



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Administrator not commenting

# Hildyard's suspension result of allegation

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Based on a single allegation by an employee of Citizens Medical Center, a Colby physician was notified last Friday that he could not see any of his patients nor admit any new patients to the hospital.

The complaint alleges that Dr. Victor H. Hildyard II, who has been practicing in Colby for nearly 30 years, acted improperly with a hospital employee that violated a recent policy known as, Hostile Work Environment, which was established by the hospital administration and approved by the board of directors in December of 2001.

Hildyard was served with a temporary restraining order Friday at 6:31 p.m., barring him from entering the hospital. The restraining order was signed by Administrative District Judge Jack Burr in Goodland and a copy of that order was faxed to the sheriff's office late Friday afternoon, said Thomas County Sheriff Tom Jones.

According to paperwork filed in the Thomas County District Court also on Friday at 4:52 p.m., Michael Boyles, chief executive officer at Citizens Medical Center, signed the petition which alleges that one of the hospital employees came to him with a complaint that Hildyard showed improper conduct to include sexual harassment in violation of the hospital's hos-

tile work environment policy.

The court document did not include when Dr. Hildyard was alleged to have committed the policy violation, but did note that Boyles had personally handed him a letter regarding the suspension of his privileges on Friday at 2:40 p.m.

Prior to giving Hildyard the letter, the hospital board of directors were contacted and informed of the situation.

Vern Schwanke, president of the board, said on Friday that he had no comment other than to say that, "this is a developing situation, we (the board) have been notified, and it's under investigation."

The current board includes Schwanke; Terry Cousins, vice-president; Doug Munderloh, treasurer; Kay Weston, secretary; along with members, Kurt Stephens, Judith Sears and Terry Wendall.

Greg Schafer resigned his position on the board Thursday, April 11, and two other previous board members Cristie Cox and Kevin Kriss were also replaced at the annual meeting. Boyles also had no comment today, but did confirm that Dr. Hildyard's suspension is still in effect and that he could not reveal anything about the allegations.

"We need to protect the employee, the facility, and Dr. Hildyard. The matter is now in the hands of the attorneys," he said.

Roger Petrick, president of Rural Health Management in Nebraska, which is the company that has managed Citizens Medical Center since 1996 also had little to say on Saturday, other than he knew about the situation.

"We are following proper procedures and by-laws of the hospital," Petrick said. "All players have been notified and we have done what was required under the circumstances."

Some of those "players" referred to in the court document included the Kansas Medical Society in Topeka, which is a membership organization for doctors, said a spokesperson for the group. No other specific groups or organizations were named.

## Boyles letter to Hildyard on Friday

Dear Dr. Hildyard:

The policy on hostile work environment, approved by the Board of Trustees of this institution, is specifically applicable to physicians. It provides that a single egregious incident or repeated incidents shall initiate investigatory action and that summary suspension may be appropriate pending this process.

I have discussed with you the nature of complaints that have been made with regard to your conduct toward employees. The nature of these complaints is such that summary suspension is hereby imposed with regard to the exercise of all your clinical privileges within this institution.

This suspension is effective immediately. You are therefore prohibited from providing patient care services at this institution until further notice.

We will proceed to investigate the allegations. In addition, the policy provides that the Board may refer issues of inappropriate conduct to the medical executive committee. I would invite you to request that the board make such a referral if you deem it appropriate.

We will advise you as to the time and location of the further proceeding prescribed under the policy before the board of trustees.

Michael Boyles  
Chief Executive Officer

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• **Questions about suspension need answers**

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Although not all the board members were available on Friday, those who were had no

Judy Jane, who is with the Kansas Medical Society, was unavailable for comment earlier today; however, it was the understanding of an official there that she had been in Colby last week, but was unaware that she would be traveling here again this week as noted in the court record that "representatives would be present today to begin a full detailed investigation."

No formal hearing has been scheduled as of presstime and attorneys for the hospital or Dr.

Hildyard were not available.

In addition, a petition is circulating that states it adamantly disagrees with the current action taken by the administration and board of Citizens Medical Center with regard to the alleged incidents by Dr. Hildyard.

Also that the undersigned do not support, endorse or condone the existing administration and board of Citizens Medical Center and demand their immediate resignation.

## Cardinal Law talks on pedophile priests

BOSTON (AP) — The embattled head of Boston's Roman Catholic archdiocese said a national policy on pedophile priests may have to wait until at least June, dashing hopes for immediate action stemming from a recent summit of cardinals at the Vatican.

"We were not there to make decisions," Cardinal Bernard Law said of last week's unusual two-day meeting between Pope John Paul II and the American cardinals. Law said that the nation's 400 bishops will discuss a binding sexual abuse policy at the United States Conference of Catholic

Bishops' general meeting in Dallas beginning June 13.

"The conference itself will make its own decision in June," Law told parishioners during Mass at Boston's Cathedral of the Holy Cross.

Law noted that regardless of national action, he has already instituted a "zero tolerance" policy for the archdiocese. Twelve archdiocese priests have been suspended since January following allegations of abuse. During the short statement, Law did not address calls for his resignation. "These are not easy days to serve in the pastoral role that is mine," Law said.

## Bush looks for ideas in Mideast peace talks

CRAWFORD, Texas (AP) — One hurdle to Mideast peace cleared, President Bush watched for Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to take steps to end anti-Israel violence. He invited other leaders in the region "to bare their soul" with ideas for permanently resolving the crisis.

Bush will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at the White House in the next two weeks. The meeting, their fifth, is part of what the president cast Sunday as an open invitation to Mideast leaders to consult on next steps now that Israel and Arafat have agreed to a U.S. plan for ending the Israeli siege of Arafat's Palestinian Authority headquarters in Ramallah.

The deal, brokered in a flurry of weekend telephone calls among U.S., Israeli, Palestinian and Saudi officials, was Bush's first triumph after weeks of frustrated diplomacy and months of criticism for being disengaged from the Mideast crisis.

Bush, who spoke by telephone with Sharon and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah as the Ramallah agreement came together on Sunday, sounded eager for input on the broader

"I welcome people from that part of the world to come and bare their soul and discuss their plans for peace," he said. But he suggested that Arafat, with whom he has never met, was not yet among them.

"He hasn't earned my respect yet. He must earn my respect by leading," Bush said at a news conference heralding the pact that frees the Palestinian leader from house arrest and pulls Israeli troops out of Ramallah.

The president said he now wants to see Arafat take decisive steps to "condemn and thwart terrorist activities."

Secretary of State Colin Powell, who, by telephoning Arafat on Sunday, played a key role in selling him on the Ramallah arrangement, is ready to return to the region if a cease-fire appears within reach.

But two stubborn obstacles to any short-term truce lingered—the violent standoff at Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity and Israel's refusal to permit United Nations fact-finders into the Palestinian refugee camp of Jenin to investigate claims of an Israeli massacre of civilians there.



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

More than 400 members of the Kansas District of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League assembled at the Colby Community

Building for their 29th Bi-Annual Convention Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

## Lutheran convention draws hundreds

By MAXINE NELSON

Colby Free Press

For the first time in 25 years, the Lutheran Women's Missionary League held its district convention in Colby. More than 400 people attended the 29th Biennial Convention at the Colby Community Building on Friday through Sunday.

Betty Kruse is president of the Colby Lutheran Women's Missionary League and served as convention chairman, Velma Rasmussen is vice-chair and they and other women have been planning the event for two years, said Linda Pabst, church secretary.

The Kansas District meets every two years, and this is the third time Colby has hosted it, said Relda Galli, who served on the committee. Colby also hosted the convention in 1956 and 1976.

"The theme this year was *Be Still*

and Know that I am God, from Psalm 46:10. The convention was focused on that theme. We had speakers, Bible study, song, and convention business," said Galli. Jan Streck, Christian humorist, was the entertainment. "She was a riot," said Kim Marshall, also on the committee. "She used examples from her own life and family experiences to motivate and inspire while making you laugh." Streck had attended a two-room Lutheran School in Indianapolis and received a degree in theater. Marshall said Streck used two characters, Gracie Ann, 5, and Pearl, an League woman, in costume. Pearl was on the phone as a mom, and Gracie Ann viewed life from a 5-year-old perspective.

The Northwest Kansas Zone was host for the convention, and the zone is made up of ladies' societies from Atwood, Oberlin, Oakley, Colby and Phillipsburg, and surrounding areas,

said Marshall, who said all members served on various committees.

There were 414 people registered, including 18 pastors, and some exhibitors as well, including Concordia Publishing House, Aid Association for Lutherans, Orphan Grain Train and others, said Galli. Members also participated in several events. The ladies brought health kits for Lutheran World Relief, made scrapbooks for residents of nursing homes, and collected paperback Bibles for prison ministry, she said.

Marshall said approximately 132 ladies participated in a Mission Mile Walk in Fike Park. They collected pledges or donations ahead of time and walked the mile. The money went for mission projects.

The convention voted to support nine different mission over the next two years, pledging \$32,000. Missions are funded through "mite boxes." The

ladies collect and donate loose change, and all those cents add up to support missions voted on by the group, she said.

Marshall said they also voted on how to disperse the "God's Gracious Gift Fund." "When people leave money, we keep the principal and use the interest," she said. The convention voted to use the money for four different projects, all in Kansas.

The District Executive Committee met Thursday morning at Trinity Lutheran Church with the evening meal at the Ramada Inn.

Friday's activities included the business session, with the 60th anniversary celebration and a communion service in the evening.

Saturday's activities included Bible studies and different speakers. National President Virginia von Seggren, from Orchard, Neb., spoke in the morning.

## Briefly

### More moisture?

Colby received 0.25 inches of rain during the 'wet spell' Friday and Saturday, bringing the month's total to 0.42 inches. And there is a probability of more shower activity through Wednesday, says the National Weather Service. Tonight, mostly cloudy, a 20 percent chance for showers, lows in the lower 40s, southeast winds 10-15 mph, becoming northeast late. Tuesday, mostly cloudy, another 20 percent chance for showers, highs near 70, northeast winds 10-20 mph. Tuesday night, mostly cloudy, a 30 percent chance for showers after midnight, lows near 40. Wednesday, partly cloudy, a 30 percent chance for showers and thunderstorms mainly in the afternoon, highs in the middle 50s to around

60. Wednesday night, cloudy, a 50 percent chance for showers and thunderstorms, lows in the upper 30s to around 40. Colby's high Sunday was 73 and the overnight low this morning was 37, climbing to 46 by 8 a.m. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 55 degrees. The records for April 29: 89 in 1934 and 16 in 1908. (The temperatures and precipitation are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

### Commissioners meet Tuesday

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. Tuesday in the commissioners room of the court house. Road Supervisor Chris Bieker will open bids on a packer

at 9 a.m. County Appraiser Mary Cech is on the agenda at 9:30 a.m. Undersheriff Mike Baughn will discuss the new combo unit at 10:30 a.m. and Extension agents D'Ette Scholtz and Dennis Chandler will give an extension update at 10:30 a.m. The commissioners will also approve the Soil and Water Stewardship Week Proclamation. The meeting is open to the public.

### ACT scheduled in June

The next ACT Assessment will be administered nationwide on June 8. College bound high school students must register for the college admissions and placement exam by May 3 — the deadline for having your registration post-

marked, said Ken Gullett, director of media relations. There is a late registration postmark deadline of May 17, but an extra fee is charged for late registrations.

### Forensics open house Monday

The Colby High School Forensics team will sponsor its annual open house on Monday, April 29, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium, said Nancy Rundel, head coach. The open house is held each year to showcase the talents of students prior to state competition, which this year will be held on Saturday, May 4. In addition to performing forensic-type activities, the students will also do a variety of skits. Everyone is invited to attend.

