



COLBY FREE PRESS

Contributions aid the hospital's newest addition

By **PATTY DECKER**
Free Press Editor

December was a busy month as construction and renovation continued at Citizens Medical Center, said Tama Unger, fund development director for Citizens Foundation.

"We completed sales for our allotted \$150,000 tax credits that were awarded to the hospital during the summer of 2001 by the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing," she said. In total, the tax credits yielded \$214,286. Those donating toward the hospital's new construction through this program included Criss, Inc., BankWest of Kansas, Farmers and Merchants Bank, Charles Davis, S & T Telephone Association, Inc., Dr. James and Anne Bruell, Radiology Association of Hays, Paul and Jenny Niblock, First National Bank and Stephens Construction, Inc.

"There also was one other donor who asked to remain anonymous," Unger said. The money received from these contributors has gone toward the new addition and renovations that started last fall and are expected to be completed in the spring of this year, she said. The total cost of the expansion/renovation project was estimated at about \$400,000.

The diagnostic service department will be an additional 3,341 square feet and house the hospital's newest technology to include nuclear medicine, ultrasound, bone density, x-ray, along with offices and waiting rooms.

Citizens Medical Center was one of 28 nonprofit organization around the state to get a portion of the community service tax credits. The benefit of this program, which was established in 1996, was that donors could give back charitably to their communities rather than send the money to the state in the form of taxes. For example, a business that wanted to donate \$10,000 toward the hospital project would receive 70 percent of that money or \$7,000 back in the form of a tax credit.

Editor's note: This is the first in a two-part series on the addition, renovations and new programs at Citizens Medical Center. The second part of the series will appear in Monday's edition.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Crews from Stephens Construction, the company contracted to do the expansion project, continued work at Citizens Medical Center this week. The additional space is being added to the hospital building on the southeast corner near the ambulance bay.

Thanks to donation, fair board to sponsor drug abuse education

By **MAXINE NELSON**
Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Fair Board will be sponsoring drug abuse education, thanks to a \$7,500 donation from the Thomas County Drug Forfeiture Committee.

Vera Sloan, board member, brought a proposal to the fair board's Thursday night meeting to request each 4-H Club to keep a notebook on drug abuse, and give substantial prizes for the completed notebooks.

Nancy Rundel, board member, suggested the board might open the contest to Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

The board agreed to accept the concept and details will be worked out.

Sloan said she would like to see bigger premiums to encourage more exhibits in open class.

In other business:

- Rosalie Seemann, representative of Genesis Thomas County Inc., asked to use the 4-H Building to store food for the Christmas baskets during late November and December. She said the Genesis board buys groceries during the sales and receives donations in November

and early December. These have been stored at various places, and then taken to the Jaycee Building to fill baskets. All the lifting and moving around has been difficult. It would be a lot easier to have everything in one place. She said the building is not usually booked for other activities during that time, but if it is booked, they could cover the groceries with tarps. The board approved her request.

- Brent Wiedeman, Farmers and Merchants Bank, requested that the free barbecue be known as the "Farmers and Merchants Bank Free Barbecue," because of the bank's contributions. He estimated it cost the bank approximately \$3,000 including a \$1,000 donation to the fair board, watermelon, cups and advertising, and labor. The barbecue serves about 2,000 people. Mark Miller, fair board president, said the fair board still had to pay for the meat, and Wiedeman suggested getting donations of meat from feed yards. Bill Shields and Mark Anderson will work with Wiedeman to get meat donations.
- Miller then adjourned the meeting temporarily, and Thomas County Commission Chair Ron Evans called a special meeting to elect

officers for the next year. Miller was re-elected president, and Mark Anderson vice-president. Darlene Hatfield was also nominated for president.

- D'Ette Scholtz, Thomas County Extension Agent, pointed out that the fair board rule that 4-H members must have attended five or more club meetings before being allowed to exhibit in the fair was discriminatory, and the 4-H Youth Development Policy and Guidelines said, "Fair boards may not establish rules and regulation for participation of 4-H members in the 4-H youth division at fairs. Rules and regulations... should conform to policies established by the director of Extension."
- Sue Draper said the 4-H Clubs had permission of the fair board to paint the 4-H building, and asked that the baseboard be replaced. The board said they would do so.
- Miller said he has been in contact with the Ricky Moore Carnival about coming to the 2002 fair, but no contract has been signed.
- At the previous meeting the board had voted to eliminate the Monday night rodeo, putting rodeo on Tuesday and Wednesday nights. Gary Garrett, rodeo chair, reported he had been in

touch with Bronc Rumford, who provides the rodeo, and the change in date will present no problem. He said Justin McKee will be the rodeo announcer and Gary Smith will be soundman, as last year. The change in dates presents no problem for them either.


- Jim Malcolm suggested the fair board charge admission for the rodeo slack. This is the extra time for riders who do not get to perform during the actual rodeo. It has been taking place after the regular rodeo. Malcolm suggested having it in the afternoon and charging, but Garrett said this would not be feasible.
- Garrett said he had inquiry from Trudy Wildeman as to whether the board was having the queen contest and if they wanted her to do it. The answer was yes.
- Nancy Rundel said Family Night at the fair had been eliminated with the change in schedule. Darrel Dible said the board still wants to promote Genesis and suggested picking up food items during the parade on Saturday. Marty Crampton suggested accepting food every night at the fair. Details will be worked out.
- Sue Draper inquired about the pedal trac-

tor pull, and it was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday afternoon.

- Crampton reported on the races. He said a contract had been signed with the Western District Racing Association for Friday night. Cars entered will be late models, bombers and cruisers. Modifieds will race Saturday night. A contract with E&G Promotions was signed for the Saturday night race.
- Draper reported a letter of acceptance has been received from Dr. Floyd and Mary Smith as grand marshals of the parade.
- Mark Anderson reported on the "Wall of Support" to be placed on the back of the grandstand. Each of the over 300 businesses in the county will be invited to participate at \$50 each. Sixteen names of businesses can be placed on each sheet of plywood. He said this will be offered in addition to chute sponsorships and other advertisements. The fair board will be contacting local businesses.
- The board voted to accept a contract from Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball to audit the books for 1998, 1999, and 2000 for not more than \$4,200. Arrangements will also be made for auditing 2001.



Thumbs up



√Randy & Melanie Fortin — parents of Bryce, the first baby of the new year born at Citizens Medical Center.

√Donna Finley, Jo Frahm, Jackie Stephens — all volunteers and especially all donors for a successful Red Cross blood drive.

√Marla Crumrine — for your hours of assistance and guidance in performing a caring project for a Colby resident.

√Prairie Museum of Art & History — on your continuing efforts to provide some of the finest exhibits available.

√Tuffy & Linda Taylor — on your new sign that is certain to draws attention to "The Oasis on the Plains."

√Colby's "Angels" — Mark Ostmeyer and Dan Baalman on your continuing efforts to aid those with medical needs.

√Firefighters — the controlled situation was all too real, and because of it the community is even more reassured.

(Call TD at the Free Press/462-3963 or e-mail td@nwkansan.com to have a name or organization recognized in this weekly salute.)

Enron's collapse tugs at Bush administration

WASHINGTON (AP)—A cascade of revelations about the bankrupt Enron Corp. and its dealings with Bush administration officials is raising questions about potential conflicts of interest as the Justice Department investigates the politically connected company.

The White House revealed Thursday that Enron officials sought the administration's help last fall shortly before the energy-trading company melted down along with the life savings of many of its employees. Several administration officials — and Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan — received telephone calls from the Enron chairman, Kenneth Lay.

Enron's auditing firm, whose work is under investigation by federal regulators, disclosed that its employees had destroyed a "significant" number of documents — which a congressional source said was thousands of pages — related to Houston-based Enron.

In another startling development in a day brimming with them, Attorney General John Ashcroft disqualified himself from Justice's criminal inquiry into Enron's conduct. The energy-trading company donated thousands of dollars to Ashcroft's Senate campaign in 2000.

Bush, who counts Enron among his biggest political contributors, pledged to pursue aggressively the investiga-

tion into whether the company defrauded investors, including 401(k) plan holders, by concealing vital information about its finances.

"Ken Lay is a supporter," the president said. "But what anybody's going to find is that this administration will fully investigate issues, such as the Enron bankruptcy, to make sure we can learn from the past and make sure that workers are protected."

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said Friday: "On first blush it looks like Enron operated within the rules and regulations ... with regard to how they managed their 401(k) plan, and if they did, then we need to look and see if there are appropriate changes we could

make." He was interviewed on ABC's "Good Morning America."

Bush said he saw Lay twice last year, but they did not discuss Enron's financial problems. Lay sought help last fall from Commerce Secretary Don Evans, Bush's chief political fund-raiser and confidant, and contacted O'Neill about the firm's financial problems, O'Neill and Evans said Thursday. Enron also revealed that Lay called Greenspan, the independent Fed chairman, about the company's problems.

Lay denied that he sought help from the officials. Enron said Lay's calls to O'Neill, Evans and Greenspan were simply to give them a "heads-up" about Enron's problems.

Briefly

Weather: Typical January

Chances for any measurable precipitation during the next three days are pretty slim, according to the National Weather Service forecast for the Colby region. Tonight, clear, lows in the middle 20s and brisk northerly winds 20-30 mph. Saturday, mostly sunny, continued windy with northwest winds 15-25 mph, turning to the southwest late. Saturday night, partly cloudy with an outside chance for snow showers and lows in the middle 20s. Sunday, cloudy, a 30 percent chance for snow showers and highs in the middle 40s. Monday, partly cloudy, lows near 20 and highs in the lower 40s. Colby's high Thursday was 49 and the overnight low this morning was 15. There was no additional precipitation, leaving the month's total at 0.10 inches. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 33 degrees. The records for Jan. 11: 70 in 1953 and -22 in 1918. *(The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)*

Carnival planned Sunday

There will be a Girl Scout Cookie Carnival on Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. at the National Guard Armory, 470 S. Range. The event is being sponsored by Girl Scout Seniors, Heather Morgan, Tasha Diederich, Nicole Frahm, and Chandi Reed, as part of their work to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. The event will feature many of the usual carnival games, along with some new ideas. For example, the RSVP ladies have baked more than 600 cookies that will be used in a cookie building and cookie eating contest. Everyone is invited to attend and admission is one can of food for Genesis. For questions or information, call 462-2082.

Commissioners meet Monday

The Thomas County Commissioner will meet at 9 a.m. Monday in the commissioners room of the courthouse. Larry Jumper, landfill supervisor, is on the agenda at 9 a.m.

to discuss the landfill budget. Undersheriff Mike Baughn will recap the year at 10:30 a.m. All meetings are open to the public.

Genesis annual meeting scheduled

The annual meeting of Genesis-Thomas County, Inc. will be held Thursday, at 6 p.m. in the Thomas County Office Complex. The regular meeting will be held immediately following, said Rosalie Seemann, board member.

Tests for Wellness Fair Saturday

Time is running out for those wanting blood tests for the Jan. 26 Wellness Fair. Jeanene Brown, with the Colby Wellness Committee, said blood will be drawn for the last time at the Citizens Medical Center laboratory from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Saturday. Those participating are required to fast for 10-12 hours prior to the test. Results will be avail-

able at the wellness fair from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Colby Community College Student Union.

College board meets Jan. 22

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will not meet Tuesday, Jan. 22, beginning at 5 p.m. The Jan. 22 meeting would normally be on Monday, Jan. 21; however, because of the Martin Luther King holiday, the college will not be in session.

Midwest recycles Christmas trees

Midwest Energy will accept Christmas trees at the Midwest Energy office, 1125 S. Range in Colby until Friday, Jan. 18. Midwest Energy officials said they are requesting that all decorations and plastic tree removal bags be taken from the trees before they are deposited at the collection points.

