

# School board reviews new Common Core Standards

By Amanda Miller  
amiller@nwkansan.com

At the November St. Francis School Board meeting, board members discussed the audit for this fiscal year, the Common Core Standards that teachers will be adopting, training materials and opening bids on the sidewalk to the west of the grade school.

## Audit Report

As the board briefly reviewed the audit report for fiscal year 2013, there were only a few suggestions that the auditors had. They are already being addressed.

Some examples of the suggestions include cross-training for positions, and making a purchase from the blind and disabled. The auditors also suggested having a personnel handbook for the staff. Rob Schiltz, superintendent, said that everything is gone over in the August inservice that would be in a personnel handbook.

Tracy Neitzel, secretary for the superintendent, mentioned that the auditors are very helpful, and she can call with questions anytime. The audit report was prepared by Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball Auditors.

The school emergency plan was also reviewed by the board. The plan is on the back of every door in the schools, and is reviewed by the staff at the beginning of the school year. The plan is simple, quick, and up to date. Schools have regular emergency

drills to ensure all teachers and students are prepared in case of an emergency. Law enforcement has reviewed the plan and has a copy.

## Common Core State Standards

Mr. Schiltz went over the changes involved with the Kansas Assessment program. Carla Schiltz, test coordinator, has recently gone to meetings explaining how to get the Common Core implemented and learn how to teach in such a style starting next year.

According to the Kansas Department of Education's website, the Common Core State Standards are academic benchmarks intended to define the knowledge and skills that high school graduates will need in order to be successful in college and careers. They have been adopted by 46 states and Washington, D.C. This is important because a student in the St. Francis school district can go to almost every other state and assimilate into the classes easily.

Shannon Grover, school board member, said there are lots of misconceptions out there about the Common Core Standards.

Mr. Schiltz said that the federal government did not push these standards on us, and the scores do not count for much (as far as financial incentive). This is a transition period, and a matter of changing lesson plans to adopt.

This method of teaching is

intended to create deeper thinking in students. Rather than a student answering by multiple choice, the tests now will require explanation of the answers. Parents can learn more by going to the website [www.ksde.org/ks-commoncore](http://www.ksde.org/ks-commoncore) and can even get examples of test questions.

## Professional development

Mr. Schiltz presented a new method of training for teachers called PD 360, which is on-demand online professional development platform for educators. PD 360 contains videos demonstrating how to teach in various situations. Teachers can search basically any subject, he said, and find information in video form.

He said this is an incredible tool for the teachers. The final approval of this policy will be voted on at the December board meeting.

## Bids for sidewalk

The board decided to start accepting bids to remove the sidewalk and parkway on the west side of the elementary school building. Bids are being accepted through Dec. 9. Letters will be sent to area contractors for bids on the project.

Mr. Schiltz said the area has needed to be cleaned up for some time. A new, clean, walkway area will replace the sidewalk and brush currently there.

The next school board meeting will be Dec. 12 at 8 p.m.



HOLLY HINGST and Gwen Keller help fill shoeboxes with gifts at Peace Lutheran Church for Operation Christmas Child.  
Herald staff photo by Amanda Miller

# City council meets with county commissioners to discuss taxes

By Karen Krien

karen.k@nwkansan.com

The St. Francis City Council met with the Cheyenne County Commissioners early Friday morning. The council meets with the commissioners about every two or three months. This meeting was used to discuss the matter of having a delinquent tax sale.

The last time the county had a tax sale was 8 years ago. The city council has been urging the commissioners to have a tax sale for several years so that some of the undesirable property in town could be cleaned up.

Dale Patton, commissioner chairman, immediately spoke up that having a delinquent tax sale is like spending dollars to raise dimes. For what it costs per individual, he said, we lose money. When there is a delinquent tax sale on the courthouse steps, there could be \$700,000 in delinquent taxes and only about \$100 will be collected.

Paula Keller, city council woman, wanted to know how he came up with the cost?

When you try to redeem a property on a tax notice, Mr. Patton said, heirs need to be found, some are deceased, there are litigations, taxes vary on whether it is farm ground or a residential property, but all take the same process, there is the cost of registered mail and publications. Everyone on the list will have to go through the same process.

The council's goal, said J.R.

Landenberger, city manager, is to have the property change hands and it will get better.

Clearing the property, said Mrs. Keller, will be income brought into the city and the county.

Mr. Patton pointed out that it had been his experience that when property is sold in a tax sale, people from outside the area buy it up as speculation property. They just hold on to it until someone wants to buy it.

Dale Weeks, city councilman, wondered if the property was generating income (for instance, farm ground), if a lien could be put on it? Comparing it to a bank, Mr. Patton said that the bank has the note to the property it is putting a lien on, but the county doesn't own the land.

Bruce Swihart, city councilman, said that if a person lives in a "blighted" area where there is poorly kept property, it lowers the value of their property. If they try to sell the good property, the blighted property could keep the good property from selling, especially at the valued price.

The council was adamant that there be a delinquent tax sale, noting that there is a 10 year limit on taxes, with the first year rotating off after 10 years, and those owed taxes will "go away."

Roger Jensen, city councilman, suggested that, if there was a delinquent tax sale every three years, it would keep the delin-

quent taxes cleaned up.

There is no "bite" in having people pay their taxes, Mr. Jensen said. Sure, their name is printed in the paper, but they know it will be, and evidently don't care. And, in 10 years, those taxes are at the maximum.

You want to have a tax sale? Dale asked. Then maybe the city would like to help with the cost.

Why don't you have Mike Day (city attorney) and Karan Thadani (county attorney) look into the costs, and maybe we can come up with a hard figure on what it would cost to have a tax sale, Mr. Patton said.

We need to get together and see what we can do - to see if we can get a delinquent tax sale organized, said Brett Poling, commissioner.

We will pursue the matter, Mr. Patton said, and put money in the budget for next year.

## In other business:

Mayor Scott Schultz, on behalf of the council, thanked the commissioners for the good roads in the county, especially to Keller Pond.

Mr. Jensen said the county landfill is no longer a "dump," as it is being very well managed.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Patton thanked the council for serving the city of St. Francis. Mr. Ketzner added that the council was a good group to work with. Together, we come up with good ideas and now we are willing to try to find a solution.

# Obituaries

## John D. Eggers

Dec. 8, 1936 - Nov. 13, 2013



John Eggers

John D. Eggers, age 77, of Salina, died on Nov. 13. He was born on Dec. 8, 1936, in Bird City. He was a farmer in Bird City until 2006, when a fall impaired his health. Even though his body would no longer allow him to farm, he continued farming in his dreams until the day he died.

John was survived by his wife Yvonne (who he lovingly called his "girlfriend") of 56 years; four sons; Dexter and wife Ann of Salina, Jim and wife Jennifer of Dodge City, Walt of Salina and Tobe of Manhattan; one daughter; Angela Walters and husband Kevin of Hays; four grandchildren: Jacob Eggers of Grand Junction, Colo., Amy Guerrero and husband Victor of Dodge City, Darin John Eggers of Great Bend, and John Walters of Hays; one great-grandson, A.J. Guerrero of Dodge City; sisters; Nina Welch of Chula Vista, Calif., and Emily Vallin of Long Island, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Amy Eggers, sister Neva Richmond, and infant daughter Karlene Kay.

Our dad lived a full and enjoyable life. He showed us how to live well, laugh often, and love much.

Live well: Dad attended country school and elementary and high school at Bird City, grad-

uating with the class of 1955. During his school years, he played many sports. He loved telling the story about his 1954 team that was not just undefeated, but unscored on the entire year! He also played basketball and track, lettering every year. Following high school, he attended auctioneer school in Mason City, Iowa. In 1957, he married, started a family, and began his life on the farm. He took pride in farming and always enjoyed his work.

Dad's passion for horses was a big part of his life. He was an avid horse rider and trainer. He loved helping young people with their horses and served as a 4-H horse leader for many years. He also loved fishing, camping, hunting, and especially enjoyed the Arkansas and Colorado hunters that arrived every year to celebrate opening pheasant season. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and Saint Joseph Church. He served on the school board, cemetery board and church council. He was always ready and willing to help friends and neighbors with cattle, farming, and whatever they needed. His faith in God was always evident and he had a great respect for all the priests he knew. We can testify to the many times he wrestled with us and wouldn't let us up until we said our "Angel of God" prayer!

Laugh often: Everyone that knew him knew that he loved joking around and telling stories. Laughter and fun was a big part of his daily life. He was always ready to play cards, no

matter what time of day. He was never bored. If he was waiting in line somewhere, you might see him pull a handful of pennies from his pocket and engage a few bystanders in a game of "pitching pennies". His sense of humor never left him, even during his most challenging days. He was always making someone smile or laugh.

Love much: Dad has said he never knew a stranger. When asked if there was anyone that he didn't like or couldn't get along with, he shook his head no. He loved and respected his parents and never fought with them. He loved his three sisters dearly. He loved his friends and wished the best for every person he met.

The love of his life was clearly our mom. She has said many times that she's the one who had the fairy tale. The worst thing we ever heard my dad call mom was "goofy" and he even said that as if it were term of endearment. He called us kids that too, once in a while, although there was no questioning his unconditional love for us and how proud he was of each of us.

During his final days, he was asked how he would like to be remembered. He responded, "that I loved my wife and kids".

A mass and burial was held Nov. 16 at the St. Joseph Catholic Church in Bird City. Interment was at the Bird City Cemetery. Services were by Knodel Funeral Home.

Memorials and condolences may be sent to the family at: 301 Seitz Drive, Salina, KS, 67401.

# Santa's Workshop Special Ads

Reach your customers with Christmas specials and ideas for gift giving

- Special Pricing
- Special Placement



# Christmas In St. Francis

## Christmas Opening • Friday, Nov. 29

- All Day - Treasure Hunt
- 125th Celebrate St. Francis items on sale (Herald office)
  - 6 p.m. - Grand "PARADE OF LIGHTS"
  - Santa will be at Bankwest after the Parade (Kids - tell your folks to bring their cameras!)

Stores will have extended hours for your shopping convenience.

- Soup Supper at the St. Francis Senior Center