

# Emergency preparedness



JAN KATZACKERMAN/Colby Free Press

Filling a syringe with flu vaccine, Carlene Gillespie of Grainfield was one of about 100 volunteers who helped with Friday's emergency preparedness public health training exercise at the Hoxie High School gymnasium. The drill was sponsored by Sheridan County Health Nurse Melanie Cooper who said her department was prepared to immunize close to 300 people for flu and pneumonia during the drill. Cooper said the exercise is a way to educate the public about its part in preparing for a public health emergency. Also pictured is Marge Hartzog, who along with Gillespie works at the Sheridan County Health Complex in the nursing department.

## Chat with Rosalie

# Seniors' questions answered

**Q. What can seniors do to help their doctors avoid prescription drug interaction?**

**A.** Keep a pencil copy of all your medication, vitamins, etcetra in your purse or wallet, listing the name of medication, how often taken (directions of use), milligrams per dosage. If your record is in pencil each time a dosage is changed you can erase and keep your record current.

This record should also include your name, address, phone number, birthday, allergies, your doctor, s name, pharmacy, Living Will, yes or no, if so, location, Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, yes or no, and the name of the person in charge. Also include current medical conditions you are being treated for, any surgeries, type and the year. This is a long answer but could be very beneficial for your doctor, emergency medical technicians and so forth.

**Q. What, and when, do seniors need to inform their children of their financial, long-term care, life insurance and other essential issues about aging?**

**A.** Whenever the person thinks the time is right. Each family will, and should, set its own priorities. I have told my children where things are, but not given them written statements. That should also be done at the same time, as the family talk is. Put everything in writing and give a copy to each child. If you have a computer you could also tell your children your information is on the computer and how you labeled the information. At the same time, a Power of Attorneys, a Living Will and a Durable Power of Attorney should be drawn up. There is a lot of information available on the Internet concerning these topics.

**Q. Is there anything new concerning the Medicare Prescription Plan D Program?**

**A.** On Sept. 30, the Wichita Eagle had a very informative article, "Medicare adds to drug plan options." Now there will be 53 plans in Kansas to choose from, WOW, I

thought 40 were way too many!

When a person receives their "2007 Medicare and You" booklet, all of the plans will be listed as this year, look them over very carefully, compare the plans with your current plan.

One person said "competition is working," but I think it may be more confusing. Many of the new plans are offering coverage that seniors have been asking for, such as no deductible or coverage in the so-called "doughnut hole."

The doughnut hole is the gap created at the point when beneficiaries have to pick up all of their drug costs.

"The new options that are available are primarily options that provide enhanced coverage," the article said.

If seniors are not satisfied with their plans, they can switch to a new one during the open enrollment period. Read your "Medicare and You" booklet very carefully to check on the enrollment or change period.

**Q. Is there anything new concerning generic drugs?**

**A.** Also from the Wichita Eagle on Sept. 30, a very interesting article on some popular drugs, "Does your drug have a generic?"

Wondering if a drug you take is available in a generic form? There were five new generic drugs listed: Zocor, Percocet, Zithromax, Zolof and Flonase.

The Generic Pharmaceutical Association says the easiest way to find out (about generic drugs) is to ask your doctor or pharmacist. You

also can use an online resource such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's "electronic orange book," which lists drugs, at [www.fda.gov/cder/ob](http://www.fda.gov/cder/ob).

To use it, first search by brand name to find the active ingredient in the drug. Then search by the active ingredient: The generic drug manufacturers will be listed beside the brand name manufacturer.

For example, The Eagle looked up Zoloft, which is a medication for depression and anxiety. The Web site showed that the active ingredient is sertraline hydrochloride.

Rosalie Seemann, secretary of the Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging, will answer questions or provide information about the agency on a monthly basis. Readers may submit questions by writing Seemann at: Chat with Rosalie c/o Rosalie Seemann, 426 Hale, Le-vant, Kan. 67743, or by emailing: [rsseemann@st-tel.net](mailto:rsseemann@st-tel.net).

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## Holton hotel a 'gem' to owners, artist

HOLTON (AP) — Whether you fancy cowboy hats and horses or petticoats and pearls, Hotel Josephine in downtown Holton has a room for you — 18 rooms actually.

Calvin and Darren Drake, father and son owners of the legendary hotel, with the help of Western artist Rebecca MacKinnon, have completed nine months of renovations with two specific themes.

"One of the things Calvin said when he called me was he wanted to bring back the 'Old West' feel and keep some of the Victorian feel," said MacKinnon, a Kansas City, Kan., artist who developed a different look for each room. "The key is keeping the wonderful charm and then enhance."

The downstairs rooms at Hotel Josephine are decorated to represent the Victorian era. The upstairs rooms are straight out of the Wild West. MacKinnon said both periods peaked when Hotel Josephine was built in 1889.

"We've made it a point to not

**"You never really know what you'll find. She surprises me."**

Calvin Drake, owner Hotel Josephine

come in and take out everything," she said. "We try to keep what history is interesting."

Calvin Drake said the history at the hotel is rich, with Grover Cleveland and Carry Nation among the notable guests. MacKinnon said that throughout its existence, the building has been through several renovations, which has allowed her to be surprised as she added her touch.

"It's an old hotel, so one of the treats is you get to tear down the old fixtures so you start to find gems,"

MacKinnon said. "It's an example of enhancing the art."

One example of a "gem," MacKinnon said, is in the breakfast room where the hotel serves continental breakfast for guests. As Drake and MacKinnon were stripping the walls, they came across large-scale paintings of horses that had been covered over the years. Now the paintings fit right into their theme.

"You never really know what you'll find," Drake said. "She surprises me."

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