

Local pharmacies access in jeopardy

A new federal policy for computing reimbursement to pharmacies for Medicaid patients is causing pharmacists to reconsider participating in federal programs like Medicaid. The new directive makes it probable that pharmacists will lose money on each prescription dispensed.

Medicaid is the federal healthcare program designed to assist low income families with health care costs. Since Medicare Part D now covers most retirees' prescription drugs, most Medicaid patients are now pregnant mothers, children and single mothers.

"I can't afford to sell any medicine at a price lower than what I pay for it, and stay in business. No business can," said Terry Kepka, pharmacist/owner of Seitz Drug Company in Ellsworth.

Kepka is not the only pharmacist to reach this conclusion. In the past six years, Kansas saw a net loss of 22 independent pharmacies. In 2006 alone there were five closings, many in rural areas.

This dilemma hits a rural state like Kansas particularly hard. There are 36 counties in Kansas with only one retail pharmacy servicing the entire population. Seven counties have no retail pharmacy at all. Access by Medicaid patients, for essential pre-

scription medications, will stop or at least become much more difficult if pharmacies in single pharmacy counties drop Medicaid or go out of business.

"The cost to the Medicaid program could be much greater if name brand drugs are dispensed instead of generics," said Brian Caswell, president of Wolkar Drug in Baxter Springs. "And with the new reimbursement directives, pharmacists will be motivated to encourage physicians to prescribe higher cost brand name drugs."

"The irony to this story is that the new federal directive applies only to generic drugs," said Jack Tebow, owner and pharmacist at Ray's Pharmacy in Quinter and current President of the Kansas Pharmacists Association.

"Generic drugs are almost 15 times less costly to purchase than their name-brand counterparts. A shift of 4 percent from generic drugs to name brand drugs would eliminate the savings the directive was designed to produce."

Medicaid reimbursements to the pharmacists are set by a joint agreement of state and federal officials. These officials realize that there is a problem with the formula which will affect all pharmacies, but are unsure how to deal with it.



THE STATE crews took advantage of the nice weather to clean the highway through St. Francis.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Haigler News

By Floy Ruggles



Haigler Community 4-H Club

On March 10, the Haigler Community 4-H Club had their meeting at 4:30 and later went bowling at St. Francis. The next meeting will be April 15 at 2 p.m. After the meeting the club will have highway clean up.

The 4-H club will also be having the Easter Egg Hunt at 2 p.m. on April 7 at the Haigler Park. Ages 10 and younger may hunt. The 4-H members are asked to bring two dozen eggs per family.

Introducing

Joann Henderson of Haigler

would like to announce the birth of her first great-grandbaby. Madison Joann was born Dec. 12, 2006. Her parents are Toni Brown and Mike Furrer.

Grandparents are Joann Brown and Alan Brown and Susan Crum and Gary Crum. Great-great-grandparents are the late Dick and Anna Wheaton and Dallas and Laura Brown, long time residents of Haigler. Madison Joann's aunts are Amber Joann Brown and Diana Todd.

96th birthday celebration

On March 6, Dode Faylor spent

several hours at Hillcrest Care Center with her mother, Dorothy Rathbun. The occasion was Dorothy's 96th birthday. A party was given in the activity room for residents wishing to share cake, ice cream and drinks with Dorothy. Also, Dorothy received phone calls from her daughter, Shirley Ridgeway of North Platte and son, LeRoy Rathbun of Denver.

91st birthday celebration

Gerald and Betty Myer and his sister, Grace Adams joined Gerald's son and wife, Tom and Charlotte Myer of Wray to journey

to Sterling, Colo., last week. The occasion was to celebrate the 91st birthday of Gerald and Grace's sister, Velma Neville, at the Sterling Care Center. Velma was a long-time resident of Haigler. Also attending the celebration were Ed and Dawn Neville of Fleming, Colo.

Laura Pearl Wall attended the Scout show in Wray on Saturday. Several relatives of Blaine Lee also attended the day's activities.

Helen Woods visited Laura Pearl Wall late Saturday afternoon.

MerryLu and Bob Simmons had lunch on Sunday at the Wall home.

The Collicott sisters, LaNeta Carlock, Myrna Mulligan, and Galena Webster, visited their father, LaVoine Collicott, at the Hillcrest Care Center on Friday. They all participated in the going-away party for Mike Bildner, Hillcrest administrator.

Norma Fisher invited Ray and Floy Ruggles to dinner on Tuesday, the 6th of March to see Robert, Lenea and two-year-old Melody Fisher (also 9 month old Jasper - a beautiful, long silky golden haired, 120 pound dog) off on their return trip to Michigan. They, since, have arrived home safely and will be moving to their new home in Pennsylvania this week. A baby sister for Melody, Hanna Elizabeth, is expected to make her arrival around May 30.

The 60 and 70 degree temperatures have inspired more outdoor activities this past week.

By Bessie Dent



Beecher Island News

There were 84 at Sunday school. Alysar Malmkar gave her birthday offering.

Violet Brown has really been celebrating her March 5 birthday. Darrell and Sally Brown of Commerce City, Jerrod Brown, who is serving on the Kitty Hawk in Japan and his fiancée came Saturday. Joining them at the LaFamilia for dinner were Danny and Kindra Brown and Davien, LeRoy and Diana Bowker. Sunday Fran and Larry Crites took her to Idalia for dinner.

Mrs. Randy Perila and children came Thursday to spend the weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Bob Simmons. Joining them for lunch were Laura Pearl Wall and Mr. and Mrs. Quentin Simmons.

Mr. and Mrs. Roger Wieser and Katie and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Strangways went out for lunch Sat-

urday to celebrate Katie's Feb. 25 birthday. They later went to Bills for birthday cake and visiting.

Mr. and Mrs. Rex Shaver visited Violet Cranmer in St. Francis Thursday.

Mr. and Mrs. LaVern Stults were Sunday afternoon visitors of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Ekberg.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenny Rose and girls had lunch Sunday with Sylvia Madsen. They later visited Albert Reitz.

Trevor and Garrett Hurlburt were Friday overnight guests of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Allen. Ashley stayed Saturday night.

Mr. and Mrs. Rowe Shively and Doris Whomble met Carole Whomble for lunch in Wray Monday.

Bible study was held at Beecher Wednesday.

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Mansfield and

Monte Mansfield were last week visitors of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Mansfield.

Saturday Laurie Perila and children and MerryLu Simmons had lunch with Laura Pearl Wall.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Strangways visited Mr. and Mrs. George Lassen in Yuma Thursday.

Breanna Stafford was a Friday night guest at the Jeff Hurlburt home.

Sunday dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Simmons were Mr. and Mrs. Quentin Simmons and Mrs. Randy Perila and children.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Dent visited Mr. and Mrs. Ron Brown and Riley Sunday afternoon.

Bowling News

Wednesday Coffee 3-7

Team standings: Sunshine Girls 25-11, Kale's Girls 23.5-12.5, Windmill Restaurant 22.5-13.5, Kathy's Cater Cats 16.5-19.5, Lodge Sleepers 16.5-19.5

High game (scratch): Shirley Adkinson 191, Janice Krien 189, Marlys Poulignot 178; (handicap): Carol Peterson 240, Krien 237, Poulignot 223

High series (scratch): Adkinson 557, Krien 511, Poulignot 448; (handicap): Krien 655, Adkinson 626, Karen McVey 594

Wednesday Night Bowling 3-7

Team standings: Haigler Two 24-8, Krien Steel Buildings 22-14, 2001 Electronics 20-16, Grace Flying Service 17-15, Neitzel Insurance 15-17, Haigler One 14-22, First National Bank 11-21, Fearless 4 Some 9-19

High game (scratch): Alan Rose 226, Wayne Mahon 224, Ted Harford 209; (handicap): Erica Harlan 238, Tammy Zimbelman 237, Janice Krien 233

High series (scratch): Rose 579, Harford 572, Mahon 560; (handicap): Krien 666, Zimbelman 654, Sally Baird 604

Ladies Nite Out 3-8

Team standings: Dundy Ag 22-14, BW Alley Kats 22-14, Wright Carpet 19-17, Cheyenne Bowl 19-17, Jersey Maids 17-19, Stockman Strikers 17-19, Mel's Gals 15-21, Wray Meat Packing 13-23

High same (scratch): Tammy

Zimbelman 203, Krysta Smestad 192, Boots Peterson 189; (handicap): Smestad 256, Lisa Walter 238, Zimbelman 233

High series (scratch): Zimbelman 544, Smestad 510, Terry Yost 500; (handicap): Smestad 702, Stephane Workman 642, Zimbelman 634

Book Review

Book review from St. Francis Public Library

School's Out - Forever

By James Patterson

Meet Max, Fang, Iggy, Gasman, Nudge and Angel, six absolutely unforgettable kids. With some major problems. They're being hunted by killers. But who?

It's even worse than that. Max is sure that a microchip has been inserted under her skin - leading freakish forces of evil to ambush them at any moment...and worse!

She and the others are supposed to save the world. But from what? When? And how?

Max will stop at nothing to find answers. One thing she does know: it's got something to do with an astonishing ability they have that no others can claim. They can fly.

Max's heart-stopping quest to protect her "family" and investigate the mind-blowing mystery of her ultimate destiny continues in the scariest, strangest and funniest James Patterson thriller yet.

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(when it comes to your heart...DeBaKey Heart Institution)

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