

Family

Death

Ronald Foss

Ronald Lee Foss, 67, formerly of Colby and Hendersonville, Tenn., died Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008, in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Arrangements are pending with Kersensbrock Funeral Chapel in Colby.

Dolores Corke

Dolores Fern Corke, 78, died Sunday, Feb. 17, 2008, at Cherry Village Nursing Home in Great Bend.

She was born Sept. 4, 1929, in rural Sheridan County, Kansas to Orin Roy and Edith Simon. She graduated from Hoxie High School and Blair Business College.

A resident of Goodland for the past 52 years, she was a restaurant manager and baker. Since 1991, she managed the Butterfly Cafe at the Goodland Municipal Airport.

She married Kenneth Corke on May 28, 1950, in Studley.

She was a member of the First Baptist Church in Goodland. She was active in the MS Walk and participated in Relay for Life.

Survivors include her husband; daughters, Carlotta McDermott and husband John of Colby, Marian Corke of Great Bend and Marlene Regehr and husband Don of

Great Bend; sons, Clarence Corke and wife Sharon of San Jose, Calif., Rodney of Goodland, Roger and wife Barbara of Fort Worth, Texas; sister, Darlene Johnston of Longmont, Colo., five grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; great-granddaughter; step-great-grandson.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, OrLee Simon and sister Kathryn Carey.

Services will be held 10:30 a.m. Thursday at Bateman Funeral Home, 11th and Broadway in Goodland. The Rev. Travis Blake will officiate. Burial will follow at Goodland Cemetery. Visitation will be from 1-6 p.m. Wednesday at the funeral home.

Memorials may be made to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society South Central and Western Kansas Division MS Walk or First Baptist Church in Goodland.

Bessie Plymptom Miskimon

Bessie Plymptom Miskimon, 90, of Bend, Ore., died Thursday, Feb. 14, 2008.

She was born Oct. 8, 1917, in Burr, Neb., to Frederick and Daisy Plymptom. She graduated from Colby High in 1938.

Bessie spent her entire life caring for others in hospitals.

Survivors include daughters Marquita Bonine and David of Ruskin, Fla., Marva Bliss and Ron of Bend, Carmen Mitchell and Patrick of Warm Springs, Ore.; sons, Curtis Cayton and Kathy of Colby and Warren Miskimon and Patri-

cia of Bend; 16 grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren, six great-great-great-grandchildren; sister, Alma Adams of Colby; brother Robert Plymptom of Houston, Texas, and nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by a grandson, James Cheney; brother, Ivan Plymptom.

Services for Bessie Plymptom will be held Wednesday at Dechutes Memorial Chapel in Bend, Ore. Memorials may be made to the Prairie Museum of Art and History in Colby.

Small-town Kansas man goes global

By Ron Wilson

Director, Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University

Meeting the customer. That's an important part of any business. But if you are a farmer in the middle of Kansas whose wheat is being exported to Amsterdam, for example, how in the world can you meet your customer?

The answer is that you band together with fellow wheat farmers and create an organization with resources to reach those customers and develop markets world-wide. That's exactly what wheat farmers have done in creating U.S. Wheat Associates. This year's Chairman of the Board of this national organization is another in our series of national ag leaders from rural Kansas.

Ron Suppes is from Dighton. Ron is Chairman of the Board of U.S. Wheat Associates.

Ron Suppes is a native of Scott City. He is both a wheat farmer and an educator, having grown up on a farm and worked as a rural school administrator. Ron went to Fort Hays State and got a master's in secondary school administration. He taught at Pratt and became a high school principal at the rural community of Fowler, population 571 people. Now, that's rural.

He went on to be principal at Scott City for eight years before going into farming full-time with his wife Shirley near Dighton. He says, "We farm as a team. Shirley's my right hand man - or maybe I'm hers."

Over time, Ron became active in the wheat organizations. He serves on the Kansas Wheat Commission and is a graduate of the Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership program. He became appointed to the Board of U.S. Wheat Associates.

he usually traveled with two cars and four bodyguards. Ron was encouraging him to buy wheat more consistently. The buyer said, "If I ever run out of wheat, I won't just lose my job, I'll lose my life."

Most of Ron's encounters are not so dramatic. U.S. Wheat Associates does lots of educational programs to show foreign millers and grain buyers how to use U.S. wheat. Many of those programs are through K-State's International Grains Program. U.S. Wheat Associates sends trade teams throughout the world to build markets, plus holding regional sessions around the globe. Ron's job is a form of personal diplomacy in support of wheat. He's even hosted a South African trade team on his Lane County farm.

Ron foresees changes in agriculture, with more diversified and identity-preserved production and new uses such as cellulosic ethanol. Of course, building relationships with buyers will always be important.

Meeting the customer. It's vital to any business, and it's part of what U.S. Wheat Associates does to build markets for U.S. wheat farmers. We commend Ron and Shirley Suppes for giving leadership to this organization and helping to see that our foreign customers' needs are being met.

U.S. Wheat Associates is the national market development organization for the U.S. wheat industry. In contrast to the National Association of Wheat Growers, which is a membership and policy organization, U.S.

Wheat Associates collects checkoff dollars from wheat sales and allocates those funds to build markets for U.S. wheat worldwide. The U.S. Department of Agriculture matches those funds three-fold.

Ron Suppes says, "Our main purpose is to sell the fifty percent of our wheat crop that we don't consume domestically. We have 80 people working for us in eighteen offices, sixteen of which are outside this country around the world."

He says, "My main purpose is to represent the wheat farmers in this effort. It's farmer-owned and doing a darn good job. And it's very efficient. For every bushel we sell overseas, it costs the U.S. farmer a fourth of a penny."

That's a real bargain, considering that a bushel of wheat is now valued at \$9 or so. In July 2007, Ron became Chairman of the Board of U.S. Wheat Associates. This means he does considerable travel in support of the organization's market development mission.

At one meeting in the Middle East, Ron met the head grain buyer from Iraq who told him chilling stories. The grain buyer said that

he usually traveled with two cars and four bodyguards. Ron was encouraging him to buy wheat more consistently. The buyer said, "If I ever run out of wheat, I won't just lose my job, I'll lose my life."

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Keith passed away on February 13, 2008 after complications of surgery. Keith was born December 23, 1957 and spent most of his adult life in Colby. He worked at Prairie Senior Living Center, The Colby Country Club, and Super 8 Motel. He was a kind gentle person who loved animals, his pickup, and cooking. He is survived by his mother and step-father Gloria and Charles Stroud and his father Harlen Neugebauer. Also by his favorite Aunt Lang Bartling, two Uncles, many nieces and nephews, and many special friends in Coby that made his life worthwhile. He will be missed by all.

A memorial service will be held at the Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin, at 2:00 pm on Tuesday February 19, 2008. All friends are welcome to attend.

Keith Neugebauer

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Gilley and Bassler

Marla Gilley and Ron Bassler were married at dusk in an intimate ceremony at the TraVigne courtyard in Napa Valley amidst wineries and fields of grapes on December 1st. Gurgling fountains and festive lights draped through mulberry trees set the reminiscent tone of the Old World.



Marla's niece, Barbara Hoover of Katy, Texas served as matron of honor. Ron's friend, Lorne Ludwig of Napa, California served as best man. The groom's 2 1/2 year old grandson of Reno, Nevada, Jake Sharp, served as the ring bearer. Marla's niece, Jessica Ruffolo of Louisburg, Kansas read the poem *The Art of Marriage* by Wilferd Peterson.

The bride wore a strapless beaded ivory gown with a sheer scarf complimented with a half century old iridescent neck choker loaned by her mother, Carmelita Clark of Goodland. The matron of honor wore a strapless black cocktail dress accented with a black sateen bolero jacket. The groom, his attendant and ring bearer all wore black tuxedo jackets, with open collared white tuxedo shirts, denim jeans and western boots.

Following the ceremony, the guests enjoyed a sit down dinner on the grounds in the Cantinetta. This room is located in an ivy covered historic stone building surrounded from floor to ceiling with both international and local wines. Special bottles of wine provided by the bride and groom were shared along with dinner.

Ron and Marla make their home in Phoenix, Arizona. Ron is the General Manager for Southwest Gas Corporation and Marla is the Director of Individual Giving for The Phoenix Symphony. Those wishing to send well wishes may do so at: 4823 East Esteven Road, Phoenix, AZ 85054.

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