

Observing Kansas at a slower pace



Jeff Friesen, library link

• Pioneer Memorial Library director

I had an excellent opportunity last week to take a trip across Kansas and see a number of great towns and communities. This trip was not in a car - it was on a bike. The difference between traveling in a car rather than a bike is air conditioning and approximately 63 mph.

While it seems crazy to pay to ride a bike across Kansas, I was charmed by the number of communities that went all out to welcome a horde of bicyclers — approximately 800 altogether.

Granted, there were economic interests at play, but it was obvious that each community we stopped at was sincere in welcoming us and made a concerted effort to put their best foot forward.

The roads we traveled were mostly off the main thoroughfares. The route that we followed can be found at www.bak.org.

It is common knowledge now that I will be moving north to Montana, but I felt that this biking experience was a proper tribute to what I appreciate and respect so much about Kansas.

In fact, I had so many great experiences that it is hard to pin down all of the great moments during the trip, but I will always remember -

- The Bicycle Comedian in Ness City who has traveled 140,000 miles on a bike over the last 20 years - and across Kansas for his appointment with us
- Homemade pies and ice cream after a long trip to Sylvan Grove
- Hayrack rides in Troy, and a local farmer lending me the keys to his old flatbed (hay bales included) to run downtown when I was craving a soda

- Reading the novel “Lonesome Dove” by Larry McMurtry deep into the night (a fitting story as it speaks to the limits of a man’s fortitude)
- Dipping my front wheel into the Missouri River in the town of Elwood.

You probably aren’t convinced to ride across Kansas on a bike. But for me at least, I now have a clearer understanding of the old proverb that says that the journey is more important than the destination.

Seeing Kansas going 12 mph and stopping often was one of the greatest experiences of my life and if I get the chance I’ll do it again!

For a great reference on the many high points of Kansas browse through “The Kansas Guidebook for Explorers” by Marci Penner before your next trip. I was surprised at how much I didn’t know about Kansas!

By the way, after so many miles on a bike, the sorest part of my body was not my legs.

And as Captain Call might say in “Lonesome Dove,” if you don’t know what I’m gettin’ at then don’t bother asking.

Have a great week and don’t forget to stop and smell the roses!

Pioneer Memorial Library is located at 375 W. Fourth and open seven days a week. Summer hours are as follows: Monday through Wednesday, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Thursday, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. For more information contact the Library at 460-4470 or visit our web site at www.colbylibrary.com. As always, we are here to serve you.

Saint Francis puts gym plans on hold

By Karen Krien

Saint Francis Herald
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The addition of a gym to the south of the high school was tabled at the June 14 meeting of the St. Francis Board of Education.

The new high school gym has been discussed at length since the first of the year. However, after working with the architect and estimating costs, the project was tabled.

The board and administration had talked about a gym that would cost no more than \$1.5 million. It would

have included a facility that would hold more people, have a concession stand and commons area, rest rooms to accommodate more people and a walking track.

Mr. Werner said that the new gymnasium project seems to have hit a “lull.”

“It may well be that at this time

we just can’t afford the gymnasium that we need,” he said.

In the meantime, there are other projects which are currently being done at the school. The high school track has a new red surface and the old home ec room is being transformed into a computer technology room.

Demand for corn increases feed costs too

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) — Motorists might save a few cents a gallon filling their tanks with ethanol, but they could soon be paying more for a burger and a milkshake as a result.

Demand for corn to make ethanol is soaring and so are the prices, which have more than doubled in the past year. That’s bad news for beef and dairy producers who depend on grain to feed their herds. Many say the cost will be passed on to consumers in the form of higher grocery bills this year.

“There’s a lot of concern among

cattle feeders,” said Jim Gill, market director for Amarillo-based Texas Cattle Feeders Association. “It’s not a moneymaking proposition right now.”

Cattle feedyards like the one Kyle Williams manages in Texas, the nation’s leading cattle-producing state, is one of the first stops on the road to higher beef prices.

About a quarter of the 30,000 animals at Lubbock Feeders were bought before corn prices began to soar steadily and the added cost was not factored into the price. Williams knows he’ll lose money when it’s

time to sell.

Corn costs went from \$4 per 100 pounds last June to about \$8.50 per 100 pounds this month, Gill said. Cattle feeders are losing as much as \$100 per head because of the higher prices, he said.

By December, corn costs could push the already high beef prices consumers are paying even higher, Gill said.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that the average price for choice beef in May was already the second highest on record at nearly \$4.30 per pound, just a

couple of pennies under the record set in November 2003.

Cattle feeders and producers are not the only ones complaining about higher corn prices. Dairy farmers also are feeling the pinch.

“As more acres go into corn it takes out other forages,” Canton dairy farmer Scott Ortiz said.

Farmers who once grew forage crops like alfalfa, milo or grain sorghum are switching to corn, so there are fewer forage crops to feed dairy cows, said John Cowan, executive director of the Texas Association of Dairymen.

Best sellers

HARDCOVER FICTION

1. “A Thousand Splendid Suns” by Khaled Hosseini (Riverhead Hardcover)
2. “Blaze” by Richard Bachman (Stephen King) (Scribner)
3. “Double Take” by Catherine Coulter (Putnam)
4. “The Good Guy” by Dean Koontz (Bantam)
5. “The Harlequin” by Laurell K. Hamilton (Berkley Hardcover)
6. “The Navigator” by Clive Cussler and Paul Kemprecos (Putnam Adult)
7. “The Overlook” by Michael Connelly (Little, Brown and Company)
8. “The 6th Target” by James Patterson, Maxine Paetro (Little Brown and Company)
9. “The Children of Hurin” by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited by Christopher Tolkien (Houghton Mifflin)
10. “For One More Day” by Mitch Albom (Hyperion)

NONFICTION/GENERAL

1. “The Dangerous Book for Boys” by Conn Iggulden and Hal Iggulden (Collins)
2. “The Secret” by Rhonda Byrne (Beyond Words)
3. “The Assault on Reason” by Al Gore (The Penguin Press HC)
4. “The Reagan Diaries” by Ronald Reagan (HarperCollins)

5. “The Diana Chronicles” by Tina Brown (Doubleday)
6. “Einstein: His Life and Universe” by Walter Isaacson (Simon & Schuster)

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