

Congressman Moran stops at Decatur Hospital for tour

By Kimberly Davis

Congressman Jerry Moran stopped by the Decatur County Hospital on Monday for a quick tour, his first since 2001.

Rep. Moran said he had a meeting in Colby that morning and thought he would stop here before he headed back home. As a member of Congress, he said, he spends a lot of time on health care issues.

Administrator Lynn Doeden said the hospital is looking at some changes, with the idea of adding on to the east side of the building. She said they have land to the east or where the emergency room door is, and they can build to the sidewalk. That would give more room for specialty clinics, home health care, bioterrorism storage and other things.

Mrs. Doeden said they are trying to decide whether to borrow money or use money that families have bequeathed to the hospital.

Rep. Moran asked if the hospital is county owned. Mrs. Doeden said it is, explaining that the hospital board is appointed by the county and then a corporation, Decatur Health Systems, leases the facility from the board. The county levies a property tax to help support the hospital, she noted.

Is this hospital associated with other facilities? asked Rep. Moran. No, said Mrs. Doeden.

Another new item since Rep. Moran's last visit, she said, is an education room in the basement. It has two couches, three computers and provides a place where staff



Jerry Moran

members can further their education. Mrs. Doeden said the hospital received a gift from a local family, and she called and asked permission to use the money for this room. It opened this week, she said.

What about Internet service, the congressman asked, is it good? Mrs. Doeden said the hospital has wireless service upstairs and uses the telephone company's service downstairs. She said the hospital has the wireless service so that nurses can use portable computers to check patients at bedside.

In order to put in a new computer system, she said, the hospital had to borrow money from the board and then the corporation pays it back monthly. Mrs. Doeden said the hospital put the system in phases, which has also helped with the cost.

There is a lot of demand for medical records to be done electronically, said Rep. Moran, but most hospitals aren't able to because of the cost. Are the doctors using the electronic system? he asked. Mrs. Doeden said one of the physicians uses it all the time but the other two don't use it as much. She said she thought about getting the computers for the doctors at the clinic, thinking that might help them use the electronic system.

Mrs. Doeden took Rep. Moran on a tour of the facility from the front to the main hallway with patient rooms, to Cedar Living Center, the nursing home wing, and back around.

She said the long-term care facility is now full. The hospital also runs an independent living facility called Wheat Ridge Terrace, said Mrs. Doeden.

The two stopped to look at fitness rooms the hospital has put in for the community, staff and physical therapy department.

The last stop was the medical records office. Mrs. Doeden said the hospital doesn't have room for all of the records. They are looking at a system where the records are scanned in and will then be stored on a server and can be put on a compact disc.

Rep. Moran spent around 45 minutes at the hospital before he had to get to his next appointment. He said in his 69-county district, he represents 75 hospitals, which is one of the reasons he is interested in health care.



PARENTS OF CHILDREN enrolled in the Head Start program attended the Health Care Institute class where they enjoyed a fun training session and also received door prizes. Lindsey Emig, Cheyenne County Head Start teacher, was the instructor for the class.

Herald staff photo by Karen Krien

Area agency on aging provides answers to submitted questions

As a way to inform older readers about ongoing and changing topics, Rosalie Seemann, secretary of the Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging, will answer questions or provide information about the agency on a monthly basis.

Replies to questions posed to Ms. Seemann will be in column format.

Readers may submit questions by writing her at Chat With Rosalie c/o Rosalie Seemann, 426 Hale, LeVant, KS 67743, or by emailing: rseemann@st-tel.net.

The Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging is part of a national network of agencies created in 1973 by the Older Americans Act.

It is a private, nonprofit organization with the responsibility of administering Older American Act programs in the 18 counties of northwest Kansas.

The following are questions posed to Ms. Seemann and her responses.

Q. What are some of the options people have in order to make the transition to the age bracket known as "senior citizen" easier?

A. This sort of depends on the person.

A person may be perfectly happy and not need, or want, any of the programs available to seniors. But if they are in need of options or programs to assist them in their senior years, the first thing is they should contact their Area Agency on Aging for assistance. The Area Agency of Aging will assist the person in determining what or if they need assistance.

Q. What are some of the benefits for senior citizens which often go unused or little known about?

A. Probably the most unused program available to those over the age of 60 is the nutrition program.

This is the noon meal prepared five days a week at senior centers or prepared at one center and transported to another center. (In St. Francis meals are served Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at the senior

center.)

This also serves as a "hospitality" site or get together for those that are alone in their home.

There is a suggested donation for those over age 60, and for those under 60 there is a set price for the meals.

This is a very good way for families to know their loved ones are getting one good balanced meal a day. The Area Agency of Aging also has the sites where the meals are served.

Q. What can caregivers do to make the lives of the loved one(s) better?

A. The Older Americans Act established what is called the National Family Caregiver Support program to provide services to our nation's caregivers.

A Caregiver is defined as "an adult family member or another individual who is an informal provider of an in-home and community care to an older individual."

Services available through the caregiver support program through the Area Agency on Aging are: Information to caregivers about available services, Assistance to caregivers in gaining access to services, Caregiver Training on various topics of importance to family caregivers; Respite Care to enable

caregivers to be temporarily relieved from their care given responsibilities, Supplemental Services to complement the care provided by caregivers.

Attendant and/or personal care, bathroom items, chore services, homemaker, nutrition counseling, repair/maintenance/renovation.

Eligibility Requirements for the Caregiver Support Program: The care receiver must be 60 years of age or older and a need for assistance must exist.

Priority for services will be given to older individuals with greatest social and particular attention to low-income older individuals.

Q. What can caregivers do to make their lives better while caring for a loved one?

A. If a caregiver is responsible for the day-to-day care of a loved one, make sure the caregiver has a "relief" person available to assist them, this way the caregiver will not burn out so quickly.

There are home delivered meals available in most areas to assist those that need to get away for a day or two.

The Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging is based in Hays, and can be contacted at (800) 432-7422; (785) 628-8204, P.O. Box 610, Hays Kan. 67601.

Useless Facts

- An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

- In every episode of Seinfeld there is a Superman somewhere.

- The name Jeep came from the abbreviation used in the army for the "General Purpose" vehicle, G.P.

- No NFL team which plays its home games in a domed stadium has never won a Superbowl.

- The only two days of the year in which there are no professional sports events (MLB, NBA, NHL, or NFL) are the day before and the day after the Major League all-stars Game.

- Only one person in two billion will live to be 116 or older.

- The name Wendy was made up for the book "Peter Pan."

- The Pentagon, in Arlington, Virginia, has twice as many bathrooms as is CURRENTLY necessary. Because, when it was built in the 1940s, the state of Virginia still had segregation laws requiring separate toilet facilities for blacks and whites.

- Cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$6,400

- A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.

Open house set in Goodland

The National Weather Service Forecast Office in Goodland will host an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. mountain time on Saturday, Oct. 28. The public is invited to tour the office (920 Army Road) to learn how the latest computer technology is being used in daily forecast and warning operations.

A ceremony will be held paying tribute to the office's cooperative weather observers, volunteers who provide daily temperature and precipitation reports across the Tri-State area. In addition, a drawing will be held to give away five NOAA Weather Radios and a balloon launch for kids will occur around 12:30 p.m.

"The way in which we prepare and disseminate forecasts and warnings has changed dramatically over the past 10 years," said David Floyd, warning coordination meteorologist at the

Goodland office.

"We want to give the public an opportunity to stop by and visit with us, ask questions about High Plains weather, and see how technology is used in our daily operation."

Stations will be set up throughout the building where staff members will be available to answer questions about Doppler radar, how to interpret satellite images, and where to find weather information on the Internet. Amateur radio operators will be on hand showing how spotter reports are communicated directly to the office during times of severe weather.

A weather event simulator will replay past weather events where anyone can sit down and issue a tornado or severe thunderstorm warning as if they were the radar operator on that day. A weather video will play continuously

showing various severe weather events on the Plains.

Personnel will be available to explain other topics, including how to set up a backyard weather station, how information is disseminated, NOAA Weather Radio and the Graphical Forecast Editor.

Since Halloween will be right around the corner, children are encouraged to show off this year's costume and receive a goody bag and free face painting. Anyone who already owns a weather radio and needs assistance with programming or learning its features can bring it along and staff members will be on-hand to provide assistance.

For more information, contact Joy Hayden at the National Weather Service at 899-7119, or visit our web page at <http://www.weather.gov/goodland> for directions.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE



Bring us your BIG, your UGLY, your FUNNY Fruits & Vegetables & we'll take a picture! The Saint Francis Herald wants to do a BIG VEGGIE EXTRAVAGANZA!

Every year area gardeners grow a wonderful variety of fruits and vegetables. Most of these delectables find their way to the table. But, there are those that are sooo big or sooo weird that they just beg to be remembered in a photograph. Bring in your huge tomatoes, your potatoes that look like the neighbor's

dog, your three foot carrots, your green bean that resembles a garter snake. We'll take a picture and on Oct. 26, we'll publish them.



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