



Members of the 2001 Leadership Sherman County class include (from front to back, left to right) Cesar Miller, Deedi Hoss, Brad Schick, Lori Leonard, Susan Bellamy, Rich Hoffman, Rebecca Downs, Nathan Rather, Jim Neal and Dan Hayden. Photo by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

Legislators to get pay increase

TOPEKA (AP)—Legislators would give themselves a pay increase of roughly \$16,200 a year if they approve a plan endorsed Tuesday by the Legislative Compensation Commission.

Under the plan, which the commission approved on a 4-2 vote, rank-and-file legislators would receive \$38,070 a year on average. The figure would include money to cover expenses.

Rank-and-file legislators now receive an average \$21,867 a year for salary and expenses. The actual amount varies, based on how many committee meetings they attend when the Legislature is out of session.

The additional money, which amounts to a 74 percent pay increase, would cost the state about \$2.7 million a year.

The proposal will be included in legislation for lawmakers to consider next year. Legislators frequently are leery of supporting a pay increase for fear of political fallout from voters.

The plan, which would take effect in January 2003, also would change legislators' pension eligibility. Currently, retirement benefits are calculated using an average of each legislator's three highest annual salaries.

Lawmakers are allowed to annualize their salaries and expenses — up to \$65,456 — for purposes of calculating their retirement benefits.

Under the commission's plan, legislators only could count an annual base salary of \$24,000 in calculating their pensions.

Citizens learn more about government and their community

LEADERSHIP, from Page 1

people who are taking part in their community by serving on boards or doing volunteer work and are interested in learning more about government and organizing projects.

"We design the classes to give people a rounded view of their commu-

nity," he said.

Belshe said the people in the class represent different backgrounds, cultures and professions. In this year's group, there is a farmer, a pharmacist, the director of the arts center, a banker and an insurance salesman. There is also an even mix of men and women, young and old.

After the session ends in April, Belshe said, class members choose a project to work on and have a year and a half to complete it. Two class members are also asked to serve on the board for three years, he said.

Janet Warren, city librarian, is the new president of the leadership board and also serves on the arts council. She

said she was a member of the first leadership class four years ago and her group helped the city by doing part of a community-wide survey on the municipal water supply.

Warren said not only did she learn a lot from the class, but it put her in touch with other community leaders.

"You get to meet a lot of different

people," she said. "You get asked to be on many different boards, but that's the purpose, to get involved."

Lynn Hoelting, general manager of Mueller Grain and vice-chair of the leadership board, who was in the first class with Warren, said besides teaching him how to be an effective member of a board, the class introduced him to Goodland. "For myself," he said, "when I took the class, I had only been in town for four years. It helped me to catch up on services the city offers and helped me to get to know the community."

Hoelting said the class not only helps the members, but the entire county by bringing in new ideas.

"It really helps the community not to stagnate," he said.

Police question two people about ties to Yemen blast

By Brian Murphy

ADEN, Yemen — Police were questioning the landlord of an apartment where they found bomb-making equipment they have linked to the deadly bombing of the USS Cole, according to people in the Aden neighborhood that has become a focus of the investigation.

Neighbors told The Associated Press on Wednesday that police also detained for questioning a real estate agent who found the apartment for two men who may have used the explosives materials. The two men have not been located.

On Wednesday, survivors of the

Cole explosion prepared to mourn the 17 killed, as Yemeni-U.S. cooperation in the investigation began to yield leads. President Clinton was expected to lead the memorial at Norfolk Naval Station, the Cole's home port in Virginia.

Yemeni security officials said investigators found bomb-making equipment in a search conducted Monday of the apartment near the port of Aden. They believe the two former occupants may have carried out the suicide bombing of the USS Cole. The disclosure came a day after the Yemeni government, which had initially rejected the possibility terrorists were involved, called last Thursday's blast "a pre-

meditated criminal act."

A senior U.S. administration official said U.S. FBI director Louis Freeh believes the government of Yemen "is now cooperating fully and genuinely" in the investigation. Freeh told the White House he was heading for Yemen as part of the investigation.

Yemeni officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, identified the possible suspects only as non-Yemeni Arabs. Other Yemeni sources said they were from neighboring Saudi Arabia, but an Interior Ministry spokesman told the state news agency Saba that there was no link to Saudi Arabia.

Moments before the huge blast Thursday, two men were seen standing

on the deck of a small vessel alongside the destroyer, U.S. authorities said. A 40-by-40-foot hole was blown into the Cole's hull and the attack boat disintegrated into "confetti size" pieces.

The independent Yemeni newspaper Al Ayyam reported Wednesday that the landlord said he rented the apartment for a month to at least one non-Yemeni Arab with an unspecified Gulf accent. Al Ayyam said police determined one tenant gave the landlord forged identification.

The paper said the tenants parked a fiberglass boat near the apartment yard. The boat was now missing.

Yemeni officials would give no further information on the explosives material found in the apartment. They said the missing men arrived in Yemen four days before Thursday's attack.

Divers were back in the water Wednesday trying to get the rest of the remains.

Hospital is trying for less-severe cuts

HOSPITAL, from Page 1

"You try to learn how to do more with less," said Chaddic.

The hospital is working with Kansas representatives in Washington. Sen. Sam Brownback and Rep. Jerry Moran, to get some relief from the amendment, Chaddic said.

"It took out a lot more than what they were originally told it would take out of the system," said Chaddic.

The hospital isn't lobbying to increase reimbursements, he added, just trying to get less severe cuts.

Another major factor in the hospital's loss is that patient volume was down earlier this year because of the mild winter. Chaddic said the hospital is used to being slow in the summer, when fewer people are sick, but not in the winter.

Expenses are up also. Chaddic said employee salaries and wages increase every year with cost of living and merit raises. Laue said the hospital hires staff to accommodate and provide services that people of the county want and need.

One reason for additional expenses this year is due to a change in the method of computing paid time off for employees. Laue said the change doubled up the hospital's costs for this year, but didn't increase the amount of paid time off that employees receive.

"After 2000, it will go back to what it has been," he said.

Laue said the cost of drugs and supplies keeps escalating every year. Also, the costs of purchasing and maintaining equipment continues to increase.

Chaddic said the hospital has only raised prices twice in the 10 years he has been administrator. The last time was in late 1997.

That creates a squeeze, Laue said, because the costs keep rising and the reimbursement goes down.

"We get a double-sided sword," he said.

One of the ways that the hospital is trying to cut back on expenses is by evaluating all operating expenses.

"We routinely evaluate the services that we provide and the cost of providing those services," said Chaddic.

Chaddic said if the hospital has to send employees away for training, they try to keep them in state or send them to Denver as much as possible.

He said if someone quits, their position is evaluated to see if it needs to be filled.

For several years, Chaddic said, the hospital has sent staff home in all departments when the patient census is low. He said the hospital also has a deal with the Sherman County Good Sa-

maritan Center to see if they need nursing help and if they do, then nurses have the option to go there and work.

The hospital pays the employee and then bills the nursing home for those hours the employee worked, Chaddic said.

However, Chaddic said, so many of the hospital's costs are fixed that it's difficult to cut one thing out.

"As soon as you cut it, then you're going to get busy again and need it," he said.

Chaddic said jobs are so interrelated that if you cut one thing, it will affect three or four things down the line.

"It's a whole lot easier to look for things that will bring in new revenue," Chaddic said.

The hospital leased a spiral computerized tomography scanner earlier this year for \$450,000, so that it would be able to do more in-house procedures.

"We are (now) able to do a bone density test for osteoporosis in-house," Chaddic said, "so we're not having to pay somebody else to do that for us."

I think everybody involved with the hospital is optimistic things will improve. The outlook is bright. It's just going to take some work to get there."



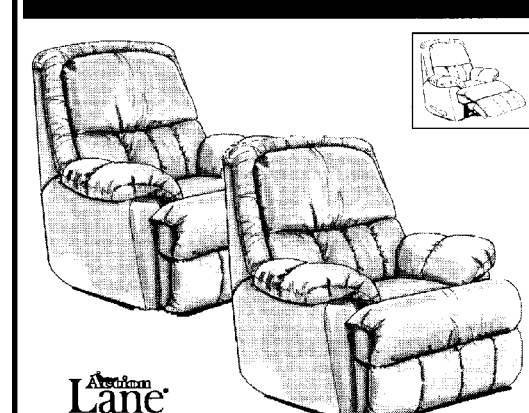
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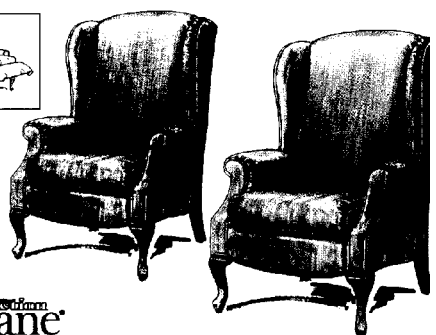
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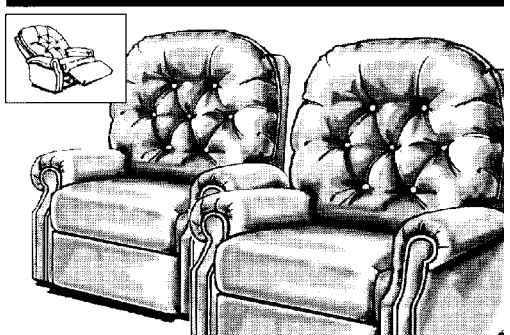
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