

Bridge inspection bids

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
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It will cost Norton County \$18,800 to get its 188 bridges inspected this year.

Penco Engineering out of Plainville, which has done the every-other-year chore for the county in the past, was the low bidder on the project.

A business out of Ellsworth bid about \$21,000, Road and Bridge Office Manager Becky Wilson told commissioners at their end-of-the-month meeting on Friday.

Ms. Wilson said that the county also has three land agreements on places where it parks its road equipment. She said she sent out the renewal requests and has one back and one with a promise to return it.

The third one, however, is strange, she said. The landowner send a check, the county had sent in 2011 with a note that he had not been paid for 2013. She said that the landowner had cashed his check for 2012 and she didn't know why he hadn't cashed the 2011 check but checked with the treasurer and it was still good so she was sending it back along with the 2013 check, which was indeed

never cut or sent and the check for 2014.

"I think it's all good," she told the commissioners about the confusing situation.

The commissioners were signing the monthly vouchers to pay bills and Commissioner Charles Posson asked about one that was to pay for repairs to the tailgate of a pickup normally driven by Road Foreman Floyd Richard. Since Mr. Richard was at the courthouse he came in to talk to the commissioners about the bill.

He said that he hadn't turned the accident into the insurance company because he thought Mr. Posson didn't want to take a chance on raising the county's rates. The \$909 repair would have still cost the county \$409 after the \$500 deductible was met.

"But that's what you have it for," County Clerk Robert Wyatt pointed out.

Mr. Posson said that, while he didn't remember saying that he probably did, but it's likely not the right thing to do.

Mr. Wyatt suggested that he take care of the paperwork and Mr. Richard and the commissioners agreed that was the best

course of action.

The accident happened, Mr. Richard said, when a trailer came off the ball hitch and damaged the pickup's tailgate.

In an unrelated incident, Mr. Posson asked Mr. Richard to figure out how many and how tall the trees were that the road and bridge crew had removed from the airport.

The commissioner said that he didn't care but that the county had received a request from the Federal Aviation Administration and that agency wanted to know.

Mr. Floyd said that there were 10 piles of trees after they were cut and made a phone call to figure out the rest of the information.

He came back with an estimate that the county had removed seven to 10 large probably 30 to 40 foot trees and up to 70 small ones.

Mr. Posson said that the big ones would do and that he would let the engineers figure out what that was in meters, which was how the government had requested the measurement be done.

Celebrate Kansas Agriculture

Join us in celebrating Kansas agriculture. Showcase Kansas Agriculture Day and Kansas Agriculture Week activities to show support for members of the agricultural industry as well as your neighbors in need. During the month of March, Kansas agriculture and service to our fellow Kansans is at the forefront as we take part in celebratory activities as well as the Neighbor to Neighbor statewide food drive.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture is partnering with Dillon's Food Stores, three food banks across the state and the Kansas agricultural community

to host a variety of events, including a statewide food drive, to celebrate Kansas Agriculture Day and Kansas Agriculture Week. We need your help and support of this important initiative. Twenty-two percent of children in Kansas are at risk of being food insecure. Reducing hunger in Kansas is important to the Kansas agricultural community. This initiative gives us a unique opportunity to serve our neighbors in need as well as educate all Kansans, including students, about how the food they eat transitions from farm to fork.

The statewide food drive, ti-

tled Neighbor to Neighbor, has a goal to raise 100,000 meals for Kansas families in need by Kansas Ag Day, March 25. Drop-off points for the food drive include school districts, county extension offices, Farm Bureau offices and Dillon's Food Stores. Another way to participate in the Kansas Agriculture Day activities is to host a local Kansas Agriculture event.

For more information about the Neighbor to Neighbor food drive and Kansas Ag Day events, visit the Kansas Agriculture Day page on the Kansas Department of Agriculture website.

Kansas first in milk production

A report issued by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS), shows Kansas' milk production grew at the fastest rate in the United States, growing 7.3 percent, in 2013.

Kansas posted the third largest increase in total pounds of milk production in 2013, only trailing dairy giants Wisconsin and New York.

The dairy industry in Kansas is a crucial component to the state's agricultural industry and overall economic growth. According to Josh Roe, economist

for the Kansas Department of Agriculture, the value of milk produced in Kansas totaled nearly \$592 million adding approximately \$131 million to the Kansas economy and 482 jobs in 2013.

"The remarkable growth we have seen in Kansas this year and in years past is an excellent testament to the quality of work Kansas dairymen and women conduct on a daily basis," said Billy Brown, Kansas Department of Agriculture's Dairy Agribusiness Development coordinator. "Our dairies are an economic engine for rural

Kansas, and we thank our dairy farmers for their commitment to continuing to grow the industry and rural Kansas by producing a wholesome and nutritious product."

As the national demand for food and agricultural products continues to grow, Kansas is quickly rising to the top as the premier dairy frontier. Abundant farmland, feed supply, ideal climate and agriculture-based culture make it an ideal location to dairy. Kansas is home to more than 300 dairy farms and 137,000 dairy cows.

New wheat variety offers many benefits

At K-State's Agricultural Research Center in Hays, Guorong Zhang is a wheat breeder whose research focuses on trying to improve the wheat crop by developing new varieties with adaptation to western Kansas, including the latest new variety—a hard red winter wheat named KS09H19-2-3, or Oakley CL.

Development of Oakley CL began in 2002, and in late 2013, K-State's Agricultural Research Center released it. Its registered and certified seed is expected to become available in 2015, while test plots will continue to be analyzed in 2014. Zhang said Oakley CL came from a three-way cross, so it has three parents that contribute to its high yield potential Beyond herbicide tolerance, drought tolerance, disease resistance, and good quality for milling and baking it also has good straw strength and grain shattering resistance to combat high winds in western Kansas, and it has good resistance to pre-harvest sprouting.

"The Beyond herbicide resistance actually comes from one parent, Above. Above is the first publicly released one-

gene Clearfield wheat variety," Zhang said. "The other two parents are Danby—the most popular white variety in western Kansas—and another parent from our own breeding lines. From Above, this variety inherited its herbicide resistance. From Danby, it inherited some drought tolerance, so it has performed very well in western Kansas. The third parent had the wheat streak mosaic virus resistance. Stripe rust resistance might come from both Danby and the third parent."

Oakley CL, Zhang said, shows strong resistance to stripe rust, a fungal disease that causes wheat to have yellow or orange blister-like lesions arranged in stripes. He has tested it for both 2010 and 2012 races of stripe rust.

"In 2012, the race was changed, so a lot of varieties that were resistant in 2010 became susceptible in 2012," Zhang said. "Another major disease resistance for this variety is wheat streak mosaic virus resistance. Now in the market, very few varieties have the wheat streak mosaic virus resistance. It is a virus disease that is hard

to control with any fungicide, so we have to rely on the variety resistance."

In addition to disease resistance, many producers want to know the yield potential for new varieties, Zhang said. In two years of dry-land testing in northwest Kansas, Oakley CL had more than a five percent higher yield than Danby. It also is comparable with other Clearfield wheat varieties in western Kansas, as it had an 11 percent higher yield than the one-gene Clearfield variety Above in the 2011 Clearfield Qualification trial in Hays and a six percent higher yield than the two-gene Clearfield variety Brawl CL Plus in the 2013 Kansas Wheat Performance Test trial at northwestern Kansas testing sites.

Oakley CL also shows good results for end product testing—milling and baking.

"This variety has a good flour yield and also a very good mixing tolerance and a good loaf volume," Zhang said. "If this variety can be planted in larger acreage, then the millers and bakers will have good wheat to process."

Our Place is growing...



Construction continues on 'Our Place,' a replacement group home for six individuals served by Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas with intellectual disabilities. Developmental Services plans to have the home completed by June of 2014.

—Courtesy photo

Roadwork begins in Trego County

Weather permitting, on Monday, March 10, a resurfacing project will begin on a 22 mile stretch of K-147 from the Ness/Trego County line to Ogallah.

The scope of the project is to mill the existing pavement and overlay with 1 1/2 inch of new asphalt material.

Traffic will be reduced to one lane and controlled by flaggers and a pilot car during daylight hours. Minor delays should be expected during construction, not exceeding 15 minutes.

The Kansas Department of

Transportation urges all motorists to be alert, obey the warning signs, and "Give 'Em a Brake!" when approaching and driving through the construction zone.

The Department awarded this construction contract - totaling \$1,759,990 - to Venture, Corp. of Great Bend. The scheduled completion date for the project is late April, 2014, weather permitting.

This project is funded by T-WORKS, the transportation program passed by the Kansas Legislature in May 2010. Find

out more about this and other T-WORKS projects at: kdotapp.ksdot.org/TWorks/.

For questions concerning this project, please contact the Kansas Department of Transportation Area Three Construction Engineer Nick Rogers at (785) 625-9718 or nrogers@ksdot.org; or Kansas Department of Transportation Northwest District Engineer Jeff Stewart at (785) 877-3315 or jeff@ksdot.org.

LYLE NEWS

By Veda Wood

Beth Johnson was moved to Cedar Living, room 506 at the Oberlin hospital complex last Wednesday. She seems to be slowly improving.

Teilia and Aubrey High paid me a short visit Sunday afternoon. Aubrey gave me a little bracelet she had made. She is growing so fast.

June Jolly had been swimming already when I called Monday morning. She entertained one card club last week and they had the last meeting of another. They had six or eight inches of snow at her place and Lloyd Frandsens home Sunday morning; more than we had here.

Teresa Wood visited her family in Westmoreland, Kansas over the weekend. She stopped in Norton on her way home and talked to LaVerne Milner at the Andbe Home, and reported that she looked wonderful. Teresa

also stopped here in Norcatour for a quick visit as she had to work today, Monday.

A little snow doesn't stop Toots Magers' family from visiting on Sunday. Jane Engelhardt

and Judy and Charlit Easton came, and said there wasn't any snow until they got as far north as Jennings. Toots played pitch Friday, where 15 players were present.

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Legislative Town Hall Meeting with
Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, and Rep. Couture-Lovelady

PURPOSE: LEGISLATORS VISITING LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO SEEK IDEAS ON ISSUES BEING ADDRESSED IN THE 2014 KANSAS LEGISLATURE

SATURDAY, MARCH 8
9:00 A.M. TO 10:00 A.M.
Town and Country Kitchen, Norton, KS

Paid for by Senator Ralph Ostmeyer, Senate District 40, Christine Niblock, Treasurer; Representative Travis Couture-Lovelady, Representative District 110, Elaine Adams, Treasurer