

Safe driving the goal; age not always a limit

Parents who fret when teens begin to drive may be surprised to see their now-grown children fretting about their parents' driving skills.

A driver's license is often viewed as a key to independence, particularly in rural areas with scant public transportation, said Jill Frost-Steward, a doctoral student in Family Studies in the College of Human Ecology at Kansas State University.

Frost-Steward, who has chosen safe driving for older adults as the focus of her research project, said that changing medical conditions, rather than age itself, often are the primary factor or factors in deciding when it's no longer safe to drive.

Driving is important in retaining independence, said Frost-Steward, who said driving allows control over daily decision-making, such as when to go to the grocery store or schedule appointments.

For many older adults, driving also is a symbol of competence, said Frost-Steward, who identified three major types of health concerns that can affect driving ability:

- Changes in vision.
- Changes in physical health.
- Changes in cognitive function.

"Changes in vision are a common concern, as a decline in depth perception, peripheral vision, and the ability to manage glare that could result from the aging process, an accident, injury or other medical condition can make driving more difficult," she said. Eye conditions, such as cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetic eye disease may create blind spots in vision.

"Visual attention is another issue," said Frost-Steward, who explained that this is a term used to describe the ability to manage a changing environment. For example, in approaching a stop sign, a driver will need to consider other cars either stopped at or approaching the stop sign or intersection, which driver has the right-of-way, and pedestrians in his or her decision-making process.

A decline or other change in physical health also can be a determining factor, she said.

Flexibility, strength and coordination also are important for safe driving because a driver will need to be able to rotate his

or her neck to look from side to side to view road conditions and traffic, and to turn around to check before backing up or parallel parking.

Shoulder and elbow movement is key to turning the wheel, and, with or without arthritis, it's important to be able to curl fingers to grip the wheel, Frost-Steward said.

Some physical limitations may be able to be addressed by health care professionals or modifications to a vehicle, she said.

The third factor that can affect a person's ability to drive is a change in cognitive functioning.

To drive safely, a driver needs to be able to make judgments, such as when it is safe to make a left turn or to react quickly to a change in traffic conditions. Examples might include a sudden stop or need to change lanes.

Cognitive functioning can be affected by a variety of factors. For example, if taking one or more prescribed or over-the-counter medications or supplements, a driver is urged to consult with his or her doctor or pharmacist to rule out negative drug interactions or side effects that could slow driving response times.

Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia also can interfere with cognitive functioning, Frost-Steward said. In the earliest stage of dementia, some older adults are able to pass an on-the-road driving test. As diseases that affect the brain progress, drivers may get lost in familiar places, may lose the ability to comprehend traffic signs, and may lose awareness of how their driving is affecting others.

Adult children and others who serve as caregivers are encouraged to ask to ride along occasionally to observe driving capacity, she said.

"The topic can be challenging," said Frost-Steward, who recommended working with a driver in question and his or her health care providers to understand and address medical concerns.

When driving is no longer an option, Frost-Steward encourages family and caregivers to develop alternative transportation that will keep the former driver connected.

No boots needed; bikes out in Rexford

It's hard to believe it's winter, what with the beautiful weather we've been having.

It looks like snow is in the forecast for midweek, though, so I'll be looking forward to that. After spending two years in Laramie, Wyo., it doesn't feel like winter if you don't get to wear your snowboots every so often.

However, my kids enjoy being able to ride their bikes all year long, so I guess it isn't too bad.

The Gideons held their monthly meeting at Shepherd's Staff on Saturday night. They had 14 members from all over northwest Kansas in attendance.

Don't forget that bingo is slated for 7 p.m. Saturday night at the



Gwen Griffiths

- Rexford Correspondent

Red Barn. There's plenty of room for whomever would like to attend, and it's always a good time.

Other than that, it's been a quiet week in Rexford.

If you have something exciting going on, we'd love to hear about it and print it! You can leave your news in the jar at the Red Barn, call me at (785) 687-2565 or email griffithsgang@gmail.com.

Have a great week!

Exhibit to feature earliest printed map

The Kansas Museum of History will display the world's earliest printed map as part of its new temporary exhibit, You Are Here: Putting Kansas on the Map.

This exhibit, which explores historic Kansas maps and other maps of the world, opens Friday, Jan. 20, and runs through Sunday, April 29. The museum is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. It is located at 6425 SW Sixth Ave., Topeka. For information call (785) 272-8681 or visit kshs.org.

A highlight of this exhibit is the world's earliest map, a "T-in-O" style map of the world, represented as an "O" with a "T" inside. The "T" divides three land masses: Europe, Asia, and Africa. This map is on loan from the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas. An 1823 map by explorer Major Stephen Long shows the plains labeled as the "Great Desert." This map led

to the perception that Kansas was not habitable. It is on loan from Special Collections and University Archives, Wichita State University Libraries. Also in the exhibit are the best maps from the Kansas Historical Society collections, including a 1560 map of the New World by German cartographer Sebastian Münster. It is the first map to show the North and South American continents as separate from the rest of the world.

Other exploration- and settlement-themed items in this exhibit include a map showing Pottawatomie land allotments, a map of Indian reserves in 1854, a topographical map of the Oregon Trail, an 1880s map showing places to water cattle in Gove County, and Union Pacific land grant maps.

Other maps in the exhibit explore town development and tourism, including an imaginative map of Ness City showing water canals and early 1900s travel maps.

Immunization registry grows

At the end of 2011, the State of Kansas had 245 school districts including the Colby Public Schools, enrolled in KSWebIZ – the state's web-based immunization registry, and two more districts and their school nurses were scheduled to begin using the registry.

"Kansas is moving in the right direction with immunization registry. I look forward to our staff working with even more school districts and providers during 2012," said State Health Officer Robert Moser. "KSWebIZ is a secure system, allowing health care professionals to more effectively and efficiently maintain electronic immunization records throughout a Kansan's life."

The registry was launched in 2005 with the enrollment of pri-

vate providers and local health departments and in 2008 began to add public and private schools.

"School nurses using KSWebIZ have access to providers' immunization records on students and have the ability to further complete the students' records by adding to the registry other immunization information..." said Kansas Immunization Program Director Ryan Burns. "The system also allows nurses to determine what vaccines their students may need."

Deaths

Helen B. Hagler

Helen B. Hagler, 75, Colby, a former bookkeeper and farm wife, died Saturday, Jan. 7, 2012, at Porter Adventists Hospital in Denver.

She was born Aug. 15, 1936, in Gem, the daughter of Melville Walden and Katherine E. (Barlow) Talbott. She attended school in Colby, and in 1954 graduated from Colby High School.

On Nov. 15, 1952, she married Lynn Hagler. On Dec. 9 of that year, he was drafted to serve in the /army in Korea. During his absence, she worked at the Berg and Grissom Drug Store in Colby. When he returned, they moved to the Hagler family farm south of Atwood.

After the birth of their children, she was a bookkeeper at the Thomas County National Bank in Colby for a short time. In 1980, the family moved to Mingo, where she was a bookkeeper at the Mingo Co-op. In 1993, the couple moved to Colby.

She was a member of the Colby Berean Church and president

of the women's fellowship, an a members of Gideons International and a weekly bridge club.

Preceding her in death was her father, who died before her birth; her mother; and a brother, Robert L. Talbott.

Survivors include her husband, of the home; a brother, Melvin L. Talbott, Palm Bay, Fla.; a son, Harlan D. (Margaret) Hagler, of Atwood; a daughter, Sherry L. (Larry) Ummerl, Colby; five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Services will be at 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 12, 2012, at the Baalmann Mortuary in Colby, with the Rev. Fran Harworth and the Rev. Mark Carlton officiating, and burial in Beulah Cemetery.

Visitation will be from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday at the mortuary.

The family suggests memorials to the Gideons International, in care of the mortuary, Box 391, Colby, Kan., 67701.

Set nutritional goals along with weight loss

Many people start the new year out with a resolution to lose weight through diet and exercise. But a nutritional expert at Baylor College of Medicine suggest that goals should be about more than just weight loss.

"Beyond weight loss, set goals to improve the one thing that only you can do – take care of the body you have been given," said Roberta Anding, registered dietitian at Baylor.

One way to do this is by adopting some simple nutritional strategies, Anding said.

- Set goals to eat breakfast,

Corrections

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day Hi-Plains Co-op	
Wheat (bushel)	\$6.30
Corn (bushel)	\$6.28
Milo (hundredweight)	\$10.70
Soybeans (bushel)	\$10.54



Thank You

The family of Adam Goalden would like to extend our sincere thanks for the care he received from Dr. Brian Unruh, the staff at Family Center for Health, Citizens Medical Center, Brad Kersenbrock at Kersenbrock Funeral Home for your kindness and support. For the many e-mails, phone calls, cards, food, flowers, and memorials from friends and neighbors.

The Family of Adam Goalden

Meadow Lake Bridge Club

Meadow Lake bridge winners for Tuesday were Kevin Taylor, first; Sarah Jane Barrett, second;

Cookie Koenig, third; Ken Ptacek, fourth; Mary Molstad, fifth; and Elaine Ptacek, sixth.



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