

COMMISSIONERS

Stegall Road still in question

By MAUNETTE LOEKS
Star-Herald

With just a week before construction had been planned to begin, the Stegall Road Construction is without an engineer. Scotts Bluff County Commissioners took alternatives for the project to continue during the board's meet-

ing Monday, but it's not clear the project will resolve the decades of woes on the frequently traveled road.

Engineers MC Schaff had been hired by the county to rehabilitate a stretch of road west of Scottsbluff that links Highway 92 and Highway 88 because of extensive cracking

and potholes. The road was last repaved in the 1970s.

At its March 15 meeting, Scotts Bluff County Commissioners directed engineering company MC Schaff to issue a change order on the project after much debate about the base layer of the project.

The direction had

come after an extensive back-and-forth between the engineers, Scotts Bluff County High Superintendent Linda Grummert, and even consultations with Department of Roads officials in Nebraska and other states. Discussion at meetings, and a gathering of emails on the project as obtained

by the Star-Herald in a public records request, showed a history of commissioners opting to proceed with significantly changing the project after it had accepted, and awarded, a bid to Simon Contractors.

County commissioners negotiated with the winning bidder, Simon Contractors, out of

North Platte, to repave five miles of Stegall Road and reduce the cost to about \$1.4 million.

Led by commissioner Russ Reisig, commissioners worked with Simon Contractors to propose alternatives to the original plans.

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AGRICULTURE



Two generations of Kaufman women were among the crowd at Ron Kaufman's retirement farm sale in the Huntley community on March 30. From the left are granddaughter Taylor Kath; cousin Joyce Deines, Connie Thomas (who claims to be Ron's favorite cousin); and Ilene, Ron's wife.

Sandra Hansen/For the Star-Herald

It's still all in the family

By Sandra Hansen
For the Star-Herald

"It was high time to call it quits," is the way Ron Kaufman describes his decision to retire and sell the family farm in the Huntley community southeast of Torrington.

Although he is turning the farm over to the new owners, his daughter Stephanie Kath and her husband Grant Kath, the retired University of Wyoming Extension Agent and 4-H leader does not plan to park himself in front of a TV with a cup of coffee.

"I don't know how my wife put up with me being gone all the time," Kaufman said, sitting at the kitchen table in the currently vacant farmhouse. "I needed a good spouse for that, and

now we're going to have time together."

Kaufman and his wife, Ilene, will spend time in the Sierra Madre country near Saratoga, Wyoming, and visit son Brian,

his wife, Tracie, and sons, Addison, Blake, and Zack, near Phoenix, Arizona.

According to Kaufman, the

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Generations continue to work the soil at the Kaufman farm in the Huntley community southeast of Torrington. This young fellow entertained himself moving dirt that is coming into the hands of the latest generation of Kaufmans - Ron and Ilene's children and grandchildren who have purchased the property.

Sandra Hansen/For the Star-Herald

MONUMENT

Rockslides close some areas

By JUSTIN GARCIA
Star-Herald

The recent swings in temperatures and moisture took a toll on Scotts Bluff National Monument this week.

Officials closed the monument's Saddle Rock Trail while crews remove boulders of fallen limestone. The Scotts Bluff Summit Road is also closed due to rockfalls.

Superintendent Dan Morford attributed the two slides to the weather of the past week. Morford said moisture freezing then meltings combined with winds are a shattering combination for the monument.

"When they all come together, that seems to be when a majority of our activity happens," he said.

Morford expected the trails to stay closed until Friday as crews work to remove the rock.

"You can still walk to Scott Springs, but the upper trail is closed," he said.

Morford said his office was notified of the rock slides late Tuesday night. He said his crews got up early Wednesday morning and confirmed that limestone splintered off. Specifically, Morford said the rock slide on the Saddle Rock Trail occurred between tunnels two and three.

"It's gonna take some time because of the size of the material," he said.

The Summit Road will also be closed until deemed safe. Limestone creaked off and covered that road as well.

When slides happen, Morford said his crew shifts gears from their day-to-day work to the limestone-removal crew. As some crew members shovel rock off trails, others keep an eye on the monument.

"We have a spotter sitting away from (the worksite) just watching up above where everybody's working. They see something, they can holler and we can get out of the way," he said.

Morford said he

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