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History group marks up '50' for its efforts

By Marj Brown

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The Thomas County Historical Society will celebrate its 50th birthday at the annual meeting at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 26, at the Prairie Museum of Art and History.

"We will be honoring this occasion with birthday cake and all the trimmings," said Sue Taylor, museum administrator. "The program for that afternoon is 'A White Glove Tour, a Living Blog,' in which we will show the society members all of the projects we are working on."

Taylor said an article written in 1964 for the dedication of the Pioneer Memorial Library shows the society was organized on Nov. 12, 1959, at a meeting attended by 75 people who were interested in preserving Thomas County history.

Earlier, on Oct. 5, W.D. Ferguson, and Jessie Dimmitt met with a committee from the Leisure Hour

Club. The group, the oldest club in the county, was asked to sponsor the new society, Taylor said.

Original officers were Carl Eddy, president; Ferguson, vice president; Dimmitt, secretary; Bertha Louis, treasurer; and Harry Eicher, Lulu Hutchinson, and Esther Sewell, directors.

At that time, the Thomas County National Bank and the Farmers and Merchants Bank offered to store and preserve paper items for the society, including pictures, diaries, letters, account books, deeds and other historical documents. Also at that time, Bill James of Prairie Printers in Colby, started printing a historical journal, "Yesterday and Today." He encouraged senior citizens to write family histories and bring in old pictures to be published.

Meetings were held once a month and James became pro-

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Brewster business offers seed, fertilizer

The CHS Brewster Agronomy Center will soon be open for business in a new building, with Rex Jamison at the helm as manager.

The building is all but finished and ready to go, but waiting on the concrete floor, the manager said.

"We are already selling, and are using the rigs out of the Colby location temporarily, to get a jump on the farming season," said Jamison. "We have chemical storage in Colby and are just waiting for the new facility to be ready, which should be in April, but right now the focus is on selling seed and chemicals."

The Brewster facility, on the planning board since last fall, will

generate four to five new jobs, he said.

The Brewster center is a sister to the Colby Agronomy Center, a fertilizer and chemical facility on East U.S. 24, three quarters of a mile east of town. The fertilizer operations had gone under the name Agriliance, and the Colby center once was owned by Hi-Plains Co-op. CHS, a major ag supply co-op, used to be known as Cenex Harvest States-Land o' Lakes, but now goes by just its initials, Jamison said.

"It is a Fortune 150 company, meaning they are in the top 150

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Woman asks herself, 'Why did I do that'

By Marj Brown

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Eighty-six-year-old Rita Beckman of rural Hoxie says she keeps asking herself, "Why did I do that?"

She has been asking that ever since the two-wheeled trailer full of water she tried to empty last September got the best of her and sent her flying.

"I knew right away I had broken some bones," Beckman said, "so I activated my Life-Line alarm to the Hoxie hospital."

The hospital called Beckman's daughter, Lanette Ball, who lives on a farm just a mile from her mother. It wasn't long until Ball had her mother delivered to the emergency room. It was deter-

mined that she not only had a broken right hip, but also a broken right wrist.

After her hip and wrist were repaired by Dr. Mekki El-Saba at Citizen's Medical Center in Colby, she spent a short time rehabilitating in Hays, and some time in Hoxie's long-term-care center. Beckman is now at home.

She said she wanted to thank all of the medical people in Colby, Hays and Hoxie who helped her with her recovery, and those who sent cards, flowers and e-mails, and her family for all they did for her during her recovery.

"I am now using a cane around the yard, but am getting around fairly well," she said, adding that she thinks she will be much more cautious in the future.



Shanda Draper photos

Shanda Draper of Colby (above) got to pick coffee beans while in Nicaragua on a trip sponsored by the Presbyterian Church and "fair trade" advocates. She stayed with a family of coffee

growers and toured facilities in the area. A girl (below right) stood by the door of her home. Draper said her group got to tour rural parts of the the country.

Woman learns of coffee, trade

By Marj Brown

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Shanda Draper says she has always been a great believer in "fair trade" practices, and after spending eight days in Nicaragua, picking coffee and touring one of the poorest nations in the hemisphere, she's convinced that is the best way to help third-world farmers.



Coffee beans like these above are red or pale yellow when ready to pick.

Draper was among 14 Americans watching fair trade in action in January. Her trip was sponsored by the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and the Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua. Other team members were representatives from Equal Exchange, a fair trade group that imports coffee, tea and cocoa.

Fair trade means the purchaser guarantees a minimum price and a long-term relationship to the farmer. In the case of the coffee, Equal Exchange pays at least \$1.56 per pound while the world market can range from just below that to as low as 45 cents.

Fair trade organic coffee is more expensive than the coffee we buy in the store — about \$6 to \$7 for a 12-ounce bag compared to \$3.50 a pound for Folgers — both because it's better

coffee, and because the money is invested in health care, education, environmental stewardship and economic independence for coffee growers who otherwise would barely make a living, the group says.

Draper is a social worker for Hospice Services Inc. in Colby and coaches the Colby Community College equestrian team.

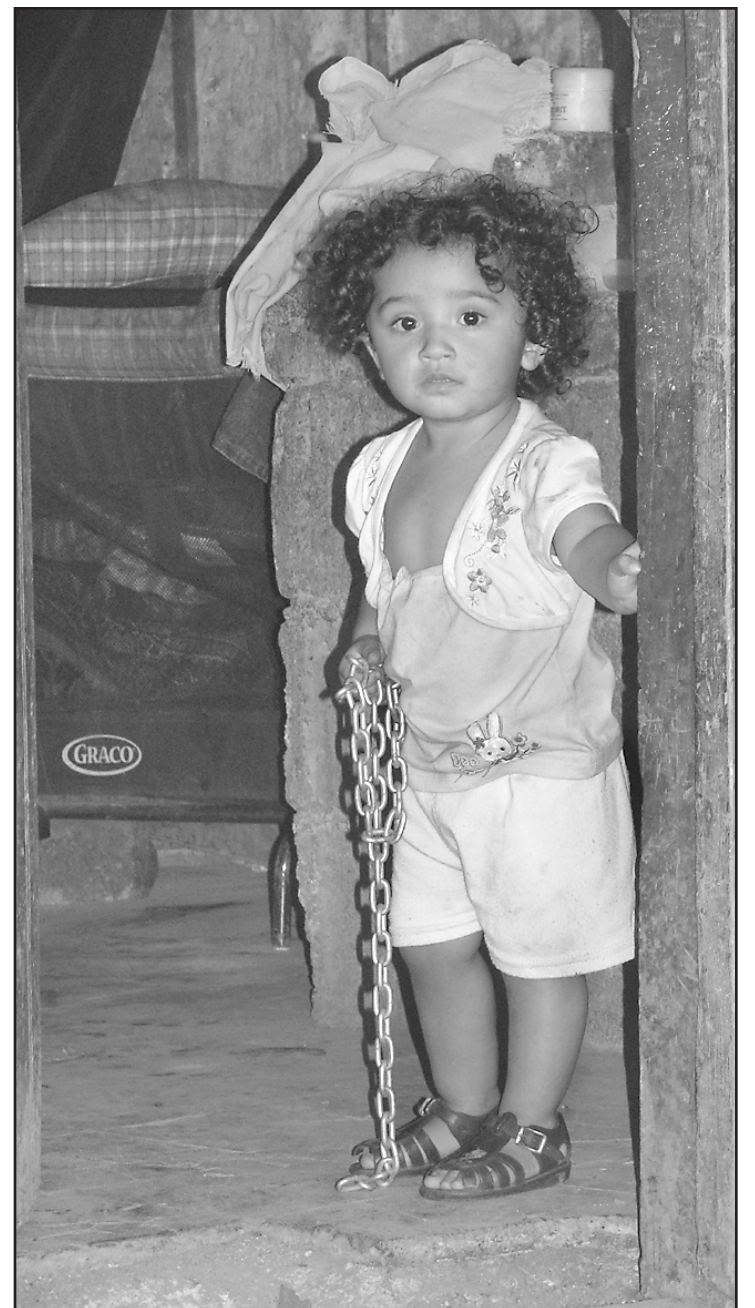
While in Nicaragua, Draper said, she visited the capital city of Managua and traveled to Esteli and rural Boaco. In Boaco, she stayed with the family of coffee growers Oneydi and Aristides Rosales.

"The Rosales family grows the coffee and employs 14 workers to help them pick the berries," she said. "Some berries are yellow and some are red."

"I was allowed to help pick berries while I was there, and it isn't as easy as it looks. You have to pick each berry individually by hand, and you have to twist it just right so you leave the stem on the tree. If the stem is removed, another berry will not grow on that area again."

"The red or yellow covering is removed from the bean with

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Briefly

Daffodils expected here Friday

Bad weather on the West Coast has delayed daffodil harvest, said Jennifer Van Eaton, community manager in Colby for the American Cancer Society. Flowers promised for delivery today now are expected on Friday. For questions, call 460-3684.

Students plan massage clinic

Colby Community College therapeutic massage students will have a pediatric clinic on Saturday. Children must be accompanied by a parent or adult. Cost is \$15. For information or an appointment, call Carol Johnson, program director, at (785) 460-5427.

Coalition to meet on Thursday

The Thomas County Coalition, an alliance of groups which works to reduce underage substance abuse, will meet at 11:30 a.m. Thursday at the Pioneer Memorial Library. Organizer Brock Fairbrother

said they hope to have a large group for some great conversation. Everyone is invited. For questions, call (785) 460-8177.

Food sign up to be this week

Prairie Land food sign up will be this week at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth. A food package is available at a reduced rate in return for volunteer hours. Delivery will be Saturday, March 28, at the Sacred Heart School Gym, 1150 W. Sixth St. For information, call 460-3579.

Free tax help offered at library

Free tax help will be available for with low- and middle-income taxpayers, with special attention to those 60 and older, from 1 to 4 p.m. on Thursdays through April at the Pioneer Memorial Library. The program is sponsored by the American Association of Retired Persons. Call 460-2645 for information.

Brother, sister to talk Thursday

Ray Imhoff and his sister, Doris Johnson, who will present a collection of stories from their mother from noon to 1 p.m. Thursday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History. The talk is a last of the Food for Thought series. Call (785) 460-4590 for details.

Support group to meet Friday

Living a full life with disabilities is the topic of a support-group meeting from 1:30-3 p.m. Friday at the Colby United Methodist Church high school classroom. The group is for people with mental and physical disabilities and caregivers. For information, call Doug Finley at 460-2306 or Connie Menges at 460-3112.

Meal delivery helpers needed

The Senior Progress Center is looking for two volunteers to help deliver meals to the home bound.

Deliveries are from 10:30 to noon every Monday for every other month beginning in April. For questions, call director Kaila DeBoer at 460-2901.

Council offers family portrait

Thomas County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council is offering a 10-inch-by-13-inch portrait of your children for a \$10 sitting fee. Sepia tone portraits, said to be a \$90 value, will be taken with vintage attire and props. Raffle tickets are available for a drawing for two portrait packages. Portraits will be taken by appointment on Saturday, March 21, at the Colby Community Building. For information or to reserve a sitting, call 462-6111.



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