



Artist fills home with paintings

By Sam Dieter
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The first thing you notice about Marlene Carpenter's house, aside from it being filled with paintings, is that she likes sunflowers. Pictures of sunflowers make up a good portion of the oil paintings covering her walls. But she also has sunflowers painted on furniture and old-fashioned cream cans, sunflowers stitched onto furniture and artificial potted flowers.

A freelance artist, Carpenter is good both at coming up with new material and expanding on a theme.

She says her first sunflower picture was inspired by a field of them near her house

when she and an ex-husband were farmers near Brewster, shortly before she moved back to Colby in 1982. It won first place at a competition of artists from Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska.

"I won Best of Show at a three-state art show for that," she said. "So then I became known as the sunflower lady."

Carpenter said she will never part with that painting, but she sells lots of other artwork. The picture hanging over the fireplace at the Farmers and Merchants Bank is hers. She sold it to the bank on Jan. 29, Kansas Day, when she was at the bank showing off her work to area kids.

"We made some nice bucks on that one," she said.

She also painted one of the chairs recently auctioned off for the "Art Friendsy

Chair-ish Your Library" fund raiser at the Pioneer Memorial Library. Bidding with her brother's number, she outbid a woman at the auction to buy her own chair, but offered to paint the woman another one.

"As a kid I would draw a lot, and maybe paint with whatever I had," she said. "I've always liked to do art, but never had any formal training."

With no art classes at the high school when she grew up here, she took a number of classes at Colby Community College, often studying under a former art instructor there, Ken Mitchell. She took classes in several types of painting and is currently teaching herself pastel painting. She will also paint on just about any surface.

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Local artist Marlene Carpenter (above) posed with a collection of paintings on the wall of her home. They include imaginary drawings and some of her kids, such as a portrait of her son, Justin Herbel, which she did based on a photograph of him working on furniture at the Hays courthouse (right).

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press



Road work starts on K-25 today

A trip between Logan County and Colby will be getting slower today because of road work.

The Kansas Department of Transportation is starting an overlay today along 17 miles of K-25, from the junction of U.S. 40 to Colby. Flaggers and a pilot car will follow the workers, reducing traffic on the road to one lane during working hours, and causing a delay of up to 15 minutes for passing motorists.

"In this case, they'll probably start on the southern portion," said Kristen Brands, public affairs

manager for the department.

The department will start the project by milling off a "test strip" along the road, Brands said. The main project, a mill and overlay of three inches of asphalt, could start right away or perhaps in several days.

If the weather is good, Brands said, the department could be done with the project by the end of April.

The \$3 million contract for the project went to Venture Corporation, a company based in Great Bend.

St. Patrick's event planned for Saturday

St. Patrick's Day may fall on Sunday this year, but the big celebration in Colby will come on Saturday night, when the Mama's Boys put on a show to benefit the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass Festival.

Dusty Road Productions plans a St. Patrick's Day Pub Party Saturday at City Limits Convention Center in Colby. There will be a social hour from 7 to 8 p.m. with a dance and concert to follow at 8 p.m.

All proceeds from the event will go to Pickin' on the Plains.

The Mama's Boys, an 80s, 90s, country and rock band, will perform and disc jockey Justin Meitl will provide entertainment during the social hour.

Free snacks will be provided and door prizes will be given away every half hour.

Tickets are \$20 and will be available at the door or in advance at City Limits or the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce.

For information, contact the Chamber of Commerce at 460-7643.

Poker tournament to benefit local man

A poker tournament has been planned Sunday in Selden to benefit a local man injured in December.

Klint "Tuffy" Wessel, 23, has been in a Denver hospital since being hit by a drunk driver Dec. 15 at Fourth and Franklin in Colby.

Tom Bruggeman, a family friend who helped organize the tournament, said it will help pay hospital, travel and hotel bills for Wessel's family.

The tournament will start 1:30 p.m. at Southwinds Steakhouse and Saloon in Selden. A \$50 dona-

tion is asked to enter the tournament, half of which will go to the Wessel family, and half of which will be paid back in prizes. Colby resident Jerry Pitner will prepare a meal of smoked brisket and scalloped potatoes, which will be served starting at noon.

Wessel's father Karl Wessel said before an earlier benefit that Klint has been at Colorado Acute Long Term in Denver after the truck he was driving was struck in the side.

Karl has been driving back and forth between here and Denver while Klint's mother Lori Wessel stays there.

Pope Francis' humility: stops by hotel to pay bill

By Nicole Winfield
The Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis put his humility on display during his first day as pontiff today, stopping by his hotel to pick up his luggage and pay the bill himself in a decidedly different style of papacy than his tradition-minded predecessor, who tended to stay ensconced in the frescoed halls of the Vatican.

The break from Benedict XVI's pontificate was evident even in Francis' wardrobe choices: He kept the simple pectoral cross of his days as bishop and eschewed the red cape that Benedict wore when he was presented to the world for the first time in 2005 —

choosing instead the simple white cassock of the papacy.

The Vatican spokesman the Rev. Federico Lombardi acknowledged the difference in style, attributing it to Francis' life work as the pastor of Buenos Aires whereas Benedict was long an academic.

He said it was too early to make a "profound evaluation" of Francis' priorities, urging instead reflection on his first few homilies — particularly at his installation Mass on Tuesday.

The former Cardinal Jorge Ber-

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