



the town crier

Volume 25 Number 1

December 1, 2011

Ellis, Kansas

MORE LEAD TIME

Submitted by Charlene Weber,
Assistant City Clerk

Everyone is aware that the Postal Service is in financial difficulty, losing \$8 billion and \$10 billion a year. Due to the economic times and technology, first-class mail volume is down 25 percent during the past five years, and the Postal Services is predicting an additional 50 percent drop during the next five years as paying bills online becomes more prevalent. *Business as usual* is not an option for the Postal Service any more. Big losses means big changes.

It now appears that the majority of the state's mail processing operations will be handled in Wichita from here on out, with the consolidation of the Salina, Hutchinson, Hays, and Dodge City mail processing centers in with the Wichita processing and distribution center. The move would increase the amount of time Wichita processing center could run sorting equipment from six to 16 hours daily, thereby helping the Postal Service reduce the size of its infrastructure because it has excess capacity at nearly all processing centers.

Another way the Postal Service is looking to save money is to eliminate overnight first-class mail. Instead of taking one to three days to receive a letter, all mail would be shipped in two to five days. So any letter mailed in Ellis to an Ellis address is going to take a *minimum* of three days to be delivered, possible five or six days if a weekend is involved, because that letter must travel to Wichita to be postmarked and then return to Ellis before being delivered.

Mailed out on the last working day of each month, the Ellis municipal utility bills are dated—and due on—the 1st of each month. Patrons have

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There will be three city council positions up for election on April 3, 2012. The **FILING DEADLINE** for those positions is January 24, 2012 at noon. All of these offices have a two-year term. Those positions are currently held by Glenn Kohl, John Douglas, and Lyle Johnston. The requirements for filing for any of the elected City of Ellis positions are

- ◆ Qualified elector (registered voter) of the city'
- ◆ Pay filing fee or file by petition;
- ◆ File all necessary paperwork with City Clerk.

The Governing Body meets twice monthly on the first and third Mon-

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NEW SEWER RATES

Submitted by Philip Martin,
City Clerk
(Council member 2001-2009)

Okay let's just start by saying we knew this was coming and did not deal with it. Five years ago, the second step raise for sewer was put in effect. That raise took the monthly base charge from \$8.40 to \$9.70. That was the first raise in sewer rates in ten years. That raise came about automatically based on projections done ten years earlier when the sewer base rates were \$6.75.

I was on the City Council from 2001 to 2009. Every year at budget time our City Clerk told us we need to look at rates because, if we did not, the business of running the sewer would eventually lose money. Based on my experience on the Council and now at City Hall, I now know that every year since the last rate increase the expense of running a sewer system ate away at the operating cash balance. This year the alarm increased as the balance neared a negative figure.

We have an in-house "tool" for calculating rates using Excel. Each year's actual revenues (income) and expenditures (costs) from the independent audit of our books are used to predict future rate requirements. This summer after the budget hearings it became clear a rate study could not be postponed. Our Excel spreadsheet showed that unless a near doubling of sewer rates occurred, the sewer utility would violate Kansas law by losing money.

At a Council meeting this fall, that information was shared and a decision was made to seek a second opinion from an independent contractor specializing in municipal finance and rate structuring. The good news

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PAYMENT OPTIONS

- † The City Clerk's Office is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday [*normally through the lunch hour*].
- † Customers may place payments in the night drop located between the windows south of the main door.
- † Customers may sign up for direct withdrawal of the bills from their bank accounts. [*Payments are withdrawn from customer bank accounts on the 10th of each month, or the first working day following the 10th.*]
- † Customers may use the online bill pay service offered by their preferred bank. [*Just remember that the bank must MAIL the payment. Also note that the bank does not necessarily mail your payment out on the date you set for withdrawal from your account.*]
- † Customers may use debit or credit cards to pay bills over the phone or in person. [*The processing company the City uses will charge the customer a \$3.95 processing fee for each transaction.*]

PARTING THOUGHTS

Submitted by Gary Haddock,
Public Works Director, RETIRED

When Joyce and I came to Ellis in May of 2005, we came not knowing who the people were, or really what the city was like. The first three years we lived here, we thought this is the place we had been hunting for and I loved it here. It was the best job I ever had. The people I have worked with—those in Ellis, Ellis County, in Hays and even those who are associated with the state and neighboring counties—are some of the most real and sincere people I have ever met. You have every right to be proud of your town and we are pleased to have been a part of it.

I have really enjoyed my tenure with the City and hope that I made a difference in some way. The rules are there for a reason and I felt that was my calling to make sure that things ran smooth. I could not have done it without the people I work with. They have been the glue that kept things together when things got tough. I did the best I could to relay my interpretation toward building, zoning, flood issues, budgets and even the Public Works aspect of the job. I made mistakes, but as the man said, "If you don't make mistakes, your not doing anything." I will miss the camaraderie I had with those of my like profession.

The good Lord willing, Joyce and I hope to stay in the area as we are centrally located for things we like to do. The "Colorado Mountain" call to camp will be an inevitable departing for 1 to 3 months in the summer.

To those who have been good

The 7th Street Project

- A new water line from Monroe to Washington which will be a bore drill.
- A new fire hydrant at the corner of 7th and Madison.
- All 7th Street water services will be tapped into the new line.
- A new concrete driving surface from Monroe to Washington.

friends, I will miss working with you. We will see you from time to time. To those who thought the journey was less than adequate, I wish you could have understood how the system works and been a more productive part of it. I remember telling the guys, "Anyone who thinks it's easy should ride the sanitation truck for one month and they'll change their mind."

Thanks again to all who made the trip enjoyable. You know who you are and you will always be remembered. **ttt**

Maddy Guthrie, Hunter Guffey, and Ava & Lauren Wood were fascinated by the fire hydrant painting done by FHSU 310 Leadership students and other volunteers.



It took the kids less than a minute after the volunteers left to get wet yellow paint on their hands!!

A POUND OF PREVENTION

Submitted by Joyce McCollam,
Police Officer

Once a year dog owners of Ellis must get their dogs registered with at the City Clerk's Office. It is important to register your dog not only because we have a city ordinance requiring it, but also for public safety. When an officer or citizen sees a City tag they do not have to worry about the dog being infected.

Dog tags are due January 1st and may be purchased prior to March 1st without penalty. To get your dogs registered you must show proof of current rabies vaccination. The cost to register your dog is \$5 if it is fixed and \$10 if it is intact. There is a penalty of \$2.00 per month per tag assessed for each month a tag is delinquent. The cost of a tag is much cheaper than the \$90 ticket per dog you will receive if your dog is found without one.



It is also important to register your dogs so they can be returned home. It keeps them out of the dog pound which saves you money. The dog pound fee per day is \$12, plus the tag fee. When the dog is registered and wearing its City tag, a police officer may return the dog to the owner without having to impound it.

If you notice your dog has escaped from the back yard or out of your house, give the Ellis Police Department a call. If you let an officer know your dog is out the officer can keep an eye out for the dog. If the

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HOLIDAY TRASH SCHEDULE

Friday, December 23
Monday, December 26
Monday, December 27

NO trash pickup on **CHRISTMAS** observation
NO trash pickup on **CHRISTMAS** observation
Friday, Monday, and Tuesday trash routes will be run

Monday, January 2
Tuesday, January 3

NO trash pickup on **NEW YEAR'S** observation
Monday and Tuesday trash routes will be run

A Pound Of Prevention

(Continued from page 2)

dog is found by the officer it may be returned to the owner without it going to the pound. The Ellis Police Department and the City of Ellis want all dogs to be returned to their owners safely.

Remember, just because an officer returns your dog by using the City tag doesn't mean your dogs can roam. An officer is glad to bring your dog home to you. But if it is a constant occurrence, you will be ticketed for dog at large. If you need more information on registering your dogs visit the Ellis Police Department website at www.ellispd.net. **ttt**

FIRE HYDRANT CODING PROJECT

Submitted by Kyra Horesky,
FHSU 310 Leadership Student

All of the fire hydrants have been flow tested and completely painted. The stems are now *safety yellow* and all of the tops are painted according to the NFPA fire hydrant standards.

During the week of October 10-15, which was National Fire Prevention Week, the first part of painting occurred. Our volunteers included: on Monday—the FHSU Football team, and on Wednesday & Thursday—the FHSU Defense Tactics Club, as well as three Ellis High School students.

We will make a presentation on the color-coding project to the Ellis City Council at their regular meeting on December 5th. Our final class presentation will be on December 6th at 6:30pm in Stouffer Lounge on the 2nd floor in the Memorial Union. **ttt**



Wearing safety vests borrowed from EPW, 310 Leadership members and other volunteers made short work of painting the color codes on all the fire hydrants in town.

TAKING UP THE REINS

Submitted by Stephen Ferland,
Public Works Director

Hello. My name is Steve Ferland, and I am the new Public Works Director. I would like to first thank the City Council for the opportunity to begin my new position. I have lived in Ellis for eleven years, but my former employment kept me on the road travelling much of the time. I am pleased to be able to be at home and have quality time with my wife Jeannie and my son Wyatt.

The City of Ellis is a very active community with many projects currently under way and many more in the works. It will be a challenge to keep up with all of them but I believe we are up to the task. Currently we are replacing five fire hydrants which have been deemed inoperable. In addition, several new fire hydrants have been installed. One is located just west of the water plant, which will be a huge benefit for the nursing home in the event of an emergency.

Public Works employees began crack patching on 17th Street from Spruce to Monroe, with plans on moving north to 16th St. then 15th St. as time and weather allows. Crack patching will also be done at Spruce Villa as the schedule allows. Please slow patching. They try not just necessary at maintenance we can more costly major re-

On November 28th and street replacement to Monroe. Thankfully a mild forecast ex-

weeks. The work will installing of the new water mains. That will be followed with the removal of the old concrete street. The construction crew will be working at a fast pace to try and beat the winter weather that we all know will be here soon enough.

A special thank you goes out to Gary Haddock. He has been working closely with me, helping me with the transition into the Director position. I wish him the best of luck and enjoyment with his retirement.

The Public Works crew will be marching along through winter looking forward to spring. I am thankful for this opportunity and plan on keeping Ellis moving forward as a strong and beautiful community where we can all be proud of calling home. I am always available please contact me at 785-726-4741 or 785-726-1741 with any concerns. **ttt**



PW Dir. Steve Ferland and Steve Homburg work on crack patching by Spruce Villa.



Inoperative fire hydrants were "bagged" during the flow testing program.

down when you see the crew to block the street for long; it is times. The more preventative do now will help postpone the pairs down the road.

work began on the water line on 7th Street from Washington the weather is holding out with expected for the next few start with the boring and installing of the new water mains. That will be followed with the removal of the old concrete street. The construction crew will be working at a fast pace to try and beat the winter weather that we all know will be here soon enough.

City Election Filing Deadline

(Continued from page 1)

days of the month at 7:30 p.m. City Council duties include setting policy and future planning for the community. Future planning and policy for a community at times can be a daunting task; however planning and policy are vital to the growth and development of a community.

Consider PUBLIC SERVICE and make a difference!

WINTER STORMS & BIG RIGS

Submitted by Philip Martin,
City Clerk

Dr. Randy Taylor (there I said it – he is officially a PhD and now the clarion call of the City of Ellis—the *Town Crier*—published it) reported to the City Council in November that he is open to suggestions of where semi-trucks would be able to park in the event of a road closing blizzard. There has been some concern that Ellis would flood with semis if I-70 ever had to be closed.

Prior to the meeting Chief Taylor met with Emergency Preparedness Director Bill Ring, Sherriff Ed Harbin, and Mr. Jim Wolf about possible designation of emergency parking. The officials approached Mr. Wolf about possibly using the parking lot in front of the old bowling alley building. According to Taylor, Mr. Wolf was agreeable to allowing limited parking in the event of an emergency. However, as big as the bowling alley lot is, there probably would be further need for parking in Council members' estimation.

Council members input for areas that could be used as emergency parking for trucks included: •parts of the existing truck routes, •the road to and the area alongside the railroad tracks, •the areas adjacent to the old

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Never Explain. Your friends do not need it and your enemies will not believe it anyway.

—Elbert Hubbard in 1911



After opening up each fire hydrant and flushing the line, a residual pressure gauge and a P I T O T

pressure gauge with a diffuser were used to gather data to assess their flow.



The annual City Elections April 3, 2012

Voters may cast their ballots *in advance* beginning March 21, 2012 at the Ellis County Clerk's Office, 1204 Fort, Hays Kansas. If you are interested in advance voting you may want to call Ellis County Clerk's office at 785-628-9410 first to insure the ballots are ready and available.

As always, voters may cast their ballot on election day, April 6th between the hours of 7 AM and 7 PM at the one official polling place, the Ellis VFW Hall located at 813 Jefferson Street.

TAG 'EM DANNO

Submitted by Margie Mickelson,
Clerk 1/Court Clerk

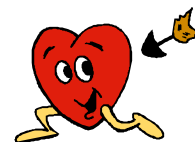
The City of Ellis will again hold a rabies clinic here in town in February at which patrons may bring their dogs and cats to be vaccinated. Brandon Weidenhaft, DMV from Hay Veterinary Hospital has graciously agreed to conduct the clinic with the help of Mark Augustine.

A City employee will be also present throughout the two hour time period to collect the fees and also sell 2012 City dog tags. At this time there is no tag requirement for cats.

Watch the *Ellis Review* for the specific date and time. ®®®



calendar



DECEMBER

- 5 City Council 7:30 pm
- 16 Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 19 City Council 7:30 pm
- 23 **Christmas observation**
City offices closed
- 24 **CHRISTMAS EVE**
- 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**
- 26 **Christmas observation**
City offices closed
- 27 Planning Comm 7:00 pm

JANUARY

- 1 **NEW YEAR'S DAY**
- 2 **New Year's observation**
City offices closed
- 3 City Council 7:30 pm
- 16 **Martin Luther King Day**
Banks & Post Office closed
- 16 City Council 7:30 pm
- 20 Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 23 Planning Comm 7:00 pm
- 24 Filing Deadline
for City Elections

FEBRUARY

- 6 City Council 7:30 pm
- 14 **VALENTINE'S DAY**
- 17 Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 20 City Council 7:30 pm
- 20 **Presidents Day**
PO and Banks closed
- 27 Planning Comm 7:00 pm

FROM WHERE I SIT

Submitted by David R McDaniel,
Mayor

It seems that some people have the attitude.....Nothing ever happens in Ellis....There is nothing to do.

My thought about this is, where have YOU been?

Have you not noticed the constant stream of backhoes, trucks, and trenchers associated with the "fiber people" upgrading our town with the latest technology? Every home and business has been affected. Check your alley. You'll definitely know they have been there!

A paving project on East 7th Street is finally here. Soon 7th Street from Washington to Monroe will have a new water line and a new driving surface.

All fire hydrants in the city have been tested and defective fire hydrants have been identified and are being replaced at this time. Also the fire hydrant identification system has color-coded the top of each hydrant in the city with regard to size and pressure. Notice the colorful tops?

Mount Hope Cemetery had a face lift this summer. Twenty-five trees were identified as "unattractive" and were removed. Both of the ponds in the Cemetery were removed due to maintenance issues. A foundation pad has been poured for the new registry, which should arrive soon.

A walking trail in the Creekside Park area has been approved by the Council and laid out. Progress is continuing toward the concreting of the path. Memorial funds are being used for the construction of this project. Also in this park, a group of remote control car enthusiasts are constructing a track to use with remote control equipment.

A *Community Discussion* was held recently. Public input identified several areas and projects that were important for the Ellis community. Housing, downtown stores, community center, and Big Creek were some of the areas brought to the top for action. Individuals volunteered and work has started toward positive out-

comes for each of the identified areas. Have you checked out the ground west of the swimming pool that has been cleared where the community center could sit? There is renewed interest in downtown building development/revitalization and second story living downtown. The new Playworld Park equipment is installed and lends a dynamic and brightly colored addition to the downtown area.

The second stage of the TIF housing project is kicking off now. The developer forecasts 26-30 new lots will be available for building in the summer of 2012. Affordable housing brings new people in to the community, increases the tax base and can increase our school student population. Keep in mind that Ellis was the only city in western Kansas to show a notable population increase in the recent census.

I could go on and on, but my point is this—Lots of things are happening in this community. Take a look around and see the progress. There is nothing to do here? VOLUNTEER!! There are plenty of opportunities at every turn. It's time to be thinking about an election in April 2012. Run for office. Three City Council positions will need to be filled. Consider the challenge of "bettering" rather than "battering" your community. Your help is needed!
t t t

And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. *What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.*
-Dr Seuss

TURF TALLY

As of the end of October, the City of Ellis has diverted 154.13 tons of grass from the landfill this year. The grass was taken to an area farm, where it is used for cattle feed. The resulting landfill cost savings for the year are \$10,480.

Since the program's inception in 1994, the City has diverted 2,802 tons, for a total savings of \$156,717 in landfill costs.



More Lead Time

(Continued from page 1)

15 days to pay their municipal utility bill without penalty. Any bill still outstanding after the 15th of the month has a 5% penalty added to it, and a late notice is mailed out with the shut off date and time printed on it. If the bill is still not paid 10 days after the late notice is mailed, the utility service is disconnected (sometime around the 26th-29th of the month) for non-payment.

What do the new Postal Service operations mean to City of Ellis utility customers? Penalties will be added and services disconnected if payments are not received by the City Clerk's Office by the prescribed deadlines. So patrons should keep in mind that payments (including online banking checks) should be mailed at least 5-7 days prior to the deadline to help ensure that the payment is received by the City Clerk's Office in a timely manner.

City of Ellis utility customers have several avenues they may use to see that their bills are paid on time. [See the box on the front of this newsletter for a complete listing.] Allowing a little extra lead time for getting your City bill paid will save everyone a lot of aggravation later.
t t t

New Sewer Rates

(Continued from page 1)

about that is the State of Kansas has a deal with Ranson Financial, LLC to assist municipalities in water rate studies. Notice I said water, not sewer. However, if we used Ranson Financial for a sewer study AND a water rate study, part of the travel expenses would be borne by the State and the remainder would be borne by the City. Costs for the actual analysis the water study are paid by the State and the City of Ellis is on tap for the sewer rate study.

On November 14th Ranson Financial representatives came to a City Council work session specifically to present their initial findings and to make sure all the data used in the rate studies were correct. The City Council was present, along with our budgetary advisor, Galen Pfeifer, CPA. The sewer rate analysis based on the need to have a positive cash balance and to plan for the future indicated the City must raise sewer rates somewhere in the neighborhood of eighty-five percent.

Base rates for sewer under the given scenario—positive cash balances at year end for the foreseeable future—would be \$18.00. Customers with the minimum usage charge would see an increase of about \$8.40 per month. Customers using about 4000 gallons per month would see an increase of around \$15.60 on their overall City bill.

Everyone realizes rate increases are not good news. Everyone shares the pain, some more than others. The oft-postponed rate increase would be less painful now if the will to do it had been present when we first were warned back in 2007. However, at budget time every year until now, the will to fix the revenue shortfall was tempered by the idea that customers could not bear an increase in sewer rates. (I share the guilt as a former council member.) I think we hoped against all evidence the revenue shortfall would go away. The fact is an aging sewer plant, inflation, aging lines, and increased costs in general make a problem that must be

December 7th is our **BIRTHDAY !!**

This is our 25th year of producing *the town crier*.

As stated in the very first issue, our mission is to provide a tool to increase and improve communications between the local government of Ellis and the citizens of the town.

How are we doing?

dealt with immediately.

An example is the present sewer plant. At the time before the present plant was constructed KDHE determined our previous treatment facility was inadequate. The City hired a consultant to design a plant and solicited bids for the plant. When bids came in, the City decided the cost was too great. The State of Kansas said, "You MUST replace the old plant" (or else). The next round of bidding resulted in a set of alternatives each which cost more than the previous bid. The City was stuck with higher costs because we delayed action.

Sometime in the first part of 2012, before April 1st, customers will see an increase in their monthly bills. I know this will result in lots of sorrow and lots of complaints. Understand no good deed ever goes unpunished. Postponed pain did not result in delayed gratification; just the opposite. I think you can direct most of the complaints to me personally as I am a guilty as anyone in delaying this pain.

To conclude, this is bitter medicine for everyone. The alternatives to taking action on rates are equally distasteful. Either the present generation deals with the issues or the problem gets worse (and probably costs more). **ttt**

COLORFUL BONNETS

Submitted by Daniel Honas,
EFD Fireman

This fall a group of students from Fort Hays State University have partnered together with the Ellis Fire Department to test and color code Ellis' fire hydrants. The 310 Leadership service learning class that took on the project consisted of 4 students: Jamie Crawford, Luke Kordsmeier, Jacob Crossman, and Kyra Horesky.

The first task of the project was to identify all of the hydrants in the city and put an address to them on paper. The next step was to go to each hydrant and flow test them with hydrant instruments to find out how many gallons per minute they were capable of. After three Sunday evenings, with help from volunteer fireman, the entire town had been tested and the results recorded. Once the leadership team had the results they plugged them into a computer program to find out the output of each hydrant.

The Leadership students then recruited student volunteers from Fort Hays and Ellis High School to paint and color-code all of the hydrants around town. The stems of the hydrants were painted safety yellow to meet national standards and the top bonnets were painted either red, orange, green, or blue—depending on the specific hydrant's output. A red hydrant's output is between 0-500 GPM; orange is between 501-1000 GPM; green is between 1001-1500 GPM; and blue is 1501 GPM or more. To finish the project the class informed Ellis Public Works of any hydrant malfunctions so that the proper maintenance can be done.

The Ellis Fire Department would like to thank these four fine students for their hard work and service to City of Ellis. **ttt**



My wife and I stayed in your **campground** last Friday night. We usually stay at the Cedar Bluff Park, but your billboards enticed us to try your campground instead. We were very pleased. We travel with two dogs, so regularly we stop and take a break in a small town and walk the dogs around. We get to see many interesting places that way. Compared to most small towns, the Chamber and city leaders of Ellis are doing an excellent job. By walking around your town we can see the pride you have. The light post banners are each sponsored by a local company, the interstate billboards are not dingy, faded or torn up by the wind, the town is clean and neat, lots of parks and playgrounds, the people friendly. Your website is up-to-date, useful, and inviting. We also appreciated the signboard at the campground that gave phone numbers for your local police. That was comforting considering that there is no camp host or ranger. I had a question about our campsite so I called the mobile number. To my surprise, someone actually answered and said they would be right over. Within 5 minutes a very nice young officer (he said he was new to your force) came over and helped us get settled. He introduced himself, said he was on duty all night, if we needed anything else just call him, and he thanked us for coming to stay in Ellis. He represented your town well. We will be back to say again--even though the trains seem to come right through the campground!!

ttt

KEEPING IT A WINTER WONDERLAND

Submitted by Gabriel Smull and Chris Krom, EPD Police Officers

It's that time of year again when the warm weather disappears and is replaced by the winter season. With that comes the snow and ice, which makes driving safely all the more important. While it sounds clichéd, once again we are reminding everyone it is important buckle up. Not only is it for your safety, it is the law. So if you don't want to see us in your rear view mirror, please take the extra second to put your seat belt on.

With that in mind, as motorists it is vital to observe and obey the posted traffic signs and signals. Taking the extra second to come to a complete stop and looking both ways before entering an intersection can help to avoid unnecessary accidents and collisions.

We also recommend these winter safety tips: **ä**Always try to keep at least a half tank of fuel in your vehicle. **ä**Drive with your headlights on

to increase your visibility. **ä**Make sure your windshield wipers are in good condition. **ä**Keep blankets and non perishable food items in your vehicle for emergencies. **ä**Carry sand or kitty litter in your vehicle to pour under your tires for traction if you get stuck. **ä**Place sand bags in the back of pickup trucks for added weight to increase traction. **ä**Allow extra time to reach your destination.

Remember, even if the road does not appear slick it may be anyway. If you are involved in an accident report it to law enforcement as soon as possible. If there is any possibility of injuries or other emergencies be sure to dial 911 to ensure all of the proper emergency services are sent as soon as possible.

Lastly, remember to watch your speed this winter season, especially during periods of inclement weather. During these times it is important to note that slowing down and driving under the speed limit is not only smart, but safer for you, other motorists, and pedestrians.

With that being said: Drive smart. Drive safe. Enjoy the winter season.

ttt



Bernadette Dinkel

was recognized at a recent City Council meeting for her upbeat attitude and for efforts in helping keep the Ellis downtown area attractive. Bernadette is often seen walking and stopping to gather discarded items that have been dropped on the streets and sidewalks. She can also be found working in the flowers by the meal site and in the other green areas downtown. If the trash is on the street, in the parking area, sidewalk or by the RR tracks Bernadette snatches it up and puts it in a receptacle. She is always pleasant and waves to anyone she passes. Bernadette takes pride in her community.

Thanks Bernadette!

Loyal and dedicated employees form the foundation of every city with a strong, progressive government. The pride and devotion shown by these men and women in their jobs is an important factor in making Ellis a better place to live.

Eleven **SERVICE AWARDS** were presented at the October 17, 2011 City Council meeting by Mayor David McDaniel. **From the Ellis Fire Department**—Troy Parson (25 years), T.A. Hays (10 years) [not pictured], Wesley James (7 years), and Tim Kohlrus (6 years). **From the Ellis Public Works**—Danny Wickham (15 years), Steve Homburg (10 years), Anthony Heroneme (7 years), Gary Haddock (6 years), and Earl Lambrecht (6 years). **From the City Clerk's Office**—Charlene Weber (25 years) and Margie Mickelson (8 years).



...and little "employee-in-training", Hannah James slept right through all the festivities!!

EPD PUBLIC FORUM

Submitted by Randy Taylor,
Chief of Police

Ellis community members and several honored guests joined the Ellis Police Department at the annual EPD Public Forum, held in the EHS auditorium on October 20th.

Officer Joyce McCullam received a *letter of commendation* for her involvement in solving a rash of crimes in Ellis this past summer. Officer Chris Krom received a *letter of commendation* for achieving above-average scores in physical fitness and the top academic award while he attended certification classes at KLETC. In addition to receiving a *letter of commendation* for achieving academic excellence while attending KLETC, Officer Gabriel Smull was awarded the *Meritorious Service Medal* for his involvement in solving a rash of recent crimes in Ellis.

Sgt. Don Wood received the *Medal of Valor* for his actions in response to an armed person of unstable mental condition in Ellis this past July. Ellis County Sheriff's Officer Garret Brening and Kansas Highway Patrolman Bill Poland were rec-



Office Smull accepts the Meritorious Service Medal from Chief Taylor.

ognized for their assistance in this incident, which was instrumental in bringing down the armed man without lethal force and no injuries to anyone else involved.

This is the second *Medal of Valor* ever given by Chief Taylor. Sgt. Wood also received the first one, for his quick actions in stopping an armed vehicle chase, which ran through downtown Ellis and finally ended near St. Mary's School.

Also honored, but not able to attend, was Fire Chief Les Weber. **ttt**

Winter Storms & Big Rigs

(Continued from page 4)

County Shop and mixing strip, and the area south of Memorial Park.

On a personal note, I hope that truckers pull off well before Ellis and fully expect that would be the case for many truckers. As nice as the Ellis community is, there are not enough of the things many truckers would require if they were stranded here by weather. I also believe truckers realize that, and would therefore be pulling off to make use of parking in bigger communities east and west of here with things like Wal-Mart, fast food, and spacious trucker lounges.

Now Randy better remember I pinch hit for him again, and put together a little blurb for the *Town Crier*. That's the way it is in the academic world—the *PhD* gets the glory while others do all the work. **ttt**



CONTENTS

the town crier, official newsletter of the City of Ellis, is distributed quarterly (March, June, September and December). The editor is Charlene Weber, Assistant City Clerk.

Questions, comments or suggestions about the newsletter may be directed to:

City Clerk's Office
815 Jefferson
Ellis KS 67637

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