



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

Making progress



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Subcontractors for Prosser Wilbert Construction of Lenexa poured concrete Wednesday for the Colby Aquatic Center. The city plans to open the new pool this summer.

Logan County death seen as 'suspicious'

By Kevin Bottrell

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The body of an unidentified Hispanic man was found Monday in southern Logan County. Few details are known yet, but the Logan County Sheriff's Office is calling the death "suspicious."

Logan County Sheriff Pat Parsons said the man is believed to have died late Sunday night or early Monday morning. Parsons said the cause of death hasn't

been determined yet, but it appears suspicious.

The body was found near U.S. 83 26 miles south of Oakley — almost to the Scott County line. Parsons said the area is mostly empty pastures. The nearest building is the Keystone Gallery on U.S. 83.

The sheriff said his office and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation are investigating. Anyone with information on the case should call the Logan County Sheriff's Office at (785) 671-8942 or the KBI at (800) 571-7463.

Judge favors hospital; doctor appeals decision

By Kevin Bottrell

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The eight-year legal battle between Citizens Medical Center and Dr. Victor Hildyard turned another page when a district court judge sided with the hospital, but a subsequent appeal shows the case may be far from over.

Senior District Judge Jack Burr found for the hospital on all the issues of the case, in which Hildyard alleged Citizens violated its bylaws, constituting a breach of contract, when it summarily suspended his hospital privileges after a 2002 incident.

Hildyard also alleged the hospital violated antitrust laws, depriving him — through his clinic, Colby Medical and Surgical Center — of economic opportunity. He

was seeking damages in excess of \$75,000. According to court documents, the hospital disputed these claims and moved that they be dismissed, but the judge determined that discovery was needed and the case moved forward.

In the Nov. 5 decision, Burr upheld the hospital's claim that it is immune to the doctor's antitrust claims because they come from decisions by peer review boards. The federal Health Care Quality Improvement Act and Kansas law protect peer review bodies from legal

claims against their decisions, the hospital maintained. The court determined that hospital bylaws do not constitute a contract, citing several cases as precedent and the Citizens bylaws, which specifically say they are not a contract.

Hildyard appealed the decision

on Nov. 24.

"Judge Burr's opinion accurately reflects the entire proceedings," said Kevan Trenkle, vice president and interim chief operating officer, "and his opinion simply affirms that Citizens Medical Center took the necessary and appropriate action to ensure that high-quality health care was provided to our patients...."

Hildyard's attorney, Michael O'Neal of Hutchinson, who also is speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives, said the case was always destined for appellate court no matter who won, because both parties intended to appeal if the decision didn't go their way.

O'Neal said the case could even end up in the Kansas Supreme Court because the issue of whether or not medical staff bylaws are a contract — and whether both hospitals and doctors are legally bound by them — is an is-



V. Hildyard

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Four Colby homes to take center stage for Christmas tour

By Vera Sloan

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Four homes and a High Plains Art Club exhibit will be on display from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday during the annual Holiday Christmas Homes Tour sponsored by the Colby United Methodist Women.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$4 for children 5 to 12. In advance, they are available from members of the United Methodist Women, the Colby United Methodist Church office or at Horlacher Jewelry downtown. On Sunday, just go to any of the homes on the tour or at the art show.

The show, which features the work of 12 area artists, will be held in the church Fellowship Hall, 950 S. Franklin Ave. The exhibit is free, said club member Peg Tole. Hot chocolate, coffee and Christmas cookies will be served by Art Club members from 2 to 5 p.m.

The money made off the tour itself will go to United Methodist Women's mission projects, dedicated to helping the poor in America and in foreign countries, club member Marj Brown said.

BARTON HOME

The Randy and Shelly Barton home at 1809 Harvey Court will be one of the stops on the tour.

Shelly says angels have always been special to her, and after she lost her twin

sister this year to cancer, she thought angels would be a good theme for her Christmas decorations this year. She said it will include some "angels on assignment" from her cousin, LeAnne Carney of Brewster, and a friend, Ralene Eaton.

Barton said she'd never ever thought of opening her home to the Christmas Home Tour and thinks the committee surely caught her off guard at a weak moment.

"I got a phone call to ask if I would consent to it, and I can't believe I said yes," she said. "After I got of the phone, I just thought, 'What in the world have I done.'"

She planned to decorate the weekend following Thanksgiving when there's lots of family here to help.

Helpers will include daughters Shanna Cooksey of Atwood and Denni Schissler of Colby and a daughter-in-law, Maggie Burger from Almena.

"It's sort of a girl thing," she said, "and Jackie Wiens and Monique Leavitt from Someplace Special deserve a lot of credit, because they gave me so many good ideas and tips on decorating."

She added that she doesn't know for sure how many angels there will be, but it will be a lot.

"My husband thinks I must have had a slight stroke," she chuckled.

WOOFER HOME

Jason and Tara Woofter will give tours of their ranch-style home at 880 Veter-



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

More than 400 Santas can be seen in Libby Curry's home (above), from the front sidewalk to the basement. Decorations on the Christmas Homes Tour range from unusual to traditional, such as this Christmas tree (right) in Randy and Shelly Barton's home.

ans Memorial Drive, and with a lively, inquisitive young son in the house, they will be thinking about some child proof ornaments.

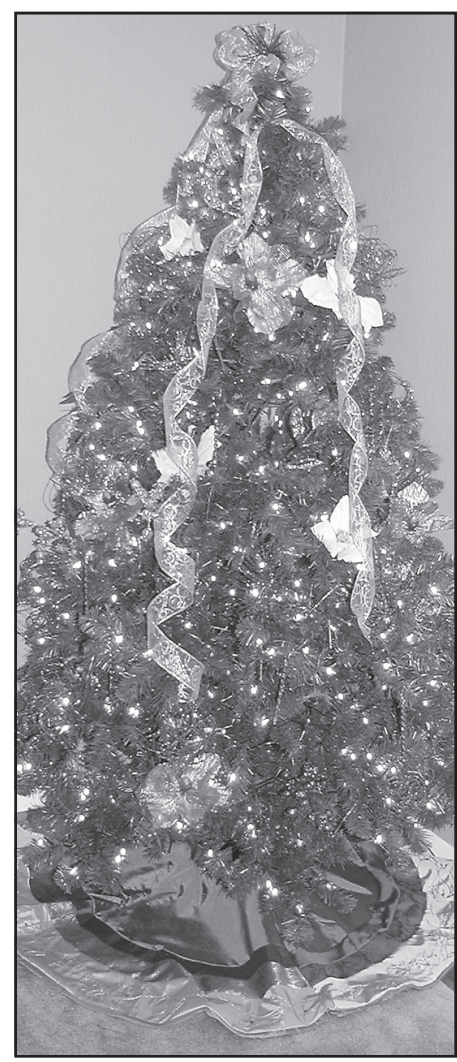
"I'm pretty laid back," Tara said, "and don't really have a theme, but it will probably be pretty traditional."

She said she likes Nativity scenes, and

will have several trees, some of wood and some metal. She added, that Boston, 18, will have a tree in his room decorated with a University of Kansas theme.

She said she's not stressed with it all, that she just sort of goes with the flow and

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Briefly

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 Quenzer at (785) 460-1351 or (785) 443-3611. All donations and addresses need to be received by Friday.

Dance is Friday at clubhouse

There will be a singles and couples dance from 6:00 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. Sat-

urday at the Colby Community Building. The new Gem 4-H Club will have a bake sale fund-raiser at the breakfast. 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. 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 Commit-

tee, will include refreshments, free open swimming and a visit from Santa Claus. 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 after the parade at the post, 1850 W. Fourth St. Donations will be accepted for Santa City.

Dr. Regier farewell set for Monday

Citizens Medical Center plans a farewell reception for Dr. LaDonna Regier from 4 to 6 p.m. Monday

at City Limits Convention Center, 2227 S. Range. Regier is relocating to Ghana in west Africa to perform missionary work and has requested no gifts. Donations may be made to the Ghana clinic or any charity in her name. For information, call Tama Unger at 462-1214.

Food signup open 'til Monday

Prairie Land Food signup is open until Monday at State Farm Insurance, 905 E. Fourth St. Delivery will be at 1:15 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 18, in the Sacred Heart School gym. For information, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579.

