

United Methodist Christmas Dinner

If you do not have plans for Christmas dinner, you are invited to the United Methodist Church for a free dinner on Christmas day. The dinner, located at 512 S Scott in St. Francis, is open to anyone in the area. You may begin arriving at 10:30 a.m., and dinner will be served at 12:30. A traditional Christmas meal will be served, and you do not have to bring anything. If you want to call in ahead of time, you may call Warren at 785-772-7098, but that is not necessary.

There will be Christmas music before and after the meal. You may come and go, visit, or play games. If you have a favorite game, please bring it with you. If you want a meal delivered to your home, please call Warren.

Bail reduction denied for woman

**By Amanda Miller
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The District Court of Cheyenne County heard motions from the defense of Leanna Windell in court Dec. 11. Motions are being heard prior to the trial date. Ms. Windell's attorney requested that the judge dismiss the charge of premeditation, as well as reduce her bond.

Windell pled not guilty to the charge of premeditated murder in the first degree in the death of Brad Figgins. Figgins, 45, was found in the basement of his home the evening of April 3, 2013, with injuries to his head. He was taken by ambulance to the hospital, and later pronounced dead. The penalty for that charge is 25 years to life in jail.

District Court Judge Scott Showalter presided over the court date. Present were the defendant Leanna Windell with her defense attorney Charles Peckham. Also present for the prosecution was Assistant Attorney General Nicole Romine.

The first motion raised by

Peckham was the request for a Bill of Particulars. He requested specifically an itemized list from the state as to why it charged Ms. Windell with premeditation. The request was denied on the condition that discovery is done in a timely fashion and provided to the defense.

Mr. Peckham also filed a motion requesting that Judge Showalter dismiss the charge of premeditation. He argued that the state did not meet it's burden to prove premeditation at the preliminary trial. Judge Showalter stated he felt this was an issue that would be brought up again. The judge in the preliminary trial ruled that the state met it's burden. Inference of the evidence can be taken both ways, from the perspective of the defense and the state. He dismissed the motion, and left the decision in the capable hands of the jury in the coming trial.

Mr. Peckham filed a motion requesting that Ms. Windell's bond be reduced. Her bond is currently set at \$1 million. Judge Showalter heard arguments on both sides regarding reducing the bond, and Ms. Windell possibly being out on bond. His final ruling was that at this time, he will not reduce the bond. Judge Showalter stated that Mr. Peckham must put together some type of plan as to where Ms. Windell would live and how she would function. He also must address the safety of community. Right now Judge Showalter does not feel comfortable letting her out, but if Mr. Peckham can return with a detailed plan, he will listen.

Finally, Mr. Peckham filed a motion requesting that his client receive proper treatment. The state asked specifically what the defense is requesting, because they felt the request was unclear. Mr. Peckham praised Sheriff Cody Beeson for working diligently to address any concerns his client had, and having to work with other counties because Cheyenne County does not have a jail. However, he felt moving Mr. Windell several times to different facilities was not conducive to communication with his client and her well-being.

Judge Showalter stated that he has no intention of "riding shotgun" to Sheriff Beeson's jurisdiction. It is at the discretion of the sheriff which facility would be best for Ms. Windell. The judge also praised Sheriff Beeson for his time and efforts in the manner. He did not enter any order regarding the motion except to state that if Mr. Peckham needed to talk to his client, to do so whenever he felt necessary.

Sheriff Beeson is preparing a security plan for the upcoming trial. Motions by both the defense and the prosecution will be addressed again in January.

Charity provides support to local families

**By Amanda Miller
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For the past three-and-a-half decades, The Ronald McDonald House Charities of Denver has offered a loving home away from home to families needing to be near their seriously ill or injured children while they're being treated in the area hospitals. For the next week and a half, local families that have been personally touched by

this "home away from home" are doing a drive to collect goods for the charity.

Here in St. Francis, there have been many families that have benefited from the Ronald McDonald House. Several local families have utilized this home away from home in the past, are currently using it, or will in the future.

There are two houses in the Denver metropolitan area. The downtown Denver house, close to Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center, has 31 rooms for families. The Aurora house, which is close to Children's Hospital, has 45 rooms. The only two guidelines to stay in the house are that the families be from more than 60 miles away, and that the child in care is 21 or younger.

Cassandra McKee, the house manager for the Denver Ronald McDonald House, said that the children that are in care are critically ill or injured. In some cases, outpatient children's families can also stay at the house, such as if the child is in chemotherapy. The Ronald McDonald House is there to meet all the family's needs, be broad shoulders for those families to stand on, and be there even just to listen. It is a very emotional, trying time for these mothers and fathers.

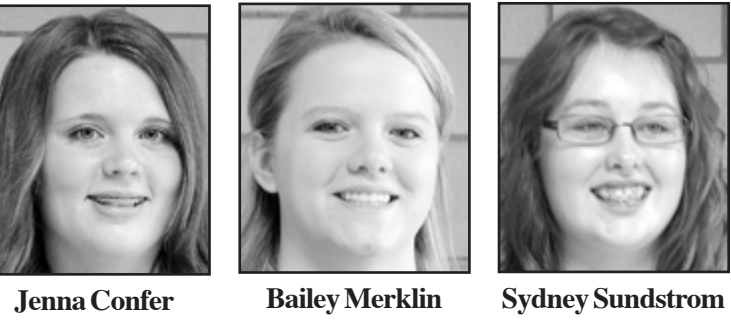
"The Ronald McDonald House does a lot of good for a lot of families. I truly enjoy being a part of it and seeing people in the community helping families during such a trying time in their life," said Ms. McKee.

To help make their stay more comfortable, it is asked that donations are taken to Frewen Insurance by Dec. 30. The family of Wyatt Zimbelman will be donating their time for repairs needed at the house, and delivering all donated items.

Suggested items to be donated are:

- Laundry Rooms – powdered laundry detergent, dryer sheets, bleach
- Janitorial – disinfectant wipes, furniture polish, vacuum cleaners, paper towels
- Kitchen – food containers for leftovers, trash bags (13 & 30 gallon), freezer bags, dish towels
- Office – copy paper, postage stamps, white out
- Gift Cards – Home Depot, Office Depot, Target, Wal-Mart, Safeway
- Entertainment – tickets to sporting events, passes to local attractions, DVD players, DVD movies
- Miscellaneous – AA batteries, AAA batteries, 9 volt, band aids, monetary donations made out to RMH

Being alone in the hospital can be a traumatic experience, especially for children. And more than ever before, children in need of emergency treatment are being brought to Denver from bordering states for expert medical care. Donations collected will be going directly to the facilities in Denver that so many local families have used.



Jenna Confer Bailey Merklin Sydney Sundstrom

Students selected for district honor

Bailey Merklin, Sydney Sundstrom, and Jenna Confer were among high school musicians from the 22 county Kansas Music Educators Association Northwest Kansas District to be a part of the District Mini Convention II. This year, the convention featured concerts by three groups of outstanding young musicians: the High School Honor Choir, High School Orchestra, and the High School Honor Band.

Students auditioned in November for the privilege to perform in the honor band and choir. Bailey, a senior, was chosen to sing alto in the choir. Sydney, a sophomore trumpet player, and Jenna, a freshman clarinet player,

were selected to play in the honor band.

Bailey, Sydney and Jenna practiced individually for several weeks prior to the convention, then traveled to Fort Hays State University on Dec. 7, where they participated in rehearsals with the other honor choir and band members during the day. They performed in a public concert at the end of the day at the Beach/Schmidt Performing Arts Center.

This is the second year for Bailey to perform with the honor choir, and the first year for Sydney and Jenna in the honor band. All three are students of Debbie Fiala, director of music at St. Francis Community High School.

The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times Will CLOSE

Tuesday, Dec. 24, at noon and all day Wednesday, Dec. 25.



Ad and Copy Deadline is Friday, Dec. 20, at 5 p.m. The papers will be delivered to the boxes on Dec. 24 and on the routes Dec. 26.

The staff at the St. Francis Herald and Bird City Times wishes everyone a Merry Christmas!

Thank you

The countless outpourings of love and support for our families from our entire community of friends have reminded us of how blessed we are to have had Randy in our lives. From the emergency responders, the Raichart family, Bradley Fries, the hospital personnel, and all who came with food, cards, and love, to everyone who helped with the funeral and Randy's celebration of life, there aren't enough words to adequately thank you. We know we aren't alone in our grieving, as Randy touched so many lives. Sharing your memories and "stories about Randy" has been so comforting for us.

God bless you all.
Sally Hudson,
Emily,
Eleanor, Dustin, and Sara

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One Candle Power

A match lit candle
The soft warm glow
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A step into the past
It brings the heart around
Like a match lit candle
And the Book so profound.

— By Rob Webb, 2013

To — Joe and Dena Webb, Matt and Lindsay Brad, Jessica Matthies, Breelyn, Makaila, Carter & Henzley Charlie and Bernadeen Hess & family (Happy Birthday, Charlie!) Jim and Christine Thornton & family Kary and Kim Zwegardt & family And all at Cuppa Joe Espresso All the Rough Writers: Janet Carman, Bonnie Cram, Margaret Bucholtz, Susan Griffin, Barbara Ewing, Marie Holzwarth, Louanne Isernhagen, Lucille Rossbach, Joy Fisher, Hazel Douthit, Helene Landenberger & Rob Webb. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year From — Rob Webb

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