



COLBY FREE PRESS

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KU site may cause tumors

LAWRENCE (AP) — The University of Kansas has called on an epidemiologist and put together a team to study whether Wescoe Hall is responsible for a series of recent health concerns.

"We don't expect to find a problem," Senior Vice Provost Kathleen McCluskey-Fawcett said. "We're erring on the side of caution because some of the residents of Wescoe are very concerned."

There have been reports that at least five people who work in the building, known for its lack of windows and overall gloominess, have been diagnosed with brain tumors in the past eight years. The most recent was an English professor in the spring.

"A lot of people are quite alarmed," said Dorice Elliott, associate professor of English and department chair. "There are people who've begun to spend less time in the building."

Elliott said those diagnosed have generally spent long hours in the building.

"I think it's worth checking out," she said. "I also think there are a lot of ... rumors. It's hard to say whether they're founded or not. Wescoe has been subject to these kinds of rumors periodically since it was built."

John Neuberger, a member of the University of Kansas School of Medicine's preventative medicine and health department, will lead the investigation. Officials said the study will include air-quality tests and an epidemiological study.

McCluskey-Fawcett said the school is prepared to spend between \$25,000 and \$100,000 on the study, which is expected to take about seven months.

Marjorie Swann, associate professor of English, said three faculty members have been diagnosed with brain tumors in the past year — two of them malignant. Another case was diagnosed four years ago and a fifth about eight years ago.

Four cases involved people in the same department, she said, and several shared the same second-floor corridor.



Colby High Plains Lions Club members and Highway 25 Association coordinators Mary Hurtt, foreground, and Hazel Estes at last year's Colby Citywide Garage Sale. This year's event is from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

File photo

Board ruling Saturday

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

The Kansas State Board of Healing Arts is expected to make a decision Saturday about a Colby doctor alleged to have committed 19 violations regarding misconduct and care of patients.



V. Hildyard

Dr. Victor Hildyard, 58, has waited since January for the board's answer following an initial ruling made by its hearing officer Edward Gaschler. Gaschler's ruling was based on a nine-day hearing held in October.

Gaschler determined of the 19 allegations Hildyard was charged with, 16 of those dealing with medical-related incompetencies or patient care were unfounded.

Of the three remaining allegations, two involving inappropriate language and the other with unsigned progress notes had merit, but were considered minor, said Hutchinson attorney Mike O'Neal, representing Hildyard.

Gaschler recommended in January Hildyard receive public censorship for his inappropriate language.

Gaschler did not propose any punishment for language and unsigned progress notes allegations.

According to the board of healing arts procedures, after the presiding officer hears all evidence, he then makes an initial order.

That order is presented to the 15-member board which reviews the order.

The state board can then concur with those initial findings, modify or reject them.

The board has met three times since Gaschler's ruling in January.

Due to the timing of the initial order, the board determined it was too much information to make a decision during its February meeting, said Mark Stafford, general counsel for the Board of Healing Arts.

When the board met in April, board attorney David Steed proposed to modify the initial order to have Hildyard pay \$70,000 for costs incurred in the investigation and the hearing in October 2005.

However, after discussing the situation with Hildyard's attorney, the board decided to table the decision until its June meeting.

Lawrence Buening Jr., executive director of the Kansas Board of Healing Arts, filed an order in April for a psychological evaluation of Hildyard.

The evaluation relates to Hildyard's alleged disruptive behavior and certain medical decisions stated in the other allegations.

Wheelin' and dealin' Yard sales stretch 130 miles

For the second year in a row Colby is part of the Highway 25 Association's 130-mile Gigantic Garage Sale on Saturday.

But there is more to the yard sales than just people trying to rid of some personal items. The purpose of the Highway 25 Association's sale is promoting the many communities along High-

way 25 from Interstate 70 in Kansas to Interstate 80 in western Nebraska. Other towns along Highway 25 include Atwood and in Nebraska, Trenton, Wallace, Sutherland and Hayes Center.

People who are shopping in those towns are also encouraged to visit the attractions in those towns.

Mary Hurtt and Hazel Estes are

coordinating Saturday's event in Colby starting at 8 a.m. in the parking lot of the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave.

The Colby Lions Club, sponsoring Colby's event, will have a garage sale with proceeds benefiting the Lions' sight foundation. Maps of other garage sales in Colby will be available at the Thomas County

Office Complex.

"We encourage anyone to join us Saturday by bringing their own yard sale items to the parking lot," said Hurtt. Today's Colby Free Press has a map of all yard sales on Saturday. The map is on page 10. For questions, call Hurtt at 443-1886 or Estes (785) 821-2492.

Thomas County agencies train for flu pandemic

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

It's not if it's going to happen, but when it will happen.

Forty-two people from Thomas County and northwest Kansas learned how to respond to a pandemic influenza outbreak during a training exercise held Monday at the Thomas County Office Complex. The event was sponsored by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

Personnel from city and county agencies as well as medical clinics, Citizens Medical Center and local

media were in attendance.

"We're practicing for the real thing," said Connie Walden, a nurse with the Thomas County Health Department. "It will come."

She said by planning and working together, people won't be so nervous when something does happen.

Ella Vajnar, a medical investigator with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment — Center for Public Health Preparedness in Hays, gave a presentation on the Strategic National Stockpile.

"The objective would be to set up mass dispensing on a local level to get out the drugs necessary to deal with an outbreak," Vajnar said.

The last flu pandemic happened in 1918 and was a strain of the bird flu.

Through the Department of Homeland Security, the stockpile is available to states in the event of a public health emergency, like a flu pandemic or bioterrorism attack, to limit the spread of the disease.

"A local emergency doesn't need to be declared, and the supplies are available when health departments run out of what they have," Vajnar said.

Supplies from the stockpile were sent to New York City within eight hours of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center Sept. 11, 2001. Following Sept. 11, other ship-

ments were sent to 10 states within eight hours after anthrax was found in the postal system.

The packs contain medicines, such as antibiotics or vaccinations, to deal with everything from anthrax to plague and the flu. Also contained in the packs are medical and surgical equipment that might be needed in emergency situations.

Vajnar said the packs weigh 50 tons. They are sent to the state, then broken down into smaller units.

"This is a lot of material you wouldn't want to manage," she said.

Every six to 12 months, the packages are reviewed and updated.

Depending on the emergency,

one person could pick up pills for an entire household, but if it requires vaccinations, everyone in the household must go to a dispensing location.

Juanita Gatz, director of the Thomas County Health Department, said those in attendance will have a role to play at a dispensing location and learned they learned what those roles are.

The office complex was set up as it would be in case of a real emergency.

The building was divided into a receiving area where people would fill out medical forms and undergo a health screening before being allowed to proceed.

Got your goat

Chris Sherman, left, and Wade Bethell, center, of Colby Livestock, reined in a goat captured at Martin Tractor Farm Services today. Bethell said the goat escaped from the sale barn, about two miles away, Wednesday. It was found this morning sleeping under a trailer at Martin Tractor, but went on the lam after waking. The Colby Police Department K-9 unit served as a deterrent to keep the animal from escaping.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

al-Qaida top official dies in U.S. air strike

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaida's leader in Iraq who led a bloody campaign of suicide bombings and kidnappings, has been killed in an air strike, U.S. and Iraqi officials said Thursday, adding that his identity was confirmed by fingerprints and a look at his face.

It was a major victory in the U.S.-led war in Iraq and the broader war on terror.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said al-Zarqawi was killed along with seven aides Wednesday evening in a remote area 30 miles northeast of Baghdad in the volatile province of Diyala, just east of the provincial capital of Baqouba, al-Maliki said.

Loud applause broke out as al-Maliki, flanked by U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and U.S. Gen. George Casey, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, told reporters at a news conference that "al-Zarqawi was eliminated."

In London, British Prime Minister Tony Blair said al-Zarqawi's death "was very good news because a blow against al-Qaida in Iraq was a blow against al-Qaida everywhere."

The announcement came six days after the Jordanian-born terrorist leader issued an audiotape on the Internet, railing against Shiites in Iraq and saying militias were raping women and killing Sunnis and the community must fight back.