



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Colby has new vet clinic

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

There's a new vet in Colby. Dr. Tammy Swartz's clinic opened on Thursday, Sept. 15 and is located at 1775 W. Fourth St.

She opened the clinic because she thought it was time to strike out on her own.

"It was time to start my own practice, expand my horizons," Swartz said. "I wanted to go out on my own."

Swartz practiced in Oakley five years and in the Greeley, Colo. area for a year before that. She is a 1999 graduate of the Kansas State University veterinary college in Manhattan. Before that, she attended Colby Community College for two years before going to K-State.

Swartz is a native of Russell Springs and went to school in Winona.

She said Colby was a good place for her and her husband because he's already established here, and they knew the community.

A good clientele and patient base already exists because many of her patrons were traveling from Colby to Oakley to see her.

"It's been great," she said. "The response has been wonderful."

With regulars alone Swartz has been keeping busy since opening.

The practice in Oakley where she worked has six vets, and mainly has a focus on large animals.

Her own focus is on small animals — dogs and cats.

"They kind of chose me," Swartz said

When she first started out, her time was divided almost equally between the two but as time went on, she found herself gravitating toward small animals. She doesn't mind large animals, but her heart is with small animals.

Also, country calls take time and would also mean she would be away from the clinic and in-house patients.

Swartz said the business is a full-service animal hospital of-



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Dr. Tammy Swartz examined Slick the cat this week at her newly-opened clinic in Colby. Swartz Veterinary Hospital opened Thursday, Sept. 15 and is a full-service vet hospital offering everything from vaccines to lab testing and surgeries.

fering everything from preventative medicine like shots to surgery.

"We can do almost anything," she said.

They have the facilities to do their own surgeries, x-ray and lab work. A few things are still under construction, but they will be done soon.

There is a waiting room, exam room and treatment area.

The business has five employees — a receptionist and four veterinary technicians. Two are certified and

the other two are still in school.

The techs she said, assist in surgery, help with patients and help with almost anything she needs help with.

Being a vet was what Swartz said she always wanted to do. She grew up on a farm and animals were always a part of life.

As far as pet care goes, she said there's been a trend over the past decade where people have started to take better care of their four-legged companions.

Swartz said they've become more like family members.

And, she said, prevention makes a pet's life better and easier.

"They don't have to get sick before we treat them," Swartz said.

That, she said, is helping animals live longer and healthier lives.

Swartz is also available for emergencies. For information or appointments, call 460-1078.

Vermont man has unusual trip itinerary

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Thomas County was an overnight stop Monday for a Vermont resident on an not-so-ordinary odyssey around the country.

Phil Bowler of Burlington, Vt. is traveling to every county in every state in the United States. Kansas is his 43rd state.

He said Nebraska and Kansas are on his current leg of the odyssey, which he started Sept. 13 and will finish on Oct. 14.

"I had been to both states before," Bowler said.

When he was 18, he hitchhiked across the country and has had a yen for travel ever since. Now retired, he's taking advantage of the opportunity to see as much as he can.

His trip Monday took him through Hugoton, Ulysses, Lakin, Garden City, Scott City, Oakley and Colby. He visited several museums along the way, including the Fick Fossil Museum in Oakley and Colby's Prairie Museum of Art and History.

He averages about 300 miles a day when traveling.

"I usually have an itinerary of things to see," Bowler said.

His interest in going to all the counties in the Union came out of an idea that originated in Vermont, which has what is called "The 251 Club." Bowler explained — people are encouraged to go to all 251 towns in the state and see what they're all like.

Bowler has done it, along with some friends who also took the journey.

"It's such an exciting thing to do," he said. They had so much fun they decided to push the envelope even further by doing all the counties in the country.

Bowler has made a habit of going to extremes in his travels and has been to what he's called some "obscure" points around the U.S.

"I try to go to all of these extremes," he said (furthest south, north, east, west, etc.)



Phil Bowler of Burlington, Vt., has set a goal of visiting every county in every state.

He and a grandson have been over or under every bridge on the Mississippi River. Three years ago, he also took a trip down the Mississippi on the on the American Queen, the largest passenger steamboat ever built. The 15-day trip went from St. Paul, Minn. to New Orleans.

Five years ago when one of Vermont's college teams made it to the NCAA basketball tournament in Lubbock, Texas, he took advantage of the opportunity and went to both Oklahoma City and Tulsa. He also took in parts of Kansas, starting with Coffeyville, Manhattan, Fort Riley, Dodge City and then the Texas Panhandle.

Interesting facts he's learned include Alaska has no counties and Hawaii has four. The Aloha state is also the southernmost American state.

An interest in tracing the history of Vermonters and history in general helped spur his travels. Bowler has also retraced the route of Lewis and Clark and the route of Gen. George Armstrong Custer and the 7th Cavalry to the Little Big Horn.

He said if anyone has the chance and health, they should travel.

"Travel requires a lot of work and a lot of effort," Bowler said. "It's a wonderful thing to do."

Activists start statewide tour to promote amendment

TOPEKA (AP) — Activists began a statewide bus tour Tuesday at the Statehouse to build support for a proposed constitutional amendment to limit the growth of state spending and legislators' ability to raise taxes.

Dubbing their effort "The American Dream Express," supporters say the amendment is needed to revive the state economy and protect taxpayers from increase burden.

"The Kansas economy needs to get out of its rut and get on track," said Alan Cobb, state director of the Kansas chapter of Americans for Prosperity. "It's a simple, simple thing."

As outlined, Kansas would limit state spending growth to the rate of inflation.

Any statewide tax increase would be subject to voter approval. Emergency accounts would be established to bolster the state budget in lean years.

Revenue collected in excess of the inflation rate would be offset by tax reductions or refunds to Kansas taxpayers.

The proposal is modeled after the Taxpayers Bill of Rights, or TABOR, in Colorado which limits growth in state spending and puts all tax increases before the voters.

Cobb said the law works, pointing to that state's growing population and economy.

However, Colorado voters will decide in November whether to relax TABOR's restrictions for five years, allowing the state to keep \$3.7 billion that would otherwise be

the refunded to taxpayers.

Without the extra money, legislators say Colorado is facing \$492 million in budget cuts next year alone, after \$2 billion in previous cuts since the recession hit in 2001.

In Kansas, it would take a two-thirds majority of the House and Senate to put TABOR on the ballot in November 2006.

Voter approval would make it part of the Kansas Constitution, Cobb said.

Legislators have been reluctant to support the measure or any change in the constitution, failing to advance proposals during a summer special session to limit the power of the judiciary.

The tour will visit 23 cities over four days, ending Friday in Leavenworth.

Opponents said the proposal would have damaging effects on the state's education and health care systems in coming years, because it could limit funding in those areas.

"I don't know what their motives are," said Maren Turner, state director for American Association of Retired Persons in Kansas.

"It is, in fact, a proposal that would be ruinous to the Kansas quality of life, seriously undermining the fundamental pillars of our economy."

Twenty-eight organizations had formed the Coalition for a Prosperous Kansas to fight TABOR, Turner said about the group.

Opponents are also concerned that TABOR supporters may try to put spending restrictions in state

law, which would require only legislative majorities and the governor's signature.

"Given the fact that the Republican governor of Colorado, once a big proponent of TABOR, is now campaigning to lift many of its restrictions, we believe caution is needed," said Nicole Corcoran, spokeswoman for Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

However, TABOR supporter Kim Borchert, a Shawnee County resident, said state government was spending the future of her children and grandchildren.

She urged government to spend responsibly.

"It is not anti-tax. It is not anti-education," Borchert said. "And it is not anti-children."

Rep. Brenda Landwehr, R-Wichita, said Kansas spends 68 cents of every dollar it collects on education, including \$3 billion on K-12 education.

She is a co-sponsor of the TABOR amendment, along with House Speaker Doug Mays, who is seeking the GOP nomination for governor.

"The question that is not answered is: How do you defend spending growing faster than three times the rate of Kansas wages?" Landwehr said.

She said special interest lobbyists for education and other state services drown out the voices of taxpayers in the Statehouse, putting pressure on legislators to continue increasing spending.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Rep. Jim Morrison, (R-Colby), spoke during an ice cream social sponsored by the Kansas chapter of Americans for Prosperity Tuesday at Fike Park. The group stopped in Colby on its bus tour to raise awareness about the benefits of a Taxpayer's Bill of Rights.

