

Holidays bring friends together

It is later on Thanksgiving Day as I start to work on this column. I spent the noon meal at the country home of Fritz and Susan Doke.

The trip in itself was like a journey into unknown land. I've never been out that way before, so it was interesting to note on the mail boxes who lived where.

Susan's family was also there. Her parents came from Agate, Colo., and her sister, Sherri, and brother, Rodger, and his wife and daughter, from the Simla and Calhoun area, outside of Colorado Springs.

Another brother and his wife were unable to come. It was a very nice day. The food was wonderful and the fellowship great. Just a grand day with people I'd never met before, except Susan's folks.

I do thank them for a great day, as it's a time of year when I'm never in the best of moods. Again thank you to Fritz, Susan, Jared and Josh Doke for their hospitality.

Mac Been is having his share of major problems. He was moved to Hays on Nov. 20 as his condition has continued to decline.

His daughter, Laura McClung, got home Wednesday evening. Her brother, Kent, stayed with their mom, while Laura came home for a couple of days.

She was to return on Saturday or earlier if needed. Remember this family as they face uncertain times during the next few days.

Others with medical conditions in the community have been having their share of ups and downs. Betty Saint has had a few tough days, but was feeling much better when I visited with her Wednesday afternoon.

Her family was going to have Thanksgiving dinner on Saturday, a time when the kids could all get together.

After all, that's what Thanksgiving is all about — being thankful for what we have or hope to have.

Elaine Thompson fell last Tuesday and broke a hip while visiting in the home of one of her sons who lives in Fort Collins, Colo. She and her daughter, Biff Young, had gone there for the holiday. She had surgery at Poudre Valley Memorial Hospital in Fort Collins on Wednesday.

My last phone call said she had made it through the surgery just fine. The good news is that it wasn't as bad a break as they first thought it might be. The last message said she would be in the hospital until the weekend and then possibly be released.

State Farm to offer people discounts to drive safer cars

CHICAGO (AP) — State Farm, the nation's largest automobile insurer, plans to offer discounts of up to \$50 a year to drivers of what it says are the safest vehicles — including big cars, pickup trucks and some sport utility vehicles.

Consumer safety experts immediately criticized State Farm's move Tuesday, saying it will penalize drivers of smaller cars who may not be able to afford large ones and are more likely to be hurt in a crash with a larger vehicle.

The company said the pricing shift will result in no more than a \$50-a-year difference in insurance costs.

Payments on the medical portion of coverage, where discounts would be made, account for only 10 percent to 20 percent of the average policyholder's total premium.

The Bloomington-based insurer said the new pricing is based on its own rating system that accurately reflects safety. It will cut rates for vehicles that generate the fewest injury claims.

"This is not about big cars and little cars, it's about safer cars," company spokesman Dick Luedke said. "Cars that produce the fewest injuries are the type of car you shouldn't pay as much to insure."

Along with some larger models, including SUVs and pickup trucks, big autos such as some Acuras, BMWs, Mercedes-Benzes and Jaguars also fall under that category. The Ford Explorer, Nissan Pathfinder, Jeep Chero-

Canadians don't need recount

OTTAWA (AP) — Jean Chretien had exhorted voters to "Remember Florida," and they heeded his message, delivering a no-recount-needed election victory that gave the prime minister's Liberal Party a third straight majority government.

The outcome placed Chretien among the most successful Canadian politicians of all time, yet it also highlighted the nation's bitter East-West divide.

The Liberals were trounced by the conservative Canadian Alliance in the three western provinces, but the Alliance failed to impress the more populous East.



Jan Zwetzig

• goodland gazette

When she will return home is still a question. Remember her in your prayers.

From my visit with Isabelle Hellerud, I found out that she is doing just great since her hip surgery. She is walking pretty good without too much help, a walker or a cane, at least around the house.

She has also been given permission to drive her car once again. She had a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving.

My sister Martha is also doing fine since her knee surgery. She doesn't have to use a walker any longer, just a cane.

Her therapy continues three times a week and the pain is gone. Her and her husband had much to be thankful for this season.

There are others still in various stages of recovery, among them are Betty Rust, Vic Morin and Leo Hatcher. They are just a few who I could remember as I worked on this page.

To all, I hope you had a nice time and dinner with family and friends on Thursday or on the weekend and our prayers are that you will continue to make progress in your struggle for better health conditions.

Birthdays that I'm aware of are Claire Bowker on Nov. 26, Joslyn Acuff on Nov. 29 and Gracia Maricle and Harriet Demaree on Nov. 30. Best wishes to one and all. The same wishes to any others who had a birthday in the past few days. I don't know of any anniversaries, but if there are some, then Happy Anniversary!

One more flip of my calendar at the computer and this year will be history. A history that will include the election mess, still undecided as I work on this. I can't believe the legal haggling, suits and countersuits that are being filed or already have been filed in the higher courts of our nation. What an embarrassment to the rest of the world! I can't believe it has taken such a stinky turn and seems that it will be more days of listening to it and reading about it in the newspapers.

I got just a few items of news from Florence Farris of Edson. Her first comment was about the wedding of Wilbur Tiede and Hazel Babst of

Winona on Nov. 4. Best wishes to them and many more anniversaries to come.

She has had many visits from her grandchildren, J.J. and Laramie, in the past few weeks.

She now visits her sister, Helen Jones, at the Good Samaritan Center. She said Helen is having a lot of problems with her legs so it makes it impossible for their weekly outings which they both miss very much.

Her Saturday visits now consist of visits with Barbara Caldwell, Barbara Lovelace and her sons and their families. They share lunch at different places in town.

Florence and her sons, Rick and Gary, attended the funeral of Mavis McDaniel, a longtime friend from the Edson area. Barbara Lovelace went with them to the services and lunch afterwards at Ray's Cafe.

While doing some shopping at Walmart, she saw Gary, Nancy and Laramie Farris there, as well as Roberta Luckert of Brewster. On the way to her care she met Bud Luckert and had a few minutes of conversation with all of them.

She said all have been most appreciative of the moisture, a total of over five inches, received the past couple of weeks. She said she didn't have too many goblins at her house on Halloween.

Florence said the Edson Social Club had their November meeting at the home of Ruby Anderson with Kathy Owens as co-hostess. A Thanksgiving dinner was enjoyed by the ten members present.

Her last bit of news was that Inez Bennett was doing OK since the car accident at the intersection near her home. The accident caused one car to careen into her front porch. Earnalea Callahan, Inez's daughter, told me that there was more damage done than there was first thought to be.

The plaster in the house is cracked, the whole porch is off balance and the whole front of Inez's house has damage, even to the foundation. I guess we never know what the next minute will bring into our lives.

It is early Friday morning as I finish this column. I hope you all had a safe and happy Thanksgiving day with family and friends. On that note I'll sign off for one more issue. "Till the next one, God willing, take care of yourselves.

P.S. Elaine Thompson has been moved to Springcreek Rehab Center in Fort Collins.

weigh more, have higher hoods and stiffer frames than cars.

State Farm says its database shows that large vehicles are involved in fewer crashes.

"While it is generally true that when a big car hits a little car it is going to inflict more damage, what we have found is that accidents involving bigger cars tend to be less frequent,"

student of the week



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Study finds farm hands in bad health

By Brian Melley
Associated Press Writer
 FRESNO, Calif. — Farm workers harvesting some of the nation's healthiest foods are often overweight, suffer from a poor diet, and many have rotting teeth, a study shows.

The study found that 70 percent of the workers have no health insurance, about half never have been to the dentist, and a third of male workers have never seen a doctor.

"An abundance of high-nutrition food is produced in this part of the country," said Don Villarejo, who headed the study paid for by the California Endowment. "The people doing the bulk of the work have poor nutrition. That's not supposed to happen."

Researchers from the California Institute for Rural Studies canvassed seven farming communities around the state, interviewing workers where they lived — in houses, automobiles, sometimes under bridges.

Interviews were followed by physical examinations to conduct the most thorough survey on farm worker health in the nation's richest

agricultural state.

Most of the 971 workers interviewed were young, married Mexican men, largely uneducated and living without health insurance on annual wages of \$7,500 to \$10,000.

Only 16.5 percent said their employers offered health insurance, and almost a third of those could not afford the cost. Seven percent had some form of government-financed health care.

Although California requires workers' compensation coverage, only a third of the workers knew it was available, and more than half of those who did know had collected at some point for a farm injury.

Physical exams of 652 people found that 18 percent of men had two of three risk factors for chronic disease: high cholesterol, high blood pressure or obesity.

While the cause of deficiencies was not studied, some pointed clearly toward poor nutrition. Four-fifths of the men and three-quarters of the women were overweight.

Evidence of an iron deficiency was four times greater in the male farm workers than among compa-

rable groups of men in the United States.

Dental exams revealed that 36 percent of the men and 29 percent of the women had at least one decayed tooth, and about a third of both groups had missing or broken teeth.

One worker told of laboring for a year with a toothache, using herbs to dull the pain.

There's a growing awareness and concern among farmers about farm worker health, but farms face unique problems, said Jack King, spokesman for the California Farm Bureau Federation, the state's biggest farm lobby.

"The limitations are the fact that for many agricultural employers it's short-term employment," King said. "Quite frankly, a lot of farm worker employers would offer health insurance if there was more profitability."

Many of the migrant workers are here illegally.

Antonio Antunez, a former field worker who sneaked into the country with his pregnant wife 18 years ago, said he avoided the doctor because he didn't have the money and didn't want to get caught.

Children's health care needs money

TOPEKA (AP) — The state needs to spend more money on children's health care and increase the wages of workers at day care centers, a task force appointed by Gov. Bill Graves says.

The task force on early childhood development issues was part of the governor's Vision 21st Century Initiative. Members outlined their proposals during a Statehouse news conference Monday.

The task force reviewed programs for children under 5, and its members

said they found gaps in services.

For example, it noted that the state's Parents as Teachers Program, designed to develop parenting skills, is available until children turn 3.

Preschool programs for disadvantaged children are available when those children turn 4.

"What I would like to see is that more children are ready for school," said Chairwoman Kristine McKechnie, of Pittsburg, coordinator of the YouthFriends student mentoring pro-

gram.

The task force didn't say how much its proposals would cost nor suggest any method for financing them.

Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer, leader of the Vision 21st Century Initiative, said the task force's job was to raise issues. But he said he believes Graves will consider the proposals in putting together the proposed state budget he will submit to the 2001 Legislature.

And the proposals likely would cost money, possibly millions of dollars.

Nearly all winter wheat is seeded

TOPEKA (AP) — The 2001 winter wheat crop in Kansas is 98 percent seeded, behind the 100 percent last year and 99 percent for the five-year average, the Kansas Agricultural Statistics Service reported Monday.

It said wheat has emerged on 92 percent of the acreage, compared to 93 percent last year and 96 percent for the five-year average. The acres of late-seeded wheat are emerging slowly and

need warmer temperatures to get established before dormancy begins, the service said.

Seven percent of the wheat is pastured, compared with 9 percent last year and 8 percent for the five-year average. The wheat condition is rated 6 percent excellent, 49 percent good, 31 percent fair, 11 percent poor and 3 percent very poor.

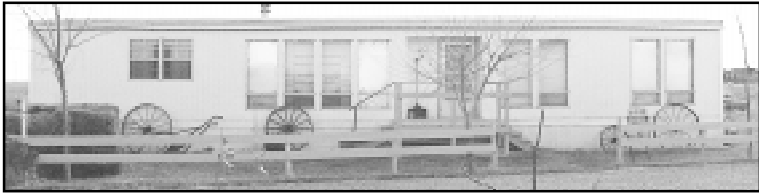
The harvest of sorghum has been

completed statewide, the same as last year's 100 percent harvested and slightly ahead of the 97 percent for the five-year average.

Ninety-nine percent of the soybeans have been harvested, compared to 100 percent last year and 97 percent for the five-year average. Ninety-eight percent of this year's sunflower crop is harvested, while all were harvested at this time last year.



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