



Emergency flights down, transfers up

By Christina Beringer
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Emergency flights out of Thomas County have decreased, with more long-distance ground ambulance transfers being run, the emergency medical services director told county commissioners last Monday.

In May 2011, director Joe Hickert said, 21 patients were flown out, compared to only nine last month. In addition, he said, last year, there were only four long distance transports in May, and that number has increased to 14.

Hickert said he expects the number of long-distance transports to continue to rise.

From January to May 2011, ambulance crews had only 12 long-distance runs, but in the same five-month time this year, they've already had 49.

After the meeting, assistant director Don Morton explained that ground transfers are a better alternative for the department and the county, rather than transporting patients in the air.

"We aim to do ground transfers because it saves the insurance companies money and it saves

the patients money," said Morton, "and it is a revenue source to EMS, so it brings in money to the county."

The report also shows that the department is making its five-minute emergency response-time goal, although the average response time last month was just slightly slower than last year.

In May 2011, the response time was 4.2 minutes, Hickert said; this year in May, it was 4.9 minutes.

From January to May 2011, the service had 134 emergency runs and 94 non-emergency runs, 76 trauma patients and 133 medical patients, for a total of 209.

From January to May 2012, crews made 112 emergency runs and 119 non-emergency runs, 77 trauma patients and 139 medical patients for a total of 216.

To help with new advanced services offered by the department, Hickert told commissioners, he has hired a new medic who will begin in July. The new employee has eight years' experience in the medical field, he said.

Commissioners gave Hickert approval to accept the lowest and best bid from Northwest

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Goodbye, Carolyn



Former City Manager Carolyn Armstrong hugged Economic Development Alliance Secretary/Treasurer and good friend Larry Barrett Friday at her retirement party at the Law Enforcement

Training Center. Armstrong retired from her position after 19 1/2 years of service and city employees, residents and others attended the reception to say goodbye.

KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press



Oakley shows cars

Despite the heat, car enthusiasts turned out to enjoy the Seventh Annual Tri-County Show and Shine at Annie Oakley Park in Oakley on June 9. Seventy-eight cars and six motorcycles competed for honors. The winners were: Mayor's Choice, Jason Krayca, Goodland, 1923 Ford T-bucket roadster; People's Choice, Stan Blair, Oakley, 1974 Ford LTD; Club Choice, LeRoy Russell, Scott City, 1961 Chevy Corvette (above); Best of Show, Gary and Mary Jo McClanahan, Wakeeney, 1947 Plymouth convertible (right).



SHARON FRIEDLANDER
Colby Free Press

Colby graduate joins Hallmark

By Joe Kleinsasser and Joe Hartup

Wichita State University

The next time you choose a Hallmark card for Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas or Valentine's, it's just possible it was designed by Wichita State University graduate Lauren (Kaiser) Younkin.

In her early education at Colby High School in northwest Kansas, Younkin said, she designed a handful of printed pieces for various projects. Her family, recognizing her talent, encouraged her to pursue graphic design as her career path.

The preliminary returns on her career show they were right.

After studying at Wichita State,

including an internship at Gardner Design in Wichita, Younkin is now a talented young graphic designer with Hallmark Cards in Kansas City.

Younkin developed her creativity through art classes at Wichita State before graduating in May 2010 with a degree in graphic design.

She said Wichita State Associate Professor Jim Hellman stands out as being especially helpful in preparing her for a career.

"I felt like I got a lot out of his courses," said Younkin. "The great thing about graphic design is that it's what you make of it."

Hellman, who teaches in Wichita State's School of Art and De-

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Maurices to donate \$500 to area charity

By Christina Beringer

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The Maurices clothing store in Colby plans to give \$500 to one area charity to mark the store's first anniversary at its new location, 2080 S. Franklin Ave.

"When it comes to supporting your favorite charity, it doesn't get any easier than this," said manager Kristina Hewitt.

She said Maurices is inviting people to stop by the store by Sunday, July 1, to vote for their favorite Thomas County charity. The one that receives the most votes will get the \$500 donation.

"People can vote for their favorite charity or charitable event like Relay for Life," Hewitt said. "We can even make a donation to the hospital in name of a patient, too."

Hewitt said she has been a manager here for 2 1/2 years, and before that, she worked for Maurices

in both Manhattan and Pittsburg. Before moving to South Franklin, the store had been located at 1923 S. Range for 15 years.

"Being a part of this community has been terrific," she said. "We appreciate the warm reception and truly value all of the new friends we've made in our store this past year. This is one way we can say thanks, and we hope customers enjoy the opportunity to determine which charity will receive the donation."

Maurices is a nationwide clothing chain for young women, known for trendy yet inexpensive fashions, Hewitt said. The store offers everything young women need to fill their closets.

She said Maurices operates over 800 stores in 44 states and offers sizes from 1 to 26.

