



# COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

## Red ribbon winner



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Quinnylyn Woofter showed her stuff in the English division of the Thomas County Fair's horse show. Woofter won a red ribbon in the event, which will be added to her point totals at fair's end.

# Eagle Med chooses Goodland over Colby

By REAGHAN SMITH

*The Goodland Daily News*

GOODLAND — Eagle Med is busy making plans to move a turbo prop King Air plane to Goodland after the Goodland Regional Medical Center board voted to bring the company here. Colby was the only other location the company was considering, according to information at the Colby City Council on July 3.

The Wichita-based company accepted the board's offer this past week, saying it will start looking immediately for employees in this area.

Eagle Med has airplanes based in Wichita, Hays, Garden City and Dodge City. While a helicopter only provides direct transport from rural hospitals to trauma centers such as Wesley Medical Center and Via Christi in Wichita, the turbo-prop airplanes can fly throughout the U.S. Eagle Med flew 1,300 missions last year and will fly

about 2,000 in 2001.

The Goodland-based aircraft will be a community aircraft covering Colby, St. Francis, Atwood, Oberlin, Oakley, and eastern Colorado.

Flying at 240 miles per hour, the plane will provide life-saving services for people in northwest Kansas.

"This is something that will benefit not only Goodland but surrounding areas as well," said Jay Jolly, administrator at the Goodland Regional Medical Center.

He said the aircraft will almost cut in half the time it takes to get critically-injured people the help and care that they need.

On August 1, Eagle Med will begin interviews for hiring people from Goodland, Colby and other areas, to fill the crew positions. Each flight has a crew consisting of one pilot, one nurse and one paramedic.

Iva Ballard, chief executive officer

and co-owner of Eagle Med, said the company is looking for at least one or two part-time pilots from this area, in addition to the 12 medical crew spots. She said if local pilots can't be found, Eagle-Med does have a crew of its own that will be available.

"Using local people helps us serve the community needs more effectively," said Don McElroy, program director for Eagle Med.

The companies time line goes from August 1 through April of 2002, when the aircraft is scheduled to arrive.

The timeline includes advertising to fill crew positions, reviewing equipment requirements, interviewing and choosing applicants, integrating the ground ambulance service into air service and identifying key players.

Training of crew members will begin Sept. 15 and end March 1, 2002. The aircraft will be moved to Goodland in April.

## Family Day set for Wednesday

By PATTY DECKER

*Free Press Editor*

Many area businesses have pulled together to make this year's *Family Day* at the Thomas County Fair — on tap for Wednesday — one of the best yet, according to fair board officials.

Darrel Dible, with the fair board, praised the efforts of businesses for helping to create the *Family Day* and to the community for its support by assisting Genesis' food bank.

"Fair board members and Genesis members will work together to get the donations of citizens," said Nancy Rundel, family day chairperson.

Throughout *Family Day*, the antique tractor show and shine and stationary engine display will take place, Rundel said. Donations of food will be the admission price to the antique tractor pull

event with judging for that show beginning at 5 p.m., but spectators, she said, are asked to stop by throughout the day and vote for the People's Choice award for their favorite antique tractor display.

"Tractors are expected from Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas," she said.

"Along with this event, the afternoon and evening will also find children of all ages enjoying the free barbecue provided by the fair board and Farmers and Merchants Bank," she said, "as well as the kids tractor pedal pull at 4 p.m."

Children who win first and second in their class will become eligible to pull at the Kansas State Fair in September. Last year, she said, Tatym Rundel, went to state.

Unopened canned goods or boxed

products suggested as donations for Genesis include peanut butter, vegetables, meats, macaroni and cheese, hamburger helper, and spaghetti and sauce.

Other needed items, she said, were toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, diapers, laundry soap, and dryer sheets.

Another feature at this year's tractor pull, said Dible, is the raffle of an antique-style pedal tractor.

"Colby Ag Center has generously donated this item to be raffled off on Wednesday at family night," he said, "with all proceeds going to Genesis."

Other businesses involved in donating money, time, or products for the special family day at this year's fair, he said, were Farm Bureau Association, and Wal-Mart Foundation along with its stores in Goodland and Colby.

# Kansans mourn death of state's first female governor; Joan Finney, 76

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Across the state Sunday, people from all backgrounds mourned the late Joan Finney and remembered Kansas' first female governor for her ability to connect with them.

Mrs. Finney died Saturday from complications associated with liver cancer diagnosed earlier this year. She was 76.

She served one term as governor, in 1991-95, after serving 16 years as state treasurer, holding both offices as a Democrat. However, she began her career in 1953 as a Republican, working on U.S. Frank Carlson's staff and considered Carlson, who also served as governor, a mentor.

Mrs. Finney had friends in both po-

litical parties, and even her opponents admired her ability to work crowds and remember faces, names and personal details about people, down to their pets' names.

"Within a minute, you felt like she'd known you forever," state Sen. Jim Barone, D-Frontenac, said Sunday. "She just had that magic about her. People liked her."

A rosary for Mrs. Finney was scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Topeka's Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic church, to be said by members of the Sisters of Charity order from Leavenworth. An ecumenical service is scheduled to follow at 7:30 p.m.

A burial mass for the former governor is scheduled at 11 a.m. Wednesday,

also at Most Pure Heart, with a burial set for 9 a.m. Thursday at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Topeka. Mrs. Finney is to be cremated.

Gov. Bill Graves, a Republican who succeeded Mrs. Finney in office, described her as "one of our finest public servants" and ordered all flags at state buildings flown at half-staff through her funeral.

"Gov. Joan Finney's passion for personally knowing and understanding Kansas people, and her desire to serve their needs, endeared her to this state," Graves said.

Before she was diagnosed with cancer, Mrs. Finney's most serious illness had been the heart problems that led to triple-bypass surgery in 1979. After-

ward, she gave up smoking and took up aerobics and walking.

During Finney's four years as governor, the state rewrote its law for distributing money to public schools, revised its abortion law, overhauled its workers' compensation system, re-enacted a capital punishment law and signed four compacts that allowed Indian tribes in northeast Kansas to open casinos. But Mrs. Finney was remembered more for her populism and her ability to reach individual voters.

"You had to see Joan Finney work a bean feed to understand her appeal," said state Sen. David Adkins of Leawood, a Republican. "She would walk in and she already knew half the people there, and the other half, before she left

they would think she was their best friend."

Mrs. Finney vigorously supported allowing voters to put proposed laws and constitutional amendments on the ballot without going through the Legislature. Legislators rejected her proposals to amend the constitution to allow for initiatives and referendums.

She fought efforts during the 1970s and 1980s to have the state treasurer appointed by the governor. Last year, she publicly supported an unsuccessful initiative to have district judges in Shawnee County elected rather than appointed.

"If you communicate with the people, then they'll get the picture, and you'll accomplish what you want to

accomplish," she said in a 1994 radio interview.

Mrs. Finney was born Feb. 12, 1925, in Topeka. Her father abandoned her pregnant mother and two older sisters in 1924, and her mother raised the three girls by teaching piano, voice and harp.

Mrs. Finney studied at the College of St. Teresa in Kansas City, then at the Kansas City Conservatory of Music, before graduating from Washburn of Topeka with a degree in economic history. She played the harp and even performed on CBS-TV's "Good Morning" in 1991.

She worked for the Santa Fe railway offices after her graduation, then on the staff of U.S. Sen. Frank Carlson, a Republican, from 1953 to 1969.

In this issue of the Free Press

## American Profile

Celebrating Hometown Life  
full-color weekly magazine

## Search begins for cause of explosion that killed two

EMPORIA (AP) — An investigation into an explosion and fire that killed two people at an apartment building will probably take most of a week, authorities said.

All five apartments in the building at the Eastgate Plaza complex were destroyed in the blast that occurred about 9 a.m. Sunday, blowing out two

walls and quickly leading to what a neighbor called a "mushroom cloud of flame." One adult and one infant were killed and seven other people, including a firefighter, were injured. No information was released Sunday about the adult and infant, whose bodies were recovered later in the day and were taken to Topeka for autopsies.

"I've never seen an explosion like this one," said Emporia Fire Chief Jack Taylor, whose department was joined by firefighters from nearby Olpe and Americus in combating the flames.

Taylor said injuries were mostly minor. The firefighter and five of the injured were released from Newman Memorial County Hospital after treat-

ment while the seventh person, Stacy Depriest, 39, was in good condition Sunday night at a hospital in Wichita.

No cause was immediately apparent, and Kelly Riggs of the Emporia Fire Department said the investigation would last most of this week.

"It was horrible, horrible," Lambert said. "It felt like slow-motion action."

## Briefly

### Weather: 80s by mid-week

A bit cooler weather is in the forecast for the Colby area by mid-week, but until then expect the heat to remain. According to the National Weather Service forecast center, lows through Thursday will generally be in the mid-60s, while highs today will top out around 100, 95 on Tuesday, 85 on Wednesday and 80 on Thursday. Thunderstorms are a good possibility throughout the period with skies partly cloudy and winds generally out of the south from 10-20 mph. Colby's weekend temperatures: highs, 87 on Friday, 88 on Saturday and 97 on Sunday; lows, 61 on Saturday, 66 on Sunday and 66 this morning. There was no additional precipitation over the weekend, leaving the month's total at 3.08 inches.

The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 85 degrees. The records for July 30: 109 in 1935 and 43 in 1971.

(The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

### Rodeo begins tonight

Thomas County fair board officials said they are proud to once again bring to Colby the PRCA rodeo beginning tonight and Tuesday at 8 p.m. at the fairground arena. Many nationally-famous cowboys will be performing here, officials said. In addition, the rodeo queen and princess will be announced during the opening event.

### Board approves contract

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees approved a contract with Woofter Construction for Living Center North at a special meeting last week. The agreement, according to Dave Starkey, college attorney, was the standard document containing all the provisions and conditions of the contract. The construction cost amounted to \$98,013 and completion should be within 90 days, officials said. In addition, the trustees accepted a bid from Dissinger Insurance Services for athletic insurance. The basic premium was accepted at \$39,700 with catastrophic insurance at \$3,197. Dr. Mikel Ary, college president, said since the college has

hired an athletic trainer, the number of athletes seeking medical attention has dropped, which could translate into premium decreases in future years.

### Parade participants wanted

Business, organizations and individuals are being reminded by the fair board to take part in this year's parade, scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday in downtown Colby. The theme is Generations — Leading into the new Millennium. with prizes offered in many categories. Before the parade, participants must stop at the registration table at Colby Glass to get an entry number and be told where to line up. The parade will proceed south on Franklin to Cedar Street, then west to the fairgrounds.

### Commissioners to meet

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m., Tuesday, at the courthouse for regular end of the month business. According to Tracey Perkins, county clerk, no appointments are scheduled for this meeting.

### Thomas County Fair 2001 Schedule of Events

#### Tuesday - July 31

7:30-11 a.m. 4-H Livestock Weigh-In  
11 a.m. Deadline for entry of all 4-H Exhibits  
8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Open Class Entries Taken  
11:30 a.m. Judging of all 4-H & Open Class Exhibits (2 p.m.)  
2 p.m. Cat, Rabbit, Hand Pet, Poultry show  
5:30 p.m. **Fair Parade** - Downtown Generations  
- Leading into the new Millennium  
8 p.m. **PRCA Rodeo**  
**Wednesday - August 1**  
8:00 a.m. 4-H Swine Show followed by Sheep Show  
9 a.m.-5 p.m. Antique Tractor Show and Shine and Stationary Engine Display  
Noon-5 p.m. Antique Tractor Pull Weigh-In

