



# COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

## Building big part of 2000

By **PATTY DECKER**

Free Press Editor

Thomas County saw some major construction projects and expansions in the year 2000 with the dairy near Rexford and the opening of Fairview Estates Retirement Community.

By mid-June, McCarty Dairy, which is a family business owned by Tom and Judy McCarty, began milking operations around the clock.

The dairy first opened in March of 1999, but continues expanding in amount of employees and production.

The retirement community, which opened in the summer, was considered a major step in providing housing for people 55 and older who wanted a more relaxed lifestyle while, at the same time, providing some assistance.

As the year came to a close, the new facility was continuing to gain occupants and finishing up the remaining units still in the construction-phase.

News of a \$5 million truck stop was announced in July, but were soon thwarted when fuel prices, the uncertainty of the trucking industry and other factors halted the momentum in November.

When the year 2000 came to a close, the idea of a truck stop facility remained on hold.

In the medical community, concerns over Medicare cuts had rural hospital administrators thinking about future health care delivery.

In Colby, Michael Boyles, chief executive officer at Citizens Medical Center, explained that while health care costs keep rising, the reimbursement rates are dropping.

Despite the less than good news on Medicare cuts, the hospital moved forward in technology, adding a CT scan machine in the fall and headed into 2001 with a somewhat brighter picture for the future.

The year 2000 also saw Americans filing their census reports and as the year closed, results showed that the state's population had grown to roughly 211,000 more people than in the last decade or an 8.5 percent increase.

While Kansas did not lose a congressional seat after the census came out, it still did not gain back the seat it had lost over 40 years ago.

Even with good news that Kansas is growing in population, the growth is fastest in suburban areas and shifting away from the rural areas.

Thomas County also welcomed a new extension agent in 2000 when D'Ette Scholtz accepted the position in late July.

Scholtz had lived in Grand Island, Neb. for the past 16 years, managing a sewing, fabric and craft store. Her reason for the change, she said, was because of her love for 4-H and extension work.

Sacred Heart Catholic School also welcomed a new face, Dave Evert, who accepted the job as principal, after Dave Stueve announced his resignation earlier in the year. The Stueve family moved to the Salina area.

The community also said its "good-byes" to Kirk Hunter, who left Colby Community College in August to coach at Butler Community College in El Dorado.

*Editor's note: This is the third in a series on the highlights of the year 2000 in and around Thomas County.*

## Briefly

### Weather: Continued warm

The National Weather Service continues to call for warm temperatures for the Colby area through the early part of the weekend. Tonight, they see clear skies, lows 20-30 and west winds 10 mph.

Thursday, sunny, highs in the middles 60s and strong northwest winds 20-30 mph and gusty. Thursday night, dry, clear, lows 25-30. Friday and Saturday, dry, lows in the 20s and highs on Friday in the 60s and around 50 on Saturday. Tuesday's high in Colby was 47 and the overnight low this morning was 14, climbing to 28 by 8 a.m. The soil temperatures at the four-inch depth is averaging 30 degrees. There was no precipitation overnight. The records for Jan. 3: 67 in 1964 and -22 in 1911. *(The daily temperatures and precipitation are provided by the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby.)*

## Future Picassos



McKayla Curry and Jay Weston worked on scratch drawings in Trish Starbuck's art class at the Colby Elementary School. Curry and Weston drew animal pictures, then transferred them to foil sheets using scratch awls.

JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

## Teacher's years add up to 100

By **JANET CRAFT**

The Goodland Daily News

On Jan. 2, Amy Nichols accomplished a feat that very few people accomplish: she turned 100.

Nichols, born Jan. 2, 1901, has been a resident of the Good Samaritan Center in Goodland since November 1997.

She was the second daughter of five children born to Cassi Ann (Mitten) and Adelbert Frank Nichols. She had three sisters and a brother, but all have died. The family lived on a farm in the Cumberland community, north of Gem in Thomas County. While living on the farm, Nichols said she milked cows, slopped hogs and fed the chickens.

She attended Cumberland School through the eighth grade and graduated in 1920 from Thomas County High School in Colby.

She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1939 from Manchester College at North Manchester, Ind., and a Masters Science in 1950 from Fort Hays State Teachers College.

Nichols was a teacher for 42 years and taught history. During her career, she taught at both elementary and high school levels. Seven of those years, she taught in one-room country schools in Thomas County.

She never married, but likes kids. She said she also likes cats and dogs.

When she was able, she enjoyed growing plants and flowers. She also read and listened to the radio a lot.

Nichols retired in 1970 and has lived in Goodland since then.

# Evans elected county commission chairman

By **MAXINE NELSON**

Colby Free Press

Ron Evans was elected chairman of the Thomas County Commissioners for 2001 at Tuesday's meeting, replacing Glen Kersenbrock who had served as chair for eight years.

The commissioners left their salaries in place at \$939.57 a month, plus \$100 a month per diem to attend meetings so they do not need to keep track of travel and meal expenses. The salaries have remained the same since 1991-92 when John Bremenkamp left the office.

Much of the meeting was occupied with routine appointments and resolutions.

The *Colby Free Press* was designated the official county newspaper.

The following holidays were approved for 2001: Jan. 1, New Year's Day; Feb. 19, Presidents Day; May 28, Memorial Day; July 4, Independence Day; Sept. 3 Labor Day; Nov. 12, Veterans Day; Nov. 22, Thanksgiving Day; Nov. 23, Day after Thanksgiving; Dec. 24, Day before Christmas; Dec.

25, Christmas. The Treasurer's office will be closed all day on the Dec. 31 for bookkeeping. Jan. 1, 2002, New Year's Day, will be a holiday.

The following county appointments were approved: County Health Nurse, Kathy Ryan; County Health Officer, Dr. Victor Hildyard; Custodian, Bettie Hamill; EMS Director, Joshua Buffington; EMS Medical Advisor, Dr. Victor Hildyard; Emergency Preparedness Director, John Lygeros; Noxious Weed Director and Prairie Dog Control, Ken Ptacek; Household Hazardous Director, Sandy Swob; Radiological Officer, J.L. Ellis; Landfill Supervisor, Larry Jumper; Chairman LEPC, Bob McLemore; Road Supervisor, Chris Bieker.

The 2001 Fair Board members, the townships they represent, and the date their term expires are: Barrett, Marty Crampton 12/31/2002; East Hale, Darlene Hatfield 12/31/2001; West Hale, Stan Strange 12/31/2001; Kingery, Roy Dixon 12/31/2001; Lacey, Gary Garrett 12/31/2001; Menlo, Kevin Wark 12/31/2001; Mor-

gan, Sue Draper 12/31/2001; North Randall, Dave Keller 12/31/2001; South Randall, Cheryl Baird 12/31/2001; Rovohl, David Pabst 12/31/2002; Smith, Mark Anderson 12/31/2002; Summers, John Cranston 12/31/2002; Wendell, Darrell Dible 12/31/2001.

Those representing Colby are: Nancy Rundel 12/31/2001; Mark Miller 12/31/2002; Vera Sloan 12/31/2001.

The commissioners passed Resolution 2001-1 naming the following banks as depository banks for Thomas County for the year of 2001:

Sunflower Bank, Colby; Farmers & Merchants Bank, Colby; First National Bank, Colby; Peoples State Bank of Colby; Gold Bank, Colby; Brewster National Bank, Brewster; Bank West of Colby.

The following institutions may be named as depository institutions for savings accounts for Thomas County, Kansas for 2001: Sunflower Bank, Colby; Farmers & Merchants Bank, Colby; First National Bank, Colby;

Peoples State Bank, Colby; Gold Bank Colby; Brewster National Bank, Brewster; Bank West of Kansas, Colby.

In other business:

- The commissioners discussed a fair board member who has not been attending meetings, and said this person would have to be released and replaced unless they started participating.

- They discussed office space at the Thomas County Office Complex. There is space available in an office which they would like to rent out, preferably to a Thomas County-related entity.

- However, if no one from the county applies, they will rent to someone else who does.

- They called former County Clerk Rosalie Seemann whose husband, Ernie, fell on the ice near the law enforcement center, and broke his hip. Seemann is now home and doing well. He comes in for therapy once a week, but does other exercises at home.

- They discussed snow-removal duties, and decided to invite the court-

house custodian, Bettie Hamill, to meet with them at 9:30 a.m. next Monday for further discussion.

- The commissioners called Mayor Warren Hixson to ask if he knew anything about Ranson Housing, which offers loans for low- to moderate-income first time home owners through Sedgwick and Shawnee Counties. Hixson said he did not know, but would look over the information and report back to them at the next meeting.

- They called Register of Deeds Denny Burk to ask where the \$85,000 in mortgage registration money she paid into the general fund for the year 2000 came from.

- Burk said it was from registration of \$25 million indebtedness in mortgages through banks in the county, but not through the Federal Land Bank.

- The next meeting will be at 9 a.m. Monday in the commissioners room of the courthouse, at which time the county officers will be sworn in. Asphalt bids for the roads will also be opened. The meeting is open to the public.

# Increases in programs' caseloads tie hands on budget

TOPEKA (AP)—Proposals drafted by Gov. Bill Graves call for spending an extra \$33.7 million over 18 months on foster care, adoption services and medical care for the poor.

The new money would account for increases in the number of children and poor families expected to use those services. The services are available for anyone who's eligible, and legislators have little choice but to approve the spending.

Legislators have priorities of their own, such as making sure elderly or disabled Kansans don't wait to get nursing or other services in their homes. But they're hampered by the state's commitments on medical services and adoption and foster care programs for abused and neglected children.

"Whatever the costs are, we fund them," said Duane Goossen, state budget director. "That immediately soaks

up a lot of the flexibility we have in building the rest of the budget."

Some legislators are frustrated and question whether the administration is being creative enough in finding money for other items.

"It seems like it's less than a good college try," said House Minority Leader Jim Garner, D-Coffeyville.

Under the current budget, the state would spend about \$361 million of its own tax dollars on medical services

and adoption and foster care programs.

The adoption and foster care programs are financed with state dollars, but for every \$1 the state spends on services under the Medicaid program, the federal government adds \$1.50.

In recent years, the governor's budget staff, members of the Legislative Research Department and Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services officials have met twice a year to estimate caseloads for medical services

and adoption and foster care programs.

Those figures, in turn, drive spending. "We wouldn't expect the Legislature to adjust these costs, either, unless we had new information," Goossen said. Medical services account for the largest amount of state spending for social services, \$258.2 million.

Graves wants the Legislature to add an additional \$4.6 million to the current budget, then add another \$20 million for fiscal 2002, beginning July 1.

### Grade school site council to meet

The Colby Grade School Site Council will meet Monday at 6:30 p.m., Jan. 8, in the grade school cafeteria. The public is invited. For information, call 465-5100.

### Midwest Energy accepting trees

Used Christmas trees may be left at the Midwest Energy, 1125 S. Range, after Christmas for recycling. All decorations and plastic tree removal bags must be removed from the trees before they are deposited. The collection points will remain open through the first week of January.

### Concert set at high school

Dan and Wendy Smith of Kansas City will perform at 7 p.m. Sunday Jan. 7, at Colby High School. The event is

sponsored by Mingo Bible Church. The couple, according to officials, will perform praise songs with songs of quiet worship and challenge for the whole family. The public is invited and a free-will offering will be taken. For information, call Pastor Jon Hansen at Mingo Bible Church 785-462-2992.

### Program promotes music

A program known as "Share the Joy with Music" is now underway, said Cathy Cash, Colby Middle School band instructor. The event is being sponsored by Pepsi-Cola Company and the way the program works, she said, is that "Pepsi Notes" symbols on all specially-marked 12 packs, 24 packs, and two or three liter bottles can be redeemed for free new musical instruments, supplies, sheet music and software. Drop boxes are located in the grade school,

middle school and high school offices and also at Dillons. For information about the project, call Cash at 465-5200.

### Old telephone books wanted

Colby Grade School is collecting phone books through the "Bounty For Books" recycling program and needs everyone's help, school officials said. Telephone books may be dropped off at Wal-Mart and Colby United Methodist Church. In addition, books can be left at the grade school during regular school hours.

### Collecting phone books

Colby Sacred Heart School is collecting phone books through the "Books For Bounty" program. Drop boxes are located at Dillons, State Farm Insurance, Someplace Special and Colby Photo.

