

Adapting home helps when aging

Normal aging brings changes in our sense and physical abilities. Everyone wants to live in their own home as long as possible. By making some simple changes, a person can make their home more age-friendly.

As we age, we don't see quite as well, glare becomes more annoying, and it's more difficult to differentiate between colors and make out details. Physically, our strength, flexibility, dexterity and endurance decline. Tasks such as grasping, twisting, walking and going up and down stairs become more difficult. Changes in furnishings, lighting, color and design can help make a home more accommodating for individuals as their bodies age.

Something as simple as removing throw rugs, installing grab bars by the toilet or tub or adding night lights improves safety in the home. Replacing worn kitchenware with new, easy-to-handle utensils or lighter-weight pots and pans will make it easier for older adults to continue food preparation, just as rearranging the furniture to allow more open space makes it easier to move about.

Dark colors absorb light and make it harder to see. For instance, it will be more difficult to see working in a kitchen with dark countertops, cabinets and floors. A contrasting, light-colored countertop would be easier to work on. Dark and light color contrasts make objects more visible.

Knowing a person's ability to perceive certain colors declines with age, there are some simple changes a person can make to avoid embarrassing mistakes. For instance, avoid buying similar socks or shoes in navy, black and brown. Use colorful placemats beneath dark dishes on a dark wooden table. This will aid vision and help avoid striking the cup on the edge of the plate when the cup is set down.

The following recommendations are for creating a "User-Friendly Home."

- Select light colors for walls and ceilings. Use medium colors for floors and wood finishes.
- Furniture that contrasts with the carpet and walls is easier to see. Slipcovers or throws might be



Diann Gerstner

• Knowledge for Life

an option to make existing furniture more accommodating.

- Avoid glossy finishes on floors, wood furniture, etc., to eliminate glare.
- Use cloth tape in a bright contrasting color on the edge of kitchen or bath countertops that are similar color as the floor or cabinets. The tape will make the counter edge more visible.
- Avoid very large patterns or small "busy" wallpaper designs. They can become confusing or produce blurred vision and eye fatigue.
- Use light colors in areas that tend to be dark, such as hallways, closets and cupboards.

For information on creating a user-friendly home, go to www.extension.org/pages/8713/furnishing-a-user-friendly-home.

If you are an aging person or have aging parents, I encourage you to attend "Full Circle ... an Aging Expo" being held Friday, April 27, in Hill City. Topics include: lifestyle choices and your health; give care, take care; making a difference for survivors and family members of traumatic brain injury; new road laws – when to give up the keys; visiting and communicating with the Alzheimer's patient; tiny garden, big rewards; and aging with a flair.

You can download a registration brochure from our website: thomas.ksu.edu or contact me at the Thomas County Extension Office 460-4582 or diann@ksu.edu. Watch this column for more on the conference.

Don't forget that one of the ways to reduce or slow aging is to be mentally and physically active – and Walk Kansas will start March 18. We have had a lot of interest, so we have moved up the date for team captain's packets release – they are ready to be picked up now.

Diann Gerstner is the family and consumer sciences agent for the Thomas County Extension office.

Golden Plains scholars fourth at regionals in Tribune

By Leea Juenemann

On Feb. 2, the Golden Plains High School Scholar's Bowl team went to Tribune for regional competition.

After four rounds of competition, the team had won two. The top question categories were language arts, science, social science and mathematics. The team then advanced to the championship rounds.

In the final meets, they beat Brewster, Fowler and Wallace County, losing two rounds against Rolla and Weskan. Golden Plains was ranked in fourth place; the top three teams qualified for state.

School speed sign irks driver

WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP) – An unusual school zone speed limit sign in suburban Detroit has drawn the attention of an irked driver.

Greg Smith tells *The Oakland Press* of Pontiac (bit.ly/zVCbZ) that he noticed the sign recently in Oakland County's White Lake Township that lists six separate times when drivers should slow down to 25 mph on school days.

Smith says drivers "practically have to come to a stop to read it."

Wedding Registry

Leah Cox
Brian Morales
Shower: Feb. 26th

THE LOFT
A Level Above

700 W. Horton Ave. • Colby, KS
785.460.0566

These few are a few of my favorite things

Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012
3:30 pm (cst)
CCC Frahm Theater

Beverly Rucker, Conductor
Featuring mezzo-soprano
Bonnie Cameron

Admission by Friends of the Orchestra Membership or at the door - \$10 Adults/\$5 Seniors/\$3 Students

The Pride of the Prairie Orchestra

College scholars honored in Topeka

Two Colby students, Jennifer Kinderknecht and Rachel Montgomery, were among 47



Kinderknecht

All-USA Academic Team sponsored by *USA Today*, Phi Theta Kappa, and the American Association of Community Colleges.



Montgomery

tion and the Dance Team. The Ellis native is a student ambassador and treasurer of the Colby Phi Theta Kappa chapter. She is majoring in elementary education.

The event was held Feb. 16 at the Ramada Inn Hotel in Topeka in conjunction with the February meetings of the state Board of Regents and the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees.

Representing 38 towns and cities, the state's 19 community colleges and a private two-year college, these scholars were named to the 2011-12 All-State Academic Team sponsored by the headquarters of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society and the Kansas Association of Community College Trustees.

Phi Theta Kappa is the honor society for students attending community and two-year colleges. Membership is based on grade averages, service and leadership in the community and on campus.

Each scholar was selected by his or her own college for the annual statewide academic team, and each scholar also is a nominee for the 2011-12

Campus gets zombie alert

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) – The cause of a security alert at the North Carolina State University campus turns out to have been a live-action roleplaying game involving zombies.

The university issued a statement saying that the two reports of men with handguns on the Raleigh campus were describing a person playing a game called "Humans vs. Zombies."

The university statement says both reports described the same person, who contacted police after hearing the descriptions and locations of the sightings. The university did not release the person's name.

The campus wasn't locked down and classes weren't affected, but police issued the alert while they investigated the reports.

A website promoting the game describes it as similar to tag, in which some players are humans and some are zombies.

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)	\$6.32
Corn (bushel)	\$6.13
Milo (hundredweight)	\$10.48
Soybeans (bushel)	\$11.28

We want your local news: e-mail to colby.editor@nwkanas.com

Marquee lights mark special event

I hope you all had a good Valentine's Day and remembered to show someone special that you care about them.

Tim and I attended the "Chocolate and All That Jazz" event at the library. We enjoyed the music, and of course the chocolate, as well as seeing friends from all over Thomas County.

It's always fun to drive by the Red Barn and see the marquee all lit up with flashing lights. It looked like the 40-and-over crowd was having a grand time during Spuds and Splits on Thursday night. This event is held every month, so make a mental note to attend next month.

Shepherd's Staff held a birthday party for a young man from McCook, Neb., at our paintball field on Saturday. There were five young men and two adults, and they had a blast playing paintball. And the weather was perfect for it – none of this "high wind warning" that we've been having.

Friday afternoon is a perfect chance to catch the Red Barn



Gwen Griffiths

• Rexford Correspondent

Gang at play – they'll be holding their monthly practice. I'm hoping to remember so that I can stop in and hear them.

Don't forget that the Christian Workers Conference is only a week and a half away. It will be held at Heartland Christian School in Colby on Saturday, March 3. Registration opens at 8 a.m. and the first main session will be at 8:45. The day continues with workshops, sessions and vendors through 5 p.m. Registration is \$45; call (785) 687-2565 or visit www.shepherdstaff.org.

That's the news from Rexford this week. Don't forget to call or e-mail me with your news, or drop it off in the jar by the door at the Red Barn.

Have a great week!

Two graduate from KU

Joshua Aaron Baden of Colby received a Bachelor of Science in mathematics from the University of Kansas in December, while Megan Elizabeth Allen of Brewster received a Bachelor of Arts in history.

Degrees are conferred in December based on work completed

during the fall semester. Because KU conducts only one formal commencement each year, many students graduating in the fall or summer terms will return on Sunday, May 13, for the traditional walk down the Hill into Memorial Stadium for the ceremony.

Some like it HOT, HOT, HOT... and some like to shop the COOL want ad way!!

The Colby Free Press - 462-3963

Please Recycle

New Oncology Clinic Brings Specialized Cancer Services To You



Dr. January Fields
Medical Oncologist/Hematologist

Dr. January Fields, oncologist and hematologist will see and evaluate new patients, manage patients currently receiving treatment and provide follow-up services at a new clinic in Colby.

Oncology – Dr. January Fields Monthly
Citizens Medical Center Specialty Clinic
100 E. College Drive - Colby

The cancer program at HaysMed is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer. Its fellowship-trained cancer specialists provide these state-of-the-art cancer care services:

- Medical oncology
- Radiation oncology
- Hematology
- Breast Care Center
- Cancer prevention, screening and early detection
- Diagnosis, consultation, treatment
- Patient support and education
- Clinical research
- Cancer survivorship services

To schedule an appointment or for more information, consult your primary care physician. Or call 785-623-5774 or Toll Free 1-800-248-0073 and ask for Medical Oncology.



Dr. Babu Prasad
Radiation Oncologist



Dr. Anne O'Dea
Medical Oncologist/Hematologist



Dr. Sameh G. Abuerreish
Medical Oncologist/Hematologist



2220 Canterbury Drive – Hays
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