



Volunteers needed to serve on council

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Volunteers are needed to serve on the local council of the American Cancer Society, said Jeanene Brown, director of education at Citizens Medical Center. The next meeting of the council is at 12:30 p.m., Wednesday (Sept. 17), in the education room at the hospital. "The council meets quarterly," Brown said, "and serves to coordinate local programs and services of the American Cancer Society." The national organization provides many services to families and

individuals who are faced with the diagnosis of cancer, she said. The role of a local council is in raising money to provide for these services as well providing the personal contact and resources for many of the organization's programs. Some of the services available in Thomas County and other communities include toll free information lines that are open 24 hours a day; a caring site on the Internet — www.cancer.org — which includes information about cancer and how to help patients make informed decisions about their treatment; and a clinical trials matching

service which offers clinical trials that best meet the patient's medical and personal needs. The number for this service is (800) 227-2345. Other services include free wigs, transportation for treatment, cancer survivor network, lodging for patients and families traveling away from home for treatment, camps for children with cancer, scholarships for youth who have had cancer, information for caregivers and much more. The American Cancer Society continues to look for a cure, more advanced treatments and improved quality of life for patients and does

make a difference in Thomas County and other communities across the nation, officials said. Kansas, for example, conducts research along with Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma. This year, the society dedicated almost \$13.4 million to the work of these 30 researchers in four states. If interested in volunteering to serve on the council, Brown encourages people to call her at (785) 462-4850 or Kelly Kriegshauser, patient services, (785) 462-4858. Another option would be to attend the next meeting, Brown said, and get a better idea of how the council works.

Area organization gives out awards

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas hosted its annual awards luncheon in Hays during the latter part of August. Many awards were given out to staff and people served, as well as to community members and organizations. The first awards given out were to employees for their years of service. They were Pam Sager of Colby; Jane Griffith, Becky Henry, Lynette Kanak, Zeldia Merz and Bette Palmer, all of Atwood; Sharon Finley, Jan Huelsman, June Kearns-Majors and Raenette Martin all of Oakley; Sandra Gottschalk, Lena Laughlin, Rene Readle, Linda Scheetz, Laquita Smith and LeAnn Wyatt of Norton and Jennifer Unger of Oberlin. Awards were also given to staff members who recently received

certification from the Teaching Family Association. They were Lisa Shearer, Delberta Miller, Teresa Daniels, Teresa Gitchel, LeAnn Wyatt, Carla Kumpke and Ed Ballinger, all of Norton and Virginia Carver of Colby. Job Placement awards were given to people who have been consistently employed in their communities. Those receiving awards were Phil Bennett, Alvin Bieker, Barbara Bieker, Betty Bieker, Cheryl Hartzog and Mark Rueber, all of Atwood; Chris Beckman, Ray Dean Dancer and James Lynn, all of Oakley. Bob Clark of Oakley was honored with the Good Neighbor Award, which is given to a community member who shows outstanding support to the people served by the organization.

Group recognizes September as recovery month

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September is National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month and one local organization plans to focus its attention on the need for additional treatment services. The Thomas County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council in Colby cur-

rently provides counseling and education services to the counties of Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Wallace, Logan and Gove in northwest Kansas, said Nina Carpenter, director. "Substance abuse is a disease which, like other chronic medical conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure, can be successfully

treated," she said. "Recovery month is a good time to highlight the benefits of substance abuse treatment and encourage people with alcohol and other drug problems to begin their journey of recovery." In addition to the many services provided by the facility, the council also operates the Northwest

Kansas Reintegration Facility in Colby, which provides a structured, drug-free environment for men 18 and older who are capable of gainful employment. For questions about the recovery month observation or treatment services, call the alcohol and drug abuse council at (800) 794-3046 or (785) 462-6111.

Attorney general criticizes judge's opinion on school finance case

TOPEKA (AP)—Attorney General Phill Kline objected Tuesday to guidelines that a judge plans to use in deciding a lawsuit challenging the state's school finance law. Kline said he would appeal a ruling based on those guidelines. In the 1999 lawsuit, scheduled to go to trial Sept. 22, parents and administrators in the Dodge City and Salina school districts allege the

state neither provides enough money for public schools nor distributes the funds it fairly. Shawnee County District Judge Terry Bullock issued a pretrial order Monday saying his decision would be guided by the state's constitutional guarantee of equal education opportunity for all public school students, not solely by dollars spent per pupil.

Bullock dismissed Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and State Treasurer Lynn Jenkins as defendants, saying the Kansas Constitution gives the Legislature sole responsibility to "make suitable provision for finance of the educational interests of the state." In a statement, Kline said Bullock's order suggested that the judge might invalidate key portions

of the school finance law, which sets school district budgets at \$3,867 per pupil. Kline said he is worried Bullock will strike down provisions allowing districts to impose extra property taxes to exceed their state-set budgets, and providing extra aid to small school districts. "I believe such an analysis is premature and flawed and, if it prevails

in district court, I will take this issue to the Kansas Supreme Court," Kline said. Bullock issued a similar pretrial order in 1991, when a previous school finance law faced a challenge. Legislators reacted to that order by passing the current school finance law the next year, and the Supreme Court upheld it in 1994.

The state spends about \$2.6 billion, more than half of its general revenues, on aid to public schools, but some education officials say the amount still is inadequate. Not only does the latest legal challenge make that claim, it suggests the law favors wealthier districts and that a misallocation of money leads to discrimination against minorities.

Charges dismissed in University of Kansas and Bank of America trust case

LAWRENCE (AP)—A judge has dismissed several claims against the University of Kansas and Bank of America over the administration of a trust designed to maintain two scholarship halls. Douglas County District Court Judge Jack Murphy dismissed

Monday the claims at the request of the plaintiffs — 26 current and former residents of Watkins and Miller halls. The ruling means the plaintiffs are no longer seeking damages, said their attorney, David Brown. Still to be resolved, however, is how much

say residents of the two dormitories will have concerning their upkeep and whether fees for Bank of America's attorneys will be paid from the trust. "The bottom line is, we have achieved virtually everything we've asked for," Brown said.

Elizabeth Miller Watkins left money in 1939 for a trust to fix the buildings. The lawsuit, which was filed in March 2001, claimed the bank had instead sent the money to the university, which has passed it on to the Kansas University Endowment

Fund. The lawsuit alleged breach of duty, fraud and conversion, and asked the bank to repay more than \$75,000 to the trust fund. The university said it was pleased with the judge's decision to dismiss the charges.

"The university has maintained all along that the allegations were without merit," said university spokeswoman Lynn Bretz. Brown said his clients asked the judge to dismiss the charges because they did not have enough money to pursue damages.

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