

Hospital board discusses services, costs and patient care

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The new interim administrator for Cheyenne County Hospital, Les Lacy, gave a detailed account of how Great Plains Health Alliance has saved the hospital over \$140,000 in the last year. Mr. Lacy also brought up the idea of mission versus margin with the board, and a long discussion took place.

Mr. Lacy, vice president for regional operations with Great Plains Health Alliance, is serving as the interim administrator until a replacement is found. He said he anticipates this will be for about three months. Mr. Lacy told the board that other management companies would not do what he is doing, and it saves the hospital about \$10,000 a month. In addition, a health insurance holiday earned with the insurance company through Great Plains saved the hospital \$33,000 in December. Also, the purchasing group through Great Plains saved 8 percent over the next best competitor. On supply

costs totaling \$1 million, that is a savings of \$80,000. Mr. Lacy stated that his Great Plains report is that it saved the hospital \$143,000 in the last year.

The cost of the lease with Great Plains Health Alliance is \$71,678 per year.

Mission versus margin

Mr. Lacy told the board that the challenge of running a hospital and deciding what direction to take it in is considering the cost versus the care. Some of the community's most popular departments are the ones that cost the hospital the most money, such as the emergency room. However, having the emergency room is important, and the community wants one, and so the hospital has to figure out how to help support that service.

Mr. Lacy spoke for some time about a few different departments and the high cost they burden the hospital with, although they are very popular departments. He went on to talk to the board about how there are many hospital services to choose from,

and the hospital must choose carefully. Some services can end up costing the hospital a lot of money. Some departments are not sustainable in hospitals that are small like Cheyenne County's.

Mr. Lacy asked the board what services they thought were important and how they thought they could help spread out costs.

Some board members expressed confusion. Member Rick Rogers told Mr. Lacy that he felt the board did not know what services were most important or would help spread out costs. He said he thought that was Great Plains' job as the hospital's management company.

Roxie Neitzel, board member, said that she thought this was what Shawna Blanka and Heidi Tice were good at, and that this was part of their job. She said that in her opinion they would have better recommendations than the board.

Board member Mike Bandel said it would be hard to look at every service in every department

and get a clear picture. Erika Zimbelman, board member, agreed, saying that it is difficult to even look at the clinic versus the hospital.

After the board members had some discussion on the issue, Mr. Lacy said that since the board feels it is Great Plain's job to determine what services the hospital should provide, he hoped that they feel like he is doing his job. He added that his hope was to address some of the concerns that the board had voiced at the last meeting. Last month, some board members said they did not feel involved in the decision-making process at the hospital.

Mr. Rogers explained that his understanding was the people that managed the hospital need to figure out what works, and what the hospital can afford, and let the board know what they think is good for the hospital and community. He felt that Mr. Lacy was try-

ing to get the board too involved. Mrs. Zimbelman said she thought the board should be looking at the big picture; the board should discuss strategic planning. Looking at cost to charge ratios is not really what the board is there for. She suggested the board put time aside in future meetings specifically for strategic planning.

Mr. Lacy agreed that it would be good to look at strategic planning, especially with a new administrator coming soon. He said he did not want to take the board anywhere they did not feel comfortable going. Mr. Lacy comforted to the board that they look at the current big picture and ask themselves if they are happy with the quality of service right now, and if they are happy with the leadership.

The board plans to discuss strategic planning at future meetings.

Department head reports

Nutrition services manager Christa Brown gave her report to the board this month. The nutrition department now has two full-time and one part-time employees. Mrs. Brown said they are conscious of the budget, and are down one less full-time employee right now.

Sara Wilson, the human resources manager, also gave her report to the board. There are currently some job positions open, including the administrator position, clinic manager, and two full time registered nurse night shift positions. She told the board that there is an interim clinic manager that will begin on May 27 until a replacement is found. She also went over some of the benefits that are provided to the employees.

Next meeting

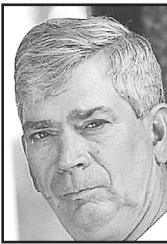
The next hospital board meeting will be held on June 24 at 3 p.m. in the basement of the Cheyenne County Clinic.

Obituaries

Michael F. Neuhalfen

May 4, 1954 - May 26, 2014

Michael F. Neuhalfen age 60 of Arlington, Neb. passed away Monday, May 26, 2014 at his home. Michael was born May 4, 1954 in Vallejo, Calif. to Vernon and Phyllis (McCoy) Neuhalfen. He married Sharon K. Dowling Nov. 5, 1977 at Holy Trinity Catholic Church at Hartington, Neb. They lived at Pierce, Neb. and owned and operated Pierce Plumbing and Heating Inc. In 1988, they moved to Arlington, Neb. Michael ended his career in the summer of 2013 as a construction superintendent for Oakview DCK in Omaha after battling cancer.



Neuhalfen

Survivors include his wife, Sharon of Arlington; daughters, Kristle Raile and spouse Tyler of St. Francis, and Amanda Mleziva and spouse Brian; grandson, Logan Mleziva all of Kronenwetter, Wis.; son, Scott Neuhalfen of Lincoln, Neb.; his mother, Phyllis Neuhalfen of Norfolk, Neb.; eight brothers, Bob and wife Maggie of Ogallala, Neb., Don and wife Kim of Sioux Falls, S.D., Jeff and wife Cathy of Lavonia, Mich., Ken of Laurel, Neb., Phil and wife Kami of Pierce, Neb., Tom and wife Becky of Norfolk, Neb., John and wife Jolene of Columbus, Neb. and Pat and wife Julie of Glenwood, Iowa; four sisters, Jan Miller and husband Mike of Jewells, Iowa, Dr. Elizabeth "Beth" Neuhalfen of Eatonville, Wash.,

Commission, Pierce Fire and Rescue and as a Boy Scout troop leader. He enjoyed fishing, building almost anything and coaching youth sports.

Mary Colfack and husband Paul of Norfolk, Neb. and Paulette Theisen of Omaha, Neb. Michael was preceded in death by his father Vernon and a brother Chuck. Funeral Mass will be 10 a.m. Friday at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Fremont. Fr. Jim Keiter will officiate. Rosary/Vigil at 7 p.m. Thursday and visitation will be on Thursday from 4 - 8 p.m. and with the family receiving friends from 6 - 8 p.m. all at Moser Memorial Chapel in Fremont. Visitation will continue on Friday one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will be at Arlington Cemetery Arlington, Neb. Memorials are suggested to Arlington Youth Sports Foundation. Moser Memorial Chapel, 2170 N. Somers Ave. Fremont, NE 68025 402-721-4490 Online condolence may be left at: www.mosermemorialchapels.com.



MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT Jack Weinstein's final resting place in Cheyenne Valley Cemetery south of Wheeler is decorated for Memorial Day by family members. A special tribute of a brass flag holder with a cross and the word "dad" built by his son Jack, Jr. takes a prominent place. A new tombstone specially commissioned with the Medal of Honor recognition will be installed in the near future.

Herald staff photo by Douglas Sloper

Rec 4 U

By **Penny Gienger**
St. Francis Rec Director



Come cheer on our home team C-team boys baseball team this Friday night, May 30 at the St. Francis ball field. Food will be available at the concession stand. Monday, June 1 starts the T-BALL Season for four to-six year olds. Teams and coaches are as follows:
GREY - Maci Workman, Cheyenne LaBarge, Kody Moberly, Diego Mendoza, Jesus Fernandez Jr., Aubrey Culwell, and D.J. Hoard. Coaches are Darren Workman and Chris LaBarge.
TEAL - Dailey Rose, Lucas

Raile, Madison Siegfried, Joel Gilliland, Andrew Andrist, Julio Yanez, Mairyn Yanez. Coach - David Rose.
BLUE - Avery Jensen, Caiman, Jensen, Jaxon Nelsen, Morgan Hathaway, Bryson Crowe, Emeline Luncsford, Camille Luncsford, Tice McAtee. Coaches are Travis Jensen and Brock McAtee.
YELLOW - Reagan Milne, Sierra Milne, Carter Matthies, Paola Ramirez, Zarik Enfield, Alexis Zimbelman, Zylas Martinez. Coaches are Travis Milne and Brad Matthies.

T-Ball Schedule:
June 2 - 6:30: Grey VS Teal; 7:15: Blue VS Yellow.
June 9 - 6:30: Grey VS Blue; 7:15: Teal VS Yellow.
June 16 - 6:30: Blue VS Teal; 7:15: Grey VS Yellow.
June 23 - 6:30: Blue VS Yellow; 7:15: Grey VS Teal.
June 30 - NO GAMES unless a rain make-up date is needed.

PITCHING TEAM games start Wednesday, June 4 at 6:30 p.m. Players signed up are: Skye Feldman, Judah Crowe, Mahra Padgett, Rhonald Neitzel, Arionna Sanchez, Ashton McAtee, Maggie Hingst, Connor Hathaway, Kaylee Moberly, Matilynn Smull, Jordan Smull, Colton Raile, Makaila Matthies, Dawson Rose, Mika Killingsworth, Shane Todd, and Jayce Landers. This team is in need of a head coach. Several dads have agreed to help. It is not too late to let your child join in the fun. Contact Penny at 332-3949 to enter.

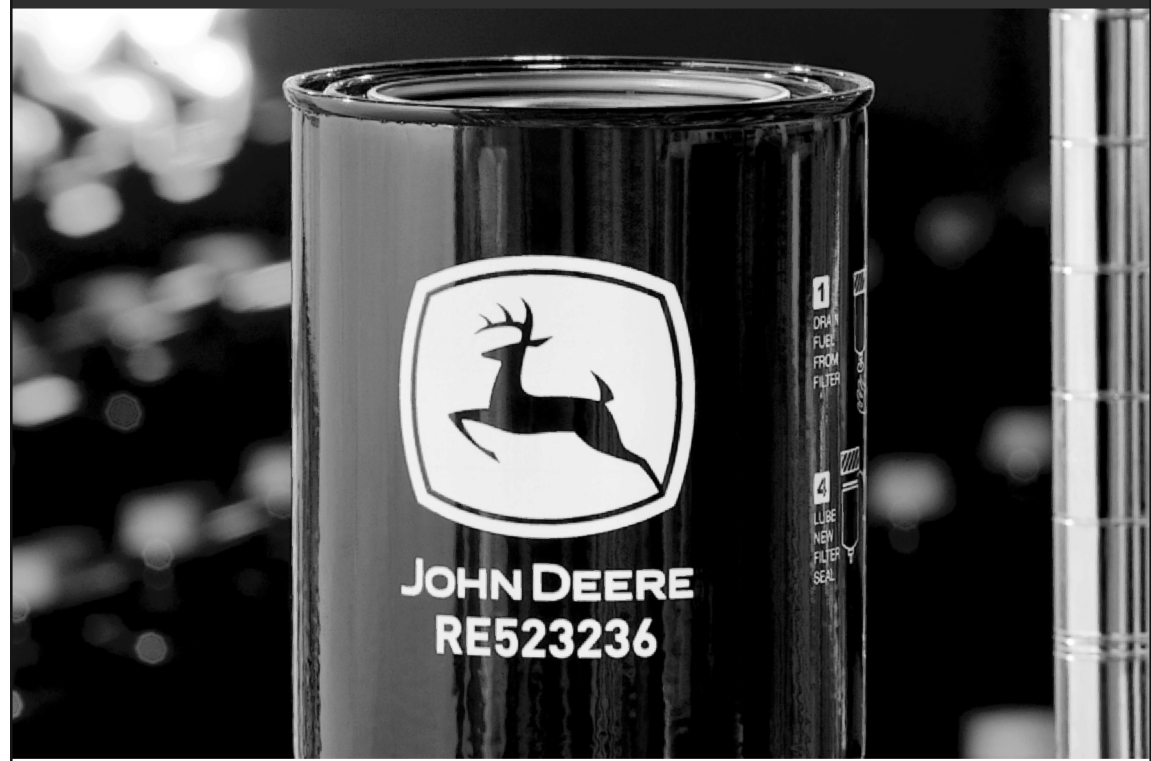
community service project at the Baseball field. The next meeting will be June 8, 2014 at 3 p.m. at the Homestead. Kye and Dax Towns, Raquel Lieurance, Jenna Wieser and Carter Schafer will all be doing demonstrations. Refreshments will be provided by the Wieser family.
Submitted by: Kye Towns, Reporter

Club Clip

Idalia Starlighters 4H News

Idalia Starlighters 4-H Club met on May 20. Reminder—take pictures of your presentations, working on your projects, and any 4H activities you are involved in so that you have them to use in your record books.
There were no demonstrations. After the meeting all members present worked on their

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