

# From Red Barn Gang to hunting, Rexford's been hopping this week

I am beginning to see Christmas decorations appear in yards in and windows. This time of year is so neat – a time to anticipate and remember why we celebrate.

The Red Barn Gang has been practicing hard for their holiday events. This year they will visit 12 nursing homes and assisted living centers in Atwood, Colby, Norton, Hill City, Oberlin, Oakley and Goodland. They perform a variety of music and use unique instruments such as the washboard, spoons and other rhythm instruments.

Shepherd's Staff welcomed a group of hunters from Bloodline Outdoors, a Christian hunting show that airs on the Pursuit Channel. While in the Rexford area, the hunters not only harvested their deer, but Bloodline founder Alex Rutledge spoke at the Heartland Christian School Banquet on Friday night.

Another group of hunters had an exciting hunt this week. Shawn Dible, son of John Dible, and his wife Andrea traveled in from Rogers, Ark, to search for deer. His hunt was successful, as the photo shows.

Quite a few kids from the Rexford, Selden and Menlo areas participated in a Tumbleweed Gymnastics program on Saturday. Over 30 different groups performed Christmas numbers and did a great job.

Coming up this weekend at Shepherd's Staff is a Cookie Mak-



Shawn Dible (left), his wife Andrea, and father John Dible posed with the large buck Shawn took in the Rexford area this weekend.



## Gwen Griffiths

• Rexford Correspondent

ing Day and a Christmas Open House, both on Saturday. You can

still register for the Cookie Making Day by calling 687-2565. The Christmas Open House will be held at the Main Center from 5:30 to 8 p.m.; the historic Philip Houston House will also be open for tours. Come and celebrate the Christmas season with us.

Next week will be my last week to report news, and then Rexford

news will need a new correspondent. If you are interested, please contact the *Colby Free Press* at 462-3963 or colby.editor@nw-kansas.com for details.

If you have celebrations or events you'd like me to include in next week's column, please call 687-2076 or e-mail griffithsgang@gmail.com.

# Public health is more than you think

What is public health? As a public health employee I get asked that question often.

There are many misperceptions about what public health is. One major misperception is that we only serve the poor. As the Thomas County Health Department our services are available to all residents of Thomas County and the surrounding areas.

We see a variety of clients, including those that are self-pay, have insurance or are on Medicaid or Medicare. The health department's clinic provides prevention through our family planning program and immunization program.

However, we are more than a clinic. As a public health agency we investigate and prevent the spread of disease. We look at policy changes that can enhance the lives of our residents.

When you think about public health, consider that approximately 80 to 90 percent of all cancers may be caused by environmental and lifestyle triggers, as opposed to genetics. While many of these triggers are currently unknown, they are being investigated by public health researchers and some of them, such as asbestos, are being eliminated as a result of public health initiatives.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, secondhand smoke causes approxi-



## Kasiah Rothchild

• Healthy Happenings

mately 3,000 deaths annually. But, thanks to public health efforts that linked secondhand smoke to cancer and advocated for smoke-free zones, steps are being taken to save lives. In July of 2010 the Kansas Indoor Clean Air Act went into effect. It prohibits indoor smoking in public places, places of employment, restaurants, bars, taxicabs and limousines, lobbies and within 10 feet of any doorway, open window or air intake where smoking is prohibited. You may have seen the posted signs throughout Kansas indicating that smoking is prohibited by law.

Because of public health efforts the life expectancy in the U.S. has increased from 47 years in 1900 to 78.2 years in 2007. That's an increase of over 66 percent that resulted from efforts to improve health conditions and behaviors.

However, public health still has a long way to go.

In the past 20 years the percentage of overweight children has soared to epidemic proportions, with approximately 18 percent

of children affected. Public health officials often promote two ways for children to improve their health: consistent exercise and proper diet.

Ensuring a safe and fun environment in which children can play is a big step toward keeping our children healthy. The Thomas County Coalition and its members have been actively involved in our community's taking steps to address current health issues. When you see the new walking trail by the Aquatic Park, you can attribute that to coalition efforts. Other activities in our community include Safe Routes to School, Walk to School Day, Bike to School Day and the Thomas County Wellness

Challenge. The activity of the coalition is public health.

For information about public health, there is a campaign called "This Is Public Health" that illustrates the many ways in which public health touches us and reminds us that where and how we live, work and play has a lot to do with how healthy each and every one of us really is.

Public health works to improve the conditions around us and promote healthy behaviors. Take a moment to look in our community and you will see public health's many reaches.

*Kasiah Rothchild is administrator of the Thomas County Health Department. A native of Thomas County, she is a graduate of Fort Hays State University.*

## Deaths

### Forrest D. 'Snick' Harrison

Forrest D. "Snick" Harrison, 90, Wallace, a lifelong Wallace County resident, died Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012, at Swedish Medical Center in Englewood, Colo.

He was born Aug. 27, 1922, north of Wallace, the son of Iva (Capper) and Thomas Allen Harrison and attended Lake Creek School and Wallace High School.

From Nov. 18, 1942, through Oct. 22, 1945, he served in the 34th Tank Battalion of the 5th Armored Division, U.S. Army.

On Nov. 10, 1951, he and Joan B. Baehler married in Sharon Springs. They were ranchers in Wallace County. He especially enjoyed times when the neighbors all gathered in the spring to work calves together, along with barn dances most Saturday nights.

Mr. Harrison was a member of the Fort Wallace Memorial Association, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the Elks Lodge. He and his brother George provided the stock for the first Fort Wallace Rodeo in 1955. He served on the

Wallace School Board and then on the first board for the Wallace County Unified School District.

Preceding him in death were his parents, his brother and an infant great-grandson.

Survivors include his wife, of Wallace; two daughters, Sherrel (Don Barnett) Harrison of Wallace and Sandra (J.R.) Knudsen of Kearney, Mo.; four grandsons; and two great-grandchildren.

Services will be at 11 a.m. (Central Time) Thursday, Dec. 6, 2012, at the Sharon Springs United Methodist Church with Pastor Keith Anglemeyer and the Rev. Paul McNall officiating and burial with military honors in the Wallace Cemetery.

Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m. (Central) at the Koons Funeral Home in Sharon Springs.

The family suggests memorials instead of flowers to the Fort Wallace Memorial Association rodeo, in care of the funeral home, 211 N. Main, Goodland, Kan., 67735.



Snick Harrison

## Three of Clubs

The Three of Clubs met Nov. 9 in the meeting room of the Pioneer Memorial Library.

After the flag salute and the club collect, Kathy Calliham introduced Sue Evans of the Thomas County Coalition, who gave information on the group's goal to make Colby the most walkable community in Kansas.

She said this is becoming a reality through the joining of the city, public schools, Colby Community College, local organizations, businesses and people who have donated money or work to make this dream come true.

A 2.2 mile paved trail system has been started by the Colby Aquatic Park, Evans said. Trees have been planted along the trail and a drip system has been put in to water the trees.

Chelsea Hayes, an architecture student at Kansas State University, has joined the team to make

plans for an amphitheater. She is donating her services and will use the project as part of her thesis.

More money is needed, according to Evans, for lighting, benches, signs and finishing touches. She also said they have plans to help the downtown area be more appreciated for its services to the community.

Joyce Hansen announced that the featured speaker at the next Max Pickerill Lecture was to be Andrea Stanton, an assistant professor on Islam at Denver University, Nov. 27 at the college.

Hostesses Verna Wiens and Lois VanHorn served pumpkin roll with candies and nuts. The next meeting will be Friday, Dec. 14, for the Christmas luncheon.

Shakespeare Club will be host and Pi Gamma will serve dessert and have the program.

— Kathy Calliham

## Christmas trees dumped

VIENNA (AP) — A seasonal delivery went wrong in Austria when a truck was involved in a crash and dumped 14 tons of Christmas trees in a resident's garden.

Police in Vorarlberg state, at Austria's western tip, say the accident happened as a truck with a trailer loaded with trees drove

through the town of Hohenems.

The trailer hit a wall, tipped over and landed in the garden of a house. A police statement said the fire service dispatched 30 people to recover the hundreds of firs.

## Barbara Joan (Riggs) Zelfer

Barbara Joan (Riggs) Zelfer, 71, died Sunday, Dec. 2, 2012 in Kimberling City, Mo. Barbara was born November 7, 1941, to Robert Preston and Vera (Lewis) Riggs in Galveston Texas. She married Robert "Bob" Zelfer January 2, 1961, and resided in Hutchinson until 1967. They moved to Colby where they raised thier family. They later moved to Cape Fair, Mo.

Barbara loved the arts, cooking, music, dancing, gardening and spending time with her family. She is survived by her husband Bob; daughters Christie and husband Dan Wolf of Oakley, Lisa and husband Lonnie Moschner of Branson West, Mo., Aimee and husband Trent Platoff of Pevely, Mo.; grandchildren, Amanda Troxell, Diane Cranston, Chelsey Schiltz, Jena Mackley, Chance Cranston, Austin Bell, Alissa Bell, Ashly Platoff and Kayla Platoff, and 11 great grandchildren.

Services will be at 1 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 7, 2012, at the Our Lady of the Cove Catholic Church in Kimberling City, MO. Call 417-739-4700 for details.



## 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 <b>Hi-Plains Co-op</b>	
Wheat (bushel)	\$8.42
Corn (bushel)	\$7.52
Milo (hundredweight)	\$12.98
Soybeans (bushel)	\$13.65

# White Christmas Special

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## Look Who's Turning The Big "70"!

**KEN BIEBER**  
**Surprise Birthday Reception**  
at the B-Hive  
Tuesday, December 11, 2012  
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Cards may be sent to:  
170 West Fourth, Colby

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