that

have had to close their landfills which turned into a very costly issue to get trash moved to another county or landfill.

Superintendent J.R. Landenberger brought up the subject of abandoned properties and properties which property taxes were not being paid. He expressed frustration that the city ends up cleaning these properties while owners do nothing.

"All that seems to be done is that the delinquent owner's names are published in the newspaper once a year and that is largely ignored by the owners anyway," he said.

A long discussion ensued in which Mr. Patton remarked that in his experience it would be too costly in the long run to pursue the people who outright refuse to pay their property taxes. Many are out of state and the cost to run notices in the local out-of-state newspapers would just cost the county too much. City attorney, Mike Day disagreed with Mr. Patton's assertions and asked him to talk to the county attorney to get an accurate figure for the cost of going after these delinquent owners.

The meeting ended with Mr. Patton repeating that he would get figures from the County attorney on the cost of dealing with delinquent property owners.