



COLBY FREE PRESS

10 pages

Cancer survivor finds stronger life, family

By John Van Nostrand
Colby Free Press

Paula Halvorson does not care a gallon of gasoline costs about \$3. She is just glad she is still alive to pay that amount.

Halvorson, 46, of Gem is a survivor of breast cancer. She will be a featured speaker 10 p.m. Friday during Relay for Life, the fund and awareness raising event in Colby for the American Cancer Society.

"I stand in line at the store and hear people complain about the price of groceries or I hear people complain about the price of gasoline. What are you complaining about," she said.

Surprise

In March 2004 Halvorson had her annual mammogram, an X-ray test to detect breast cancer. Those tests showed nothing was wrong.

"But weeks later, I felt something," she said.

A follow-up doctor's appointment again did not find anything suspicious. But Halvorson was still not convinced.

"I was concerned," she said.

She went to a doctor in Hays who discovered the cancer April 29, weeks after the mammogram.

"My life was in an abyss," she said. "I felt like I was never going to stop falling. There was no way to describe I have cancer. You think about your family and death."



Paula Halvorson, right, is even closer now to her family since being diagnosed and cured of breast cancer. She said her family was supportive throughout her ordeal. Husband Bruce is seated on the left along with daughter April, standing, and daughter Carrie, seated in foreground. Paula will speak Friday during Relay for Life.

Paula's husband, Bruce, went with her to Hays that day. On the drive back she said they were talking how the diagnosis was already impacting their lives.

"We were at Ellis and I remember putting my hand on his shoulder and saying, 'We are going to

Relay for Life schedule highlights

Colby's 12th annual Relay for Life will be held Friday at Denmen Field, located at 1615 W. First St.

According to the American Cancer Society, Relay For Life is an overnight event designed to celebrate survivorship and raise money for research and programs of your American Cancer Society. During the event, teams of people take turns walking or running laps. Each team tries to keep at least one team member on the track at all times.

Last year, Colby raised more than \$22,500.

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life began in Tacoma, Wash., as the City of Destiny Classic 24-Hour Run Against Cancer.

In May 1985, Dr. Klatt spent a grueling 24 hours circling the track at Baker Stadium at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma for more than 83 miles.

Throughout the night, friends paid \$25 to run or walk 30 minutes with him. He raised \$27,000 to fight cancer.

That first year, nearly 300 of Dr. Klatt's friends, family, and patients watched as he ran and walked the course.

While he circled the track those 24 hours, he thought about how others could take part. He envisioned a 24-hour team relay event that could raise more money to fight cancer. Months later he pulled together a small committee to plan the first team relay event known as the City of Destiny Classic 24-Hour Run Against Cancer.

Schedule of events for Colby's Relay for Life

5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.: Survivors Reception at Thomas County Office complex

6 p.m. - 10 p.m.: Wild Ride performs.

7 p.m. Opening ceremony; flag ceremony, Star Spangled Banner

sung by Kathy Bissitt; survivor's story; survivors, caregivers walk; team walk.

8:30 p.m.: live auction by Tom Harrison; theme baskets; John Deere battery powered tractor-trailer from Orschelns; necklace, earrings donated by Horlacher's; Colorado Rockies-Los Angeles Dodgers tickets donated by Performax; John Deere toy donated by Colby Implement.

10 p.m.: Luminary service, survivor story, McClemore family performs, reading of luminaries;

11 p.m. - 1 a.m.: Pieces of Eight plays.

1 a.m. - 2:30 a.m. DJ Nate Schwarz.

2:30 a.m. - 3:30: Blake and Brandon McClemore play.

3:30 a.m. - 7 a.m.: DJ Nate Schwarz plays

7 a.m.: Closing ceremony, breakfast provided by the Girl Scouts.

work," she said. "Then he said, 'That's my girl.'"

The first thing Paula did was tell her two daughters, from her first marriage. "They had no idea," she said. "When we sat down to tell

them the first they said was 'what's wrong?'"

Halvorson was encouraged since daughters Carrie Riedel, 26, and April Riedel, 22, did not shed any tears after being told. It was a shock

though.

"It felt like it hit me in the stomach," Carrie said.

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Appraiser to go online

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Businesses needing legal descriptions of land will soon have them online for a fee.

Thomas County Commissioners Ron Evans, Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen Monday approved \$4,415 for a Web site for the county appraiser's office.

"This will be user fee based," County Appraiser Mary Cech said.

Anticipating a minimum of 10 businesses which will pay to research legal descriptions online will allow Cech to avoid hiring another staff member.

"I'm in favor of it if you aren't going to hire another person," Evans said.

Besides Cech, the appraiser's office staff consists of George Overton, Kathy Cunningham, and Ray Schindler. Cech said having an online search module will allow businesses to find legal descriptions and those she has talked to were in favor of the service. The Web site is expected to be operational next month.

"It's going to pay for itself," she said.

Provided by Infnitec of Hays, the online service will provide data for residential, commercial and sales databases. Each business, such as law firms or real estate companies, will have a registered user name and password to gain access to the site.

The commissioners agreed to pay for a one-year subscription to the service, renewable for \$1,920.

Lunch on us



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Colby Community College students had the chance to become acquainted with local businesses during a welcome picnic Tuesday for students and faculty at Fike Park. The picnic was sponsored by the Colby Chamber of Commerce and Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau. Today marks the beginning of classes for the 2006-2007 school year.

County passes budget

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Thomas County Commissioners approve the 2007 budget Monday without protest.

"In the 12 years I've been a commissioner, I think we've had people here two times," Commissioner Ron Evans said. "Once was to compliment the board of commissioners."

Evans and Commissioners Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen spent the past couple months pouring over figures to determine the 2007 budget for the county.

"We are down 2.22 mills and we are up \$1,850,898 in valuation," Evans said.

He said key elements driving the lowered mill levy budget were both sales tax revenue and interest on idle funds were more than projected.

And Evans said Steele's expertise as a certified public accountant was invaluable in helping determine how much money it would take to fund each line item on the budget.

"I want to applaud him," he said.

Christiansen said Thomas County is "pretty fortunate" compared to area counties which will have to raise taxes next year to pay for goods and services.

"Mr. Chairman," Steele said, "if there's not going to be anyone show up to protest the budget I'd move to approve it as published."

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Judge determines doctor can still practice during appeal

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

A Colby doctor is appealing the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts' decision to revoke his medical license. The board based its decision Saturday on two obstetrical cases, seven steroid cases, unprofessional behavior involving language and presigning progress notes.

However, Dr. Victor H. Hildyard, 58, a family practitioner for more than 30 years, will continue practicing medicine following a stay issued by Judicial District Court Judge Jack Burr Tuesday, said Mike O'Neal of Hutchinson, representing the doctor.

"Dr. Hildyard is still in business," O'Neal said. In its final order, the board concluded Hildyard practiced below the standard of care to a degree constituting ordinary negligence on multiple occasions involving different professional services and on repeated instances involving multiple patients with the steroid injections. The same conclusion was reached regarding two obstetrical patients.

In the initial order the board's presiding officer, Edward Gaschler cleared the doctor of any wrong-doing regarding all medical-related issues.

The board wrote they arrived at different findings from the initial order, adding Gaschler does not possess any special ex-

pertise regarding the medical profession. "It was likely proper for him (Gaschler) to use the evidentiary standard," according to the final order. The document further stated that the board does possess that expertise and is entitled and expected to rely upon that in determining whether the record establishes practices below the standard of care.

O'Neal said the board's final order was a "valiant attempt to backfill" as a way to justify its vote to revoke the license in June.

"It took them (the board) this long to come up with reasons to disagree with the hearing officer — weak."

O'Neal said one of the two obstetrical cases dated back to 1998 and the steroid cases

were from 2000-04. "They substituted their judgment after only looking at records for the judgment of the hearing officer, who not only had the records, but say and heard the witnesses," he said. "He (Gaschler) found no deviation."

As for the steroid cases, O'Neal said the board's claim is Hildyard over treated the patients. "These are the cases our expert said were cases where there was no other effective form of treatment."

O'Neal said Gaschler found these poor patients required the treatments.

"Not one resulted in a bad outcome from the steroids," he said.

O'Neal added some of the steroid patients had end-stage diseases for which this was the only treatment to relieve the suffering. "The board would take that away from them," he said.

The next step, following Burr's decision to stay the revocation of the license, will be an appeal.

According to O'Neal, he has 50 days to submit a written argument and the board has 30 days after that.

"A hearing before the court is about 80-plus days away," O'Neal said. "The court will then take the matter under advisement, review the extensive record and rule, and a decision to uphold or overturn could take as long as four months."