

Salute to Working Women 2003

The Goodland Star-News

June 27, 2003

Butterfly Cafe baking attracts pilots

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

A 73-year-old woman is able to attract pilots. But it's not so much her sparkling good looks as her spectacular baking.

Dolores Corke, manager of Butterfly Cafe at the Goodland airport, bakes pies, breads and cinnamon rolls good enough that pilots fly in to Renner Field just to buy them. People from Converse, Ind., to Danville, Calif., have ordered her pies. And her baking earned the restaurant a listing in "Best Breads in Kansas" by the Kansas Wheat Commission.

Besides that, some people just have to have her homemade strawberry/rhubarb jam. Corke said she sent five jars to Canada and three to Leavenworth not long ago.

Corke said she has worked in restaurants since 1958 and has done about everything a person can do in a restaurant, except deliver a baby.

"And I almost did that," she said.

Corke said that besides waiting tables, baking, cooking and managing, she has kicked people out and broken up fights. Corke said she worked at the Sunflower Restaurant on Business U.S. 24 until it burned down, at a restaurant and gas station where Sinclair now is, at the Buffalo Inn and then back at the Sunflower when it was rebuilt.

She said she went back to the Sunflower and cooked at night because she didn't have a babysitter for her children. She worked there 18 years. Then she went back to the Buffalo Inn, which she leased and managed for seven years. And now she has managed the Butterfly Cafe for 12 1/2 years.

Besides handling the regular restaurant crowd, Corke caters events, and parties can be booked at the cafe.

Corke said she bakes every morning between 3 and 4 a.m. and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays has 30 pies in the freezer by 6 a.m. She bakes up to eight dozen rolls at a time and bakes bread as well.

As if baking four dozen rolls, 20 loaves of bread and 30 pies in one day isn't enough, Corke also makes Mexican food and chicken fried steaks from scratch and real mashed potatoes,



Dolores Corke carried plates of homemade chicken fried steaks with mashed potatoes and gravy to customers at the Butterfly Cafe at the Goodland Airport Friday.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

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Tom Betz



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Cooking brings people from surrounding states

BUTTERFLY, from Page 1

and when her work is done at the restaurant, she walks four miles a day.

The secret to her cooking, Corke said, is that she has a collection of recipe books but adds her own ingenuity. When she wants to try something different, Corke said, she goes through the books and jots something down. Then she makes it into her own creation.

"Don't ask for my recipe," she says she tells people. "It's just something I put together. I don't use recipes."

The master baker/manager has had the same two grill cooks working for her since the day she started at the Butterfly. Corke said she worked with Theresa Pentico for six years at the Buffalo Inn before she started managing the Butterfly and Pentico began cooking there. Betty Wright has cooked at the Butterfly from the day Corke started as well, and Corke's daughter Carlotta McDermott, has worked there for 10 years.

Corke said she hires young people as soon as they are old enough to work and

trains them. Many have worked from when they were in junior high, she said, until they finished high school.

With such loyalty, Corke said she doesn't have to hire new people very often. And employees are not the only ones who have been loyal.

Pentico wasn't the only person who followed her when she quit working at the Buffalo Inn to manage the Butterfly. Corke said she has a good clientele, a big clientele, some of whom followed her from the last place.

She said some of her clientele have urged her to take over a bigger restaurant. But she's having none of that.

"But I say, 'Fiddle!'" Corke said.

Corke said she likes working at the cafe because she closes at 3 p.m. and then has time to walk her four miles and be home in the evening.

Corke raised six children while working nights, and now some of them help her. Besides Carlotta, who lives in Colby, Rodney Corke of Goodland and Carlotta's husband John, who comes over at 4 a.m. and

See BUTTERFLY, Page 4



Dolores Corke chatted with customers while waiting tables at the Butterfly Cafe Friday. Her years of experience in the restaurant business show in her ease in making her clientele feel at home.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

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Working Women of Kanorado



Back row left to right: Peggy Witzel - owner, The Little Butterfly Cafe; Sharon Modglin, The Little Butterfly Cafe; Tamara Nagel, Kanorado Co-Op; Penny Helderman, Kansas Highway Patrol Port of Entry; Deb Fahey, Northwest Kansas EMS; Tammy Colby, Kanorado Senior Center.

Front row left to right: Marlene Van Laeys, ADM - Collingwood Grain; Susan Adams, Kanorado City Clerk and Northwest Kansas EMS; Connie Sheldon, Postmaster; Augustina Gamboa, Kanorado Senior Center; Joni Denton - Editor, Kanorado Kaper and Working Partner, Denton Farm

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Fly-in food

BUTTERFLY, from Page 3

helps her make the pies, make it a family operation.

"Without them," she said, "I would be in trouble."

Dolores and her husband Kenneth Corke have four other children, Roger who now lives in Dallas, Clarence of California, and Marian and Marlene of Great Bend.

Dolores and Carlotta have donated their tips for a day at the Butterfly to the Multiple Sclerosis Society through the MS Walk in Hays the last two years to help fight the disease that took Marian out of the work force.

Dolores said she was raised in Sheridan County and went to school in Hoxie. She married Kenneth in 1950, and the couple moved to Goodland in 1956.

He worked for Farmer's Home Administration when they moved to Goodland, she said, and then at the Co-op elevator, where he was the feed mill manager until he retired. Since his retirement, Dolores said, Kenneth has helped at the cafe.

Corke said she has threatened to retire but people keep begging her not to. And so far, they're winning out.



Dolores Corke served her famous homemade pies and bread Friday at the Butterfly Cafe. Her baked goods, made entirely from scratch, draw pilots to the airport to refill their stomachs.

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Woman finds niche helping special people

By Shannon Davidson

The Goodland Star-News

Meripat Bowman born in Nebraska and raised in Goodland found her niche in assisting people at an early age. Her parents have been in Goodland since she was a little girl they owned Goodland Sheet Metal and retired five years ago.

Meripat graduated from Goodland High in 1966 and took business occupational classes from the Northwest Kansas Technical College. She then applied for a job at the Intermediate Care Facility for Developmentally Disabled institution and was hired as an Medical Records Secretary. In 1995 The facility was purchased by Res Care Corporation and began to make it a place to serve the community.

She then moved in to an active treatment coordinator position. Wanting to do more with the industry she attended the University of Kansas and obtained a degree in Human Resource Management in 1991. After completing her degree she received her Nursing Home Adminis-



See **GOLDEN WEST**, Page 6

Meripat Bowman, head of the Golden West Community Center, has been involved in working with special people for over 14 years.



Tammy Hageman, optometric assistant, and Connie Russell, office manager, assist patients in selecting and fitting eyewear, in addition to their many office duties.

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Tips for balancing work and home

According to the National Women's Business Center and Women's Business Network, women own approximately 66 percent of all home-based businesses. An estimated 6.2 million women-owned firms in the U.S. employ 9.2 million people and generate \$1.15 trillion in sales. However, sometimes juggling work and home life can be challenging for female entrepreneurs.

Shonda Parker, a micro-business owner and member of the board of directors for the National

Association for the Self-Employed, says it can be done but it's important to find a balance. When you discover ways to blend work and home, it leads to a happier mom and family, overall stress reduction, and improved productivity in both your business and personal lives.

Parker shares advice that has helped her successfully manage both her nutrition consulting business and seven children, ranging in age from 15 to 3 months. These tips and guidelines

can help establish a separation between work and family even when your office is located in your home:

- Establish boundaries for work and home by making time guidelines for clients and family and sticking to them, following through with family and clients, and reserving a workspace just for work.

- Create an "Entrepreneurial Greenhouse" for the children by sharing work with them, involv-

ing them in business decisions and introducing them to fellow entrepreneurs.

- Give and receive by connecting with other entrepreneurs, helping others' businesses grow and going beyond mutual "back scratching" business relationships.

The National Association for the Self-Employed is the nation's leading resource for the self-employed and micro-businesses, bringing a broad range of benefits to help entrepreneurs succeed and to drive the continued growth of this vital segment of the American economy. Since its start-up, the association for the self-employed has been an important partner in the explosion of micro-businesses in the United States, supporting the interests of the self-employed with benefits and advocacy initiatives aimed at leveling the playing field between these businesses and larger corporations.

One of the most valuable services the association offers is free advice from knowledgeable business consultants who are familiar with the ins and outs of running a micro-business. Whether you need start-up advice, financial assistance, marketing ideas, or just moral support, the business consultants can answer your questions.

Information about the association for the self-employed is available by visiting the association's Web site at www.nase.org or by calling 800-232-NASE (6273).

Special people have special champion

GOLDEN WEST, from Page 5

trators License from Good Samaritan and became a part of the Administration staff of Golden West Community Center in February of 1997.

Now in her 14th year at the Center they are serving 47 people in the community

Helen Musil who has been apart of the Center since 1988 let us know, "I love her (Meripat) as a boss, she is really good to work with and allows me a lot of freedom to do my job. She is very supportive and gives me guidance and input"

"She has done a variety of jobs here at the Center and that helps with the knowledge of

being able to do her job so well." Musil also said.

Bowman has two children Vesper her 29 year old daughter who lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico and a son Jordan who is 23 and living in Dallas, Texas.

When given extracurricular time she enjoys being a part of the Kansas Guardianship Program which she has been a part of since 1987 currently assisting three people with decision on insuring their rights are not being infringed upon and financial management. Another outside activity includes her work with High Plains.

One moment she remembers about the facility is when the transition from an institution into

a community service center and they had to lock the doors in June of 1998 for the first time since 1974. They are now celebrating five years of being a community center and Meripat, the staff and their members wouldn't want to go back to the institution ways.

Meripat is a beautiful woman who is very passionate and enthusiastic about her job. She is very intelligent and low key about the work she does that makes a dramatic impact on the city of Goodland. Golden West and the 47 individuals receiving service spend over \$200,000 every month in Goodland. Along with the combined rents paid by individuals exceeds \$7,000 per month all to local landlords.

We appreciate your hard work



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Not Pictured: Jamie Flanders, Maureenm Brown, Jean Johnson, Jessica Colby, Judy Bateman, Pat Graves, Kelsey Leiker, Rita Rall, Avelia Valles, Amy Flax.



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High school job became her career



Nancy Kear spends a lot of her days at the auto body shop talking on the phone for repair estimates and looking for parts for cars and trucks the shop is repairing.

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

She started working at an auto body shop in Loveland, Colo., as part of a high school business office program in 1975. Today, Nancy Kear owns and operates Lonny's Quality Auto Body which she and her husband opened 28 years ago.

While in high school she worked at the Valley Auto Body in the afternoons, doing books as part of a high school business program. That is where she met Lonny Kear, who was working at the body shop.

She graduated in the top 10 percent of her class of 502 from Loveland High School in June 1975, and married Lonny 15 days later.

A couple of months after the wedding, Lonny realized his dream of owning a shop in his hometown when he returned to Goodland and they opened Lonny's Quality Auto Body on Aug. 5, 1975.

The shop opened in the back of Leonard Stephens' Studebaker dealership at Eighth and Main. Four years later, the business moved to a new building at 1933 Caldwell.

Lonny Kear ran the shop until he died of a heart attack on Aug. 5, 2000, 25 years to the day after he opened the business.

Looking back, Nancy Kear said there were two reasons she took the job at the auto body shop in Loveland. The first was that the job was open, and second that she always had an interest in cars.

"I always liked cars," she said. "Driving them, not working on them."

She still likes cars. She has a 1952 Chevy her grandfather had in Nebraska. She remembers going on vacation with her family in a 1963 Chevy which got totaled when they hit a deer and driving home in a 1964 Chevy.

With Lonny, she helped rebuild several cars, including a 1957 Chevy convertible, a 1936 Ford which they found in a pasture near Edson, a 1932 Chevy and a 1963 Corvette, which she sold.

She remembers the 1936 Ford because she spent hours grinding all the

See AUTO BODY, Page 8



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She likes cars, restored a few

AUTO BODY, from Page 7

rust off of the frame as part of the ground-up restoration.

She and Lonny went to a lot of rod runs and car shows in the 25 years they were together.

She was always involved with the body shop, doing the books and watching over the business side, but after they started the business in 1975, Nancy also worked for the law office of Perry Warren and Tom Oglevie for four years. She then worked with Janice Minner, an accountant, doing books.

When Lonny had his first heart attack in 1993, she took on more responsibility at the auto body shop and learned more about the business.

"I used to mix the paint," she said. "After his first heart attack in '93, I took more responsibility. It was good to have those seven years."

She says there is a true sense of family with the five guys who work in the shop, and they have over 65 years of experience repairing and painting vehicles.

Scott Gilmer has been with the shop for 22 years, Robert Rall 17, Randy Selbe 14, Tim Dinkel eight and Matt Murray five.

"I couldn't do this without them," she said,



See AUTO BODY, Page 9 Nancy Keaer talks with Scott Gilmer and Randy Selbe about the pickup they are working on at Lonny's Quality Auto Body.



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