



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Big changes in store for medical services

By Vera Sloan

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Thomas County's emergency medical services director told commissioners at a meeting last week that he is losing his top aide and the department's medical director, and ambulance crews will be required to meet new, tougher state standards next year.

"Martin Rinehart, assistant director will be retiring at the end of 2010," director Ken Gatlin said at the meeting Nov. 20, "and (Dr.) LaDonna Regier, emergency

medical advisor, is resigning by the end of the year."

He said new operating protocols will need to be written for the department, because all Kansas emergency medical agencies will be transitioning to a new "scope of practice," with crews required to have more training to keep up with changing technology and drugs. That may require the county to buy some new equipment, such as computers, he added, to meet the new training requirements.

Gatlin proposed that when Rinehart retires, Dawnelle Umberger would step in as education direc-

tor and take over as the program coordinator and instructor for the American Heart Association programs, such as cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and all initial education for technicians.

He said he also wants Umberger to take on continuing education for technicians and transitional education for current volunteers and write grand applications for departments projects. This arrangement would be permanent, he said, and no replacement for Rinehart would be hired.

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Gem breakfast next week

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The Gem Lions Club will serve pancakes, sausage, eggs and pie and those famous Lions Candy Day mints from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. next Wednesday at the Community Building in Gem.

"It's all you can eat for a donation to the club," said Ken Poland, publicity chair for the club, "with proceeds going to community betterment, sight conservation and education."

He said the club recycles used eyeglasses and hearing aids and encouraged people to bring any they can get their hands on when they come to eat.

"The Gem Pancake Feed is pretty much known as the 'premier' of pancake feeds in these parts," Po-

land said. "The first feed was held in 1955, and ... we figure there have been as many as 400 people to come sometime during the day."

He said that during the 55-year history of the feed, it has never been called off due to weather. Poland said he remembers a time when he had to take his tractor and move huge amounts of snow, but there has never been anything to even suggest they call it off.

Another part of the history, he said, is the homemade pies. With pancakes, yet! Poland said many people in years past came only for the pie. He noted that the club also is unique in that they serve eggs with the pancakes and sausage.

He said the feed probably does qualify as the social event of the year for Gem, when the visitors outnumber the locals four to one.

One dozen down, 319 to go



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Amy Jennings won't admit to how much she loves baking cookies, but does admit she will be making lots of them for the annual Kappa Upsilon Sorority Cookie and Candy Sale from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Dec. 11, at the Colby United Methodist Church. Sixteen sorority members will make 320 dozen cookies and pounds and pounds of candy to sell to the public for \$7 a pound. Proceeds go to local service projects.

Downtown bar going strong after 30 years

By Vera Sloan

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Thirty years in business, now just one door down from where he started, is all right with Ken Bieber, owner of Colby's well known B-Hive bar and grill.

For 30 years, the main attractions at the B-Hive have been food, cold beer and conversation.

Bieber, who serves as Colby's mayor, said he graduated from Colby High School in 1960, went off to college and got a bachelor's degree, got married, then worked for General Electric Credit Corp. for seven years as manager with credit and collections. He got divorced, went to a used car lot and bought a car, got his dog and headed back to Colby, practically all in that order, and with no regrets.

After returning to Colby, he married his second wife, Lois, in 1978 and bought the bar in 1980.

"That was 30 years ago," he said, "and just before the high school reunion, and I couldn't have chosen a better time to open."

He said he has loyal customers, a good mix of the general public, and he's now seeing a third generation coming into his business to grab a bite to eat, sit and talk.

He spends a lot of time at work, opening at 10 a.m. and closing at 2 a.m. six days a week. On Sunday, he opens at noon and stays open again until 2 a.m.

Bieber says he has enjoyed his 16 years of public service with the city, as councilman and now as mayor. He says he plans to leave office next year.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press
Ken Bieber and wife Lois (above) stood by their cash register at the B-Hive in 1980. Thirty years later, Bieber said, that register is sitting in his basement while a new one (right) is in service at the bar.

The mayor said he sees good things for Colby if people will remain positive. He said the economy hasn't hurt his business and he believes Colby will be fine.

He admitted he's having visions of retirement, however, and he has a grandson who would like to step into the business when he decides to hang up his work clothes.

"It's been five years since I've had the boat and motor home out," he said, "and I'd like to fish again."



New crop varieties lead to elevator boom

By Roxana Hegeman

The Associated Press

LARNED — A construction boom is underway at grain elevators across the Great Plains, where new varieties of corn are allowing farmers to grow more crops off the same acres and demand from ethanol plants is keeping more crops in state.

In more recent years, a number of forces have coalesced to ignite a building boom of new storage facilities — particularly in states such as Kansas and Nebraska that are awash with more grain crops than places to put them. But demand for more storage space is up across much of the nation's grain producing areas despite historically high storage capacity in the nation's federally licensed grain elevators.

The boom is driven in part by the advent of drought-resistant corn varieties that gave growers in arid climates like western Kansas the option to switch to more profitable corn crops that yield far more bushels per acre than the traditional wheat crops they are replacing. Another factor driving the booming construction is the rise of an ethanol industry that has kept more corn and sorghum within the state, rather than shipping them out immediately after harvest. And commodity markets have given farmers more incentive to hold

crops in storage during the harvest glut to wait for better prices later in the season.

All this comes at a time of low interest rates and high commodity prices that have allowed elevators to raise grain storage prices and ultimately build new capacity at existing facilities to handle the huge mounds of grain now being dumped on the ground during each fall harvest.

For communities, the boom is bringing in temporary construction jobs during the weeks it takes to build the storage, but the most immediate economic impact for rural towns will be in the added property valuation on the tax rolls that help fund schools and municipal services. Since most of this storage is going up in existing elevators, it is not adding new jobs at them because typically the existing staff can handle it, said Tom Tunnell, executive director of the Kansas Grain and Feed Association, the trade group representing grain elevators.

"But then that (construction) crew and that operation move to the next location within the state," Tunnell said. "It is an on-going process. Those guys are working somewhere all the time and mostly in our state. So it is good for the state."

Capacity at federally licensed grain facilities nationwide

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Briefly

College band offers concert

Everyone is invited to the Colby Community College band's holiday concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Cultural Arts Center on campus. For information, call director Tony Schroer at 460-5519.

Auxiliary will send out goodies

The American Legion Auxiliary is collecting donations for holiday care packages members will be sending to soldiers. If you would like to make a donation or have a soldier you would like to receive a holiday package, call Megan Quenzler at (785) 460-1351 or (785) 443-3611. All donations and addresses need to be received by Friday.

Dance Friday at clubhouse

There will be a singles and couples dance from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Friday at the Meadow Lake

Golf Course clubhouse. Granny Z will provide the music. For information, call Lue Duffey at (785) 269-7057.

Lions cooking flapjacks, sausage

The High Plains Lions Club will hold its annual pancake-and-sausage feed from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the Colby Community Building. For information, call Virgil Jones at 462-1106.

Kids can shop for mom and dad

The Thomas County Community Foundation will sponsor Santa's Workshop from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave. The event gives children in preschool to fourth grade an opportunity to buy Christmas gifts for moms, dads, guardians or grandparents for \$4 each. Each child may buy up to four gifts. Proceeds will be used for foundation grants. For information,

call the office at 460-9152.

Pool offers free swim, Santa

Come get "Aqua"nted with the Colby Community College pool from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday. An open house, sponsored by the Swimming Pool Committee, will include refreshments, free open swimming and a visit from Santa Claus. Donations will be accepted to help revitalize the pool. For information, call committee chair Dr. Keegan Nichols at 460-5490.

Light parade downtown Sunday

The annual Christmas Light Parade will begin at 5:45 p.m. Sunday at Second Street and Franklin Avenue and proceed through downtown to Santa City. Entry forms, available at the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce in the county office complex, are due by Friday. For information, call the office at

460-3401.

The Colby American Legion Post will hold a soup supper following the parade at the Legion hall, 1850 W. Fourth St. Donations will be accepted for Santa City.

Nativity sets on display at tea

The Colby First Presbyterian Church plans a "Nativity-TEA" from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the church, 515 W. Fourth St. More than 100 nativity scenes from around the world will be on display, along with a hands-on display for kids. Refreshments will be served. For information, call the church at 462-6342.

