



COLBY FREE PRESS

Emergency room decision decried, praised

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

Local doctors are not all happy about the decision to use outside physicians to staff the emergency room at Citizens Medical Center. The hospital's board of trustees voted Tuesday to contract with Staff Care, Inc. of Irving, Texas to provide emergency room coverage. "Often physicians who are on call for the emergency room are pulled away from their clinic patients or awake all night to see a patient at the hospital emergency room," said hospital Administrator Michael Boyles. "Both instances detract from the quality of care the physicians can provide for their clinic patients." Dr. Victor Hildyard, of the Colby Medical

and Surgical Center, disagrees. "We've done this twice before, and quality has always suffered while costs rose."

Hildyard added that services are usually contracted because of a manpower shortage, and with seven doctors, he didn't see that here.

He also said the other doctors working with him agreed, "We are concerned about continuity of care."

Dr. Eric Jacobsen, of the Family Center for Health Care said he isn't concerned. "I think it's a good idea," he said. Jacobsen also disagreed with Hildyard's assessment of the results when a similar system was used before.

"When I first came here, we had doctors from Salina covering weekends," he said. "They did

a good job and it worked very well."

Jacobsen said using a service will mean every emergency room patient will see a doctor.

"I cover about half of my emergency room with a mid-level (nurse-practitioner or physicians assistant), but I still have to be in the hospital a lot."

The problem comes when a doctor has 25-30 patients waiting, between the clinic and inpatients at the hospital, and he has been up all night. Jacobsen said the Memorial Day weekend was an example, "I lived in the emergency room on Saturday and Sunday."

Jacobsen also has experience with this type of system. During his residency in Chanute, he organized and operated a similarly system for

the hospital there.

"They had 11 doctors and they didn't like the call time, either."

Boyles said he realizes there will be some discomfort initially. "Although patients may initially feel a little discomfort with seeing a different doctor, they should keep in mind that, currently there are six physicians covering the emergency room and the odds of their personal physician being the one on call are one in six."

Emergency room doctors will be able to contact the primary physician if the patient desires, according to Boyles.

Boyles also said emergency medical services director Josh Buffington had worked with similar systems and was comfortable with the

changes.

Benefits include in-house coverage eight hours per day, a physician will see all patients and decreased waiting time for staff and patients. Another benefit would be general healthcare for hospital staff, a benefit already received by clinic staff, according to Boyles.

Boyles admits there is a down side. With doctors who do not know local patients, histories will take longer, making emergency room visits longer, but said there is an advantage of the "patient being seen through a different set of eyes."

"Also, with physicians in the facility, a cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation program becomes a real possibility," he said.

Colby area

Blood drive coordinator is top need for Red Cross

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The American Red Cross is looking for a volunteer or group of volunteers to coordinate community blood drives in Colby — but so far nobody has come forward.

Bev Biel, who served in that capacity here for more than 14 years, said Thursday that she is ready to pass the responsibility on to someone else.

"I found coordinating blood drives to be one of the easiest ways in providing the life-giving gift to people in need," she said.

Becoming a volunteer coordinator, she said, requires very little time and the rewards cannot be measured when considering the effort is caring for and about people.

Prior to coming to Colby, Biel said she chaired the blood drive program in Ogallala, Neb. for 10 years.

"When I came here Pi Gamma, one of the women's federated clubs, supported the blood mobile by making the calls and recruiting donors," she said.

After working closely with Natalie Urbom, former executive director of the Thomas County Red Cross chapter, Biel said she was asked to chair the local blood drives.

For many years, the blood drive chairperson was responsible for calling, recruiting and scheduling donor appointments, but that's not the case anymore.

"The American Red Cross Central Plains Region in Wichita handles all of those duties now," she said.

The main function of the local coordinator in recent years has been to make sure there is a location for the blood drive, set up the facility prior to the event and having other volunteers scheduled to assist in registration, helping donors to the canteen after giv-

ing blood and publicity before the drive.

Wendy Anderson with the Red Cross Blood Services in Wichita said a blood drive coordinator has the unique opportunity to work with a number of people in this community.

"This is such an excellent way for one person, an organization or church group to become involved," Anderson said.

"We are looking for strong leadership abilities and the desire to help the state's hospital patients who need blood to live," she said.

Anderson said that donor support in Colby has been excellent. "It was the community's commitment in helping area hospital patients that brought the idea of establishing a community blood drive to reality many years ago," she said.

In order to continue the tradition, however, Anderson said it is going to require that a person or group step forward and keep the momentum going.

According to Biel, there are three times a year that a volunteer would be called on to make the blood drive happen. One of those three times occurs in the spring when the drive is held at Colby High School.

"This particular drive is made easier because most of the volunteers are high school students who want to help," Biel said.

The next blood drive is planned in July and both Anderson and Biel are urging any interested people to call if interested.

"We will help to make sure that Colby's volunteer receives our full support, but finding a volunteer is critical," Anderson said.

For information or questions, call Biel at 462-2311 or Anderson at (785) 650-0067.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Mike Grover, of Colby, has already pre-registered his 1977 white Corvette for the three-day Rod Run, scheduled for June 8, 9, and 10. "It's

going to be a great weekend," Grover said, "and like the other rodders, I look forward to visiting and reminiscing — hope to see you there."

Rod Run planned for next weekend

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Colby's annual Rod Run begins next Friday and, according to organizers, an estimated 200 classic, custom and muscle cars are expected to arrive from Texas, Colorado and Kansas.

Now in its eighth year, the event kicks off at 5 p.m. Friday, June 8, at Sonic Drive-Inn with registration and social time for rodders, said Bev Biel, one of the organizers. Activities include door prizes for regis-

trants, 50s style rock and roll music and lots of "visiting and cruising."

Most of the activities, however, will be centered around Fike Park and the downtown area beginning at noon with cars displayed in the "Show and Shine," allowing spectators a chance to see these vintage automobiles up close.

"In addition to the rods and rodders," Biel said, "there will be a large display of pedal cars this year in the center of Fike Park." Other events Saturday include Colby Police Officer Scott Sitton

and his canine patrol at 3:30 p.m. This will also be a farewell to Blitz, who is retiring after nearly 8 years as Sitton's canine partner, she said. Along with Blitz' last performance, Sitton also plans to introduce Capone, the new canine.

On Sunday, everyone is invited to bring a lawn chair and join in a casual church service from 9 to 10 a.m. featuring Rodder for Christ, Rod Palmer of Colorado Springs, Colo.

The awards ceremony follows at noon, Sunday, with special awards

given, along with more door prizes and other special drawings for the rodders. This year's award categories include the Mayor's Choice, Paint Choice, Engine Choice, as well as participant's pick of the 1950s, 60s, 70s and 80s.

In addition to the Saturday and Sunday events at Fike Park, the Rod Run committee wants to see as many people as possible come out on Friday, too, and extend a "real Colby welcome" to the many guests visiting.

House overrides die in Senate as session ends

TOPEKA (AP) — The House wanted to send Gov. Bill Graves a message on curbing state spending, but the Senate wasn't in any mood to play mailman.

Legislators ended their 2001 session Thursday, after the House overrode four vetoes — three that cut \$3.1 million Graves had restored and another adding \$525,000 he had cut. They all died in the Senate.

"I am disappointed that so many members of the House of Representatives, who I have supported in the past, chose not to support me," said Graves, who listened to House and Senate de-

bate from his office.

"Even if the Senate had concurred with the House veto override attempts, the results would have been little consequence to the state's overall fiscal situation," Graves said.

House leaders said the overrides were an attempt to curb spending in fiscal 2002, which begins July 1, and ease the pain of drafting what is expected to be a difficult budget during the next session.

"This is all about 2003," said House Appropriations Chairman Kenny Wilk, R-Lansing.

Wilk said the vetoes were "a bit in-

consistent" with the governor's message during the session. Graves had told legislators to leave the state with ample revenues for what is expected to be a tight budget again next year.

Rep. Rocky Nichols, D-Topeka, said Graves did not act in the best interest of the state.

"He's blown a hole in the budget," Nichols said, adding the override attempts sent a message of fiscal responsibility.

Senate President Dave Kerr saw it somewhat differently.

"They didn't do anything meaningful," said Kerr, R-Hutchinson.

Kerr said he was surprised the House mustered enough votes to override Graves, but that none of the votes restored substantial cuts to improve the state's financial outlook.

The message sent Thursday, Kerr said, is that Senate Republicans are "very willing to line up" behind a Republican governor to work together not just this year but next.

The House's willingness "remains to be seen," he said of the GOP-controlled chamber.

Speaker Kent Glasscock said the House action was just part of the legislative process.

Bleak outlook for young job seekers this summer

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

According to Linda Goff with Kansas Job Services in Colby, the summer job situation looks pretty good for adults, but not as promising for kids.

"Most of our jobs are truck driving or harvest crews," she said, "and you need to be over 21."

Goff said the unemployment rate for northwest Kansas is one of the lowest in the state.

"Sometimes, I think we have more jobs than people," she said.

Citizens Medical Center is the largest user of the service, she said.

There are jobs for kids 16 and up at the hospital, in food service and other areas and the hospital usually has some openings.

"These are year-round openings," she said.

Young people interested in jobs need to call the Job Service Center at 462-6862.

Briefly

Weather: Pleasant

Highs in the 70s and lows in the 50s; that's the Colby region forecast through Monday as issued this morning by the National Weather Service. Tonight, partly cloudy, low in the 50s and east winds 5-15 mph. Saturday, partly sunny, high 75 and southeast winds 10-20 mph and gusty. Saturday night, cloudy, 40 percent chance for thunderstorms and the low around 55. Sunday and Monday, thunderstorms, low in the 50s and high in the 70s. Thursday's high in Colby was 73 and the overnight low this morning was 54. There was an additional 0.03 inches of rain during the night. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 70 degrees. The records for June 1: 96 in 1899 and 36 in 1917. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center)

Injury accident on U.S. 24

A Gem woman was transported to Penrose-St. Francis

Hospital in Colorado Springs, Colo., after an early morning accident Wednesday, one mile east of Colby on U.S. 24. The Thomas County Sheriff reported that 25-year-old Dalene Rowley was taken to Citizens Medical Center, before being transported to Colorado Springs after she lost control of her 2000 Ford and slid down an embankment. Her passenger, Douglas Brogan, 30, was treated and released in Colby.

Singles dance planned tonight

The Colby Singles Group will hold its regular monthly dance today, from 8 p.m. to midnight, said Don Birzer, coordinator. For information, call Birzer at 462-2127.

School board meeting Monday

The Colby School Board will meet in the boardroom of the administration building, 210 N. Range, at 7 p.m. Monday night. Items on the agenda include approval of the

Northwest Kansas Technical College advisory board representative, Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce dues, school lunch, breakfast and special milk programs, along with out-of-district attendance and transportation.

Commissioners to meet

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet in the commissioner's room in the Thomas County Courthouse on Monday at 1 p.m. Items on the agenda include the detour on Veterans Memorial Drive for the Kansas Department of Transportation, an annual budget report from High Plains Mental Health and a visit from Donna Bennett and Linda Vaughn from Waddell and Reed.

College considers Internet bids

The Colby College Board of Trustees are meeting Monday, June 4, at 5 p.m. in the board room at Thomas Hall administration building. Items to be discussed or approved

include bids for Internet access, Bedker Memorial Complex mural, student-trustee dinner comments, swim club request and negotiations.

Ice cream fund-raiser Sunday

The Aid Association for Lutherans in conjunction with Trinity Lutheran Church, Fifth and Country Club, is having an ice cream social fund-raiser beginning at 6 p.m., Sunday, June 2, through the social is to raise money for tornado victims in Hoisington, officials said.

Help needed to plant sod

Volunteers are needed to help lay sod at the Fairview Estates Retirement Community east of Dillon on Saturday, June 2, beginning at 8 a.m. In exchange for helping lay sod, ABC Construction Company has donated three sets of portable bleachers to the community. For information call Rod Williams at 462-8260.

