



COLBY FREE PRESS

Sears' name is removed from surgeon's lawsuit

By **PATTY DECKER**

Colby Free Press

The lawsuit filed by a Goodland surgeon in November of 2002 against a former Citizens Medical Center board member was dropped recently, but two other local physicians, who were also involved, are still named in the suit.

Dr. Duncan Davis alleged that Judith Sears, former hospital board member, along with Drs. Raymond Ketting and Victor Hildyard, made false and defamatory statements regarding him.

Davis further alleged in his lawsuit that

Ketting and Hildyard made public statements that he was the subject of a large number of lawsuits and that he was about to lose his hospital staff privileges. Davis also claimed that Hildyard and Sears made statements that officials in Colorado were exhuming the bodies of his patients because of his incompetence and lack of (surgical) skill.

Larry G. Michel, Davis' attorney with the law firm of Kennedy, Berkley, Yarnevich and Williamson of Salina, said on Tuesday the reason why Sears was dropped from the lawsuit.

The primary reason for dropping Sears from the lawsuit, Michel said, came during discovery when he learned that statements she made were made to her by a third party and all she had done was repeat something said to her.

"After talking with my client, the decision was made to focus our attention on Drs. Ketting and Hildyard and we have now requested a pre-trial conference," he said. "We are ready to go to trial on this."

Ron Shalz, attorney for Sears, said today that he presumed the case against his client was dropped because they (Davis) couldn't

win. "Any comments either made in a board meeting or to other trustees is protected under Kansas law under qualified privilege," he said. In addition to that, he said, each of the hospital trustees signed the same confidentiality agreement everyone else with the hospital signs.

When asked why Sears thought she was named in a lawsuit to begin with, she offered the following background and explanation.

"As far as I can determine," she said, "the lawsuit was filed by Duncan Davis based on a letter written to him by Vern Schwanke

(president of Citizens Medical Center's board) and without the consent of any other trustees."

It was Sears understanding that Schwanke then chose to disclose conversations that had occurred between and among trustees and medical staff members at meetings in the board room at the Colby hospital. She said that Citizens Medical Center is a private organization and any board meetings, board committee meetings and medical staff meetings are not open to

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Levant Post Office closing

By **TISHA COX**

Colby Free Press

After 115 years, the Levant Post Office will be closing its doors permanently on Friday.

Postmaster Lisa Carney said the office is closing because she has resigned and is moving to Sylvan Grove where her husband will manage a ranch.

Carney has been postmaster for 15 years. She said no one else could be found to take over the post office.

Carney said she's sad to be leaving and residents are upset the post office is closing but mail service will continue in the community.

"They will get their mail delivered to a box unit," she said. "It's a change they're reluctant to make

even though they have to do it."

Colby Postmaster Jim McDonald said it was the responsibility of the post office in Hutchinson to find a new postmaster for Levant but no one was interested in the position.

He added the highway contract driver from Brewster will take over mail delivery in Levant.

"The only difference is that they'll pick up their mail outside instead of inside," he said. "They'll still receive the same service they've always had."

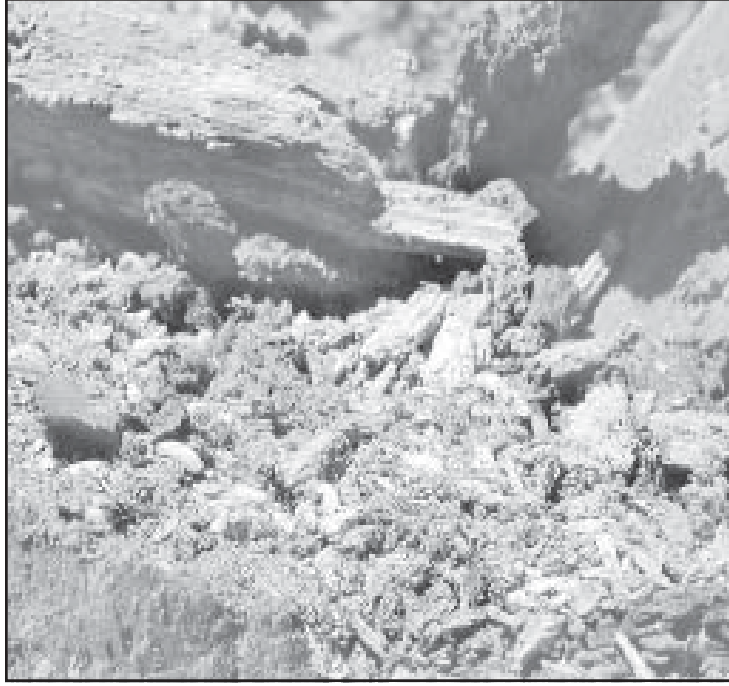
Carney said some former postmasters included Kathy Brown, who was postmaster before she was, along with Lucille Davis and Sadie Harper.

Ants win the battle



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

ABOVE: Dave Rudy of Expert Tree Care in Gem worked on a fallen tree in the yard of Janet Worthy Wednesday afternoon. The tree fell at about 10 a.m., narrowly missing the house. Rudy said the reason the tree fell was because of a nest of black carpenter ants. The tree had been infested with ants probably for 10 years, Rudy said, judging by the size of the nest. He said it was an "emergency situation" when he got the call because part of the tree trunk was still standing and he had to cut it down. **RIGHT:** Carpenter ant larvae and ants still on the stump of the tree. The ant nest contributed to the decay inside the tree.



Better result than most had thought Closing of Colby office signals end of harvest

By **TISHA COX**

Colby Free Press

Harvest is all but over now and the Colby wheat office is now closed.

Roger Hale, who has been in charge of the wheat office for more than 30 years, said harvest went better than expected.

"I think overall harvest was better than most thought it would be," he said, adding, "except for those who got hailed out."

He said the average bushel per acre will probably end up being approximately 35-40, which is bet-

ter than what was earlier projected.

Hale also had enough custom cutting crews to get all the wheat in. He said if it hadn't stormed in the middle of harvest, there probably wouldn't have been enough crews to cut all the wheat.

Because some fields were hailed out, it forced the crews to look for other jobs.

"It was some of the better wheat that got hailed out," he said.

He will have to report how many crews he did place and the numbers were also better than expected.

"I placed more than I did last

year," Hale said.

From his side of things, most everything went smoothly with no big accidents.

"I think we had a pretty safe harvest and I don't think there were too many fires," he said.

Even though Colby elevators didn't fill up, Hale said the elevator crews were quick in getting trucks back to the field.

"We had a good, safe harvest and I'm glad for the farmers and glad for the harvesters and we could help them," he said.

Meth case Colby couple sentenced

By **TISHA COX**

Colby Free Press

Two Colby residents were sentenced on meth charges Wednesday in Thomas County District Court. The two had pleaded guilty and were convicted in March.

County Attorney Allan Taylor said Ray Chadwell, 41, and Bobye Chadwell, 47, were each sentenced on three counts: 15 months each for possession of methamphetamines with intent to distribute, a class III felony; 11 months each for possession of methamphetamines, a class IV felony; and 11 months each for possession in anhydrous ammonia in an unapproved container.

Taylor said the judge ordered them to serve the sentences consecutively, but under Kansas law, no more than 30 months can be served. He also said their attorney gave evidence there was a treatment program available and District Court Judge Jack Burr ruled that treatment would be more effective than prison.

Taylor said they are already in treatment and were sentenced to 30 months probation each, to pay court costs, KBI lab fees and restitution for disposal of hazardous materials.

The couple was arrested on Jan. 4 after manufacturing meth and also on Sept. 23 of last year.

Briefly

Levant reunion plans told

The Levant reunion will be held on Sunday, Aug. 3 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Quality Inn in Colby. Dinner will be served in the restaurant at noon. Contact Elva Livingston for reservations by July 16 so she can give the restaurant a head count. For information, call (785) 462-6012.

Car wash to benefit local group

The Community Awareness Team is holding a car wash to benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters of Thomas County. The event will be held all day Saturday, July 19 beginning at 11 a.m. in the Dillon's parking lot.

Coffee House Night scheduled

The Community Awareness Team is sponsoring a smokefree Coffee House Night at City Limits Convention Center from 8 to 11 p.m. on July 26. Team members invite

area poets, musicians and comics to perform at the open microphone. The event is open to the public. For more information, contact j_cateam@hotmail.com or (785) 462-7188.

Bluegrass potluck scheduled

A community potluck supper to kick off the "Pickin' on the Plains" bluegrass festival will be held on Thursday, July 17 at 7 p.m. on the cement slab at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Bring a covered dish and then stay for the open jam session. Everyone is welcome.

Deer permits deadline near

Deer applications are available at the Thomas County Clerk's office between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The deadline for any deer permit is Friday.

Trap shoot planned Friday

The Colby Fire Department will be holding a trap shoot

on Friday and will feature a 5-stand sporting clays set-up along with the Pheasant's Forever Wobble Trap. Starting time is 1 p.m. and the shoot will continue until dark. The shoot will be three miles north of Colby on K-25, one mile west and 1/2 mile south.

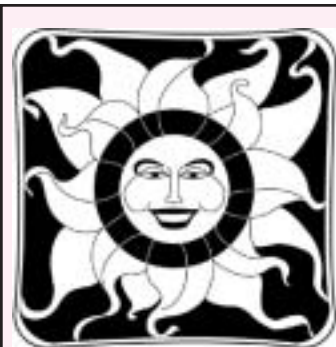
For questions, call the Colby Fire Department at (785) 462-4454.

School district has new prefix

Colby Public Schools has changed all telephone numbers from the "465" prefix to "460" prefix, said Kirk Nielsen, superintendent. The change went into effect on Tuesday, July 1.

Mosquito spraying underway

City of Colby crews are spraying for mosquitoes for the remainder of the summer. For those wanting to be notified before crews enter their area, call Jo Strage, executive secretary to the city manager, 462-4410.



Pleasant forecast

Today, mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 80s north to upper 90s south-central. Tonight, partly cloudy south-central and mostly clear elsewhere. Lows upper 50s northwest to upper 60s south-east. Friday, partly cloudy with a chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 80s north to near 100 south-central. Friday night, partly cloudy with a chance of thunderstorms west and south. Lows in the lower 60s northwest to lower 70s south-east.

By the numbers

Wednesday's high, 91
Low this morning, 57
Year ago today, 97 and 67
Records for the date, 108 in 1938, 42 in 1905
24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00
Month's precipitation, 0.08
Year's precipitation to date, 10.95
2002's precipitation to date, 4.18

Water Usage/Colby

July 9 = 3.491 million gallons
The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other figures from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby.

