

Medical center rates high in technology

By Sharon Corcoran

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Goodland Regional Medical Center found itself in the top 17 percent of Kansas critical access hospitals in some areas of information technology according to the 2006 Health Information Technology Survey conducted by the Rural Health Resource Center, a private non-profit organization based in Duluth, Minn.

And the Siemens Medical System 4 computer the hospital selected in August 2002 and is installing will put the hospital among the most technologically advanced in the state. The hospital expects the installation to be complete next year.

They did a survey of critical access hospitals in Kansas, said Administrator Jay Jolly, and found that 83 percent of the hospitals surveyed do not use electronic medical records, which Goodland expects to be using next year.

"We're putting in the pieces right now," he said. "Next year we will have electronic records."

The survey said only 17 percent have automated pharmacy dispensing machines, he said, and 17 percent are using telemedicine — Goodland has both. Only 31 percent have doctors offices or clinics connected electronically to the hospital's information system, he said; the medical center is not behind in these areas.

Thirty-four percent of hospital pharmacies have computerized allergy and drug interactions, he said, which Goodland has. Thirty-nine percent have computerized clinical review of radiology records, Jolly said, which Goodland has, and 47 out of 59 transmit the images electronically, which Goodland does.

None of the hospitals that responded to the survey share clinical data electronically with other hospitals, he said; Goodland will have the capability next year.

Some of the departments have been working with electronic records for some time, Jolly said, but the hospital won't have complete electronic records until the core piece is in place in nursing. The hospital plans

to have that done next spring, he said, and it will pull information from all the ancillary departments and include nurses' notes and doctors' orders all in one electronic file.

The information in the survey is from 59 critical access hospitals in Kansas, he said, about three-quarters of the 84 critical access hospitals in the state. They may have sent the survey to all of them, Jolly said, and that is how many responded. He said if Goodland was asked to participate, he probably responded to the survey, but he doesn't remember it specifically because he answers a lot of surveys.



Neil Normandin, maintenance director at Goodland Regional Medical Center, gave hospital board members a tour of recent updates made to the physical plant. Board members, from left, are Mary Volk, Joyce Moore and Darin Neufeld.
Photo by Tina Goodwin/Goodland Regional Medical Center

Hospital board tours boiler room

By Sharon Corcoran

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Goodland Regional Medical board members took a tour of the hospital's boiler room Monday during their regular meeting, getting a look at where money was spent on repairs in the last couple of years went.

Maintenance Director Neil Normandin led the board on a "physical plant tour," showing them generators, compressors, the air conditioner, which has been there since 1961, and the furnace.

Normandin showed them a black part, slightly bigger than the end of his thumb, and said, "This \$18 item put us in the dark for three hours."

When a blizzard hit Goodland on Thanksgiving weekend in 2005, the hospital's emergency generator was used for 24 hours straight and then quit, leaving the hospital in the dark

for three hours while Normandin worked to get it running again.

The hospital had spent \$7,943 on a transfer switch for the generator before the outage, but when the starter went out, it got dark and cold anyway. During the tour, Administrator Jay Jolly pointed at the generator transfer switch and said the hospital had spent \$15,000 fixing it.

The hospital has spent money repairing the air conditioner, Normandin said, and then discovered it is out of Freon. It needs 400 pounds of Freon, he said, adding that he hasn't gotten an estimate yet with less than \$1,000 to deliver it, so he is looking into ways to get it here for less.

That's what it would take to recharge the whole system, Administrator Jay Jolly said; he's looking ahead, but it's something he would want to do in the winter. He doesn't have that on the calendar yet, Jolly

said, but he's looking at different costs.

Normandin showed the board a compressor that controls the air conditioner and said he had welded a split on the back and thought it would get them by a while, but it split again, so they are waiting for a new one.

He said the hospital just had the boilers tuned up as well, but keeping things up is becoming a challenge.

Some of the equipment is so old, he said, it's getting hard to find parts.

During the finance committee report, Chief Financial Officer Jim Precht said the hospital had spent \$43,000 on unexpected maintenance items in the last quarter including vacuum compressors, air compressors and fire alarms.

The hospital has \$370,000 in equipment added to capital outlay Precht said.

Study: Fort Hays top 10 percent in student value

By Ramona C. Sanders

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Fort Hays State University has been ranked nationally in the top 10 percent of four-year institutions for improving student education by the Council for Aid to Education, a national nonprofit New York-based organization

The recognition was announced Tuesday by Fort Hays State University President Edward Hammond during a stop at *The Goodland Star-News* as part of a five-day media tour throughout the state.

"Everybody already knows we're the fastest-growing and most afford-

able college in the state," Hammond said. "Now we finally have something to point to other than our own opinion that we do a good job."

The Council for Aid to Education conducted a four-year study called the Collegiate Learning Assessment which tested the knowledge base of a random sample of incoming freshmen and compared the testing of the same group four years later. The study concluded that Fort Hays State University performed better than 90 percent of universities nationwide for improving students' writing, reasoning, thinking and argumentation skills.

The Council for Aid to Education was

established to advance corporate support of education and to conduct policy research on higher education, according to its Web site. The organization focuses on improving quality and access in higher education.

During his visit, Hammond talked about other things the university can be proud of including tuition affordability and significant enrollment growth.

Hammond compared the university's tuition cost to University of Kansas.

"It costs \$8,000-\$10,000 (annually) for tuition and fees at KU," he said. "That compares to \$3,000-\$4,000 at Fort Hays."

He said a combination of growth, cost reduction due to technology and better use of energy and a decrease in non-teaching staff has resulted in the college becoming

more efficient and affordable.

Hammond talked about the success of the college's on-line degree program called Virtual College and international studies program which includes a partnership with four colleges in China.

In addition to the Virtual College, Fort Hays has a College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education and Technology, College of Health and Life Sciences, College of Business and Leadership and a Graduate College.

In the 20 years that Hammond has been president of Fort Hays, enrollment has almost doubled from about 5,000 in 1987 to its current 9,600. Enrollment includes 4,600 on-campus students and 5,000 on-line students including 2,200 students in China.

About 32 students from Goodland are enrolled in on-campus classes at Fort Hays and about 11 take on-line classes at its Virtual College. Hammond said about 1,000 students are from northwest Kansas.

Hammond said the Virtual College is the largest provider of distance learning in the state and one of the best ways to serve rural northwest Kansas students.

"There are 1,000 students in western Kansas who can get a degree who have never set a foot on campus," Hammond said.

But Hammond said the college hopes to continue to add to those successes. With the original goal of having 10,000 students by 2010 almost met well before the deadline, Fort Hays has now committed to having 15,000 students by 2020, Hammond said.



Hammond

Speeding car loses control, hits ditch

A speeding car on County Road 17 driven by a Burlington man ran into a ditch and hit a culvert Wednesday afternoon.

Alic Sloan Bezzina, 20, was driving south about two miles southwest of Goodland, and was driving too fast for road conditions, according to the Kansas Highway Trooper Eric Hodges, and lost control of the vehicle.

Both Bezzina and his passenger, Matthew A. Smith, 13, were injured and taken to Goodland Regional Medical Center, according to the Highway Patrol report. Their conditions are unknown.

Old West photographs new arts center exhibit

By Sharon Corcoran

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An Old West trading post is the subject of the photography to be displayed this month at the Carnegie Arts Center, and sculptures capturing nature's beauty will fill the center as well.

Kansas photographer and sculptor George Phillippy will exhibit his work starting with an opening reception from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the center. Goodland High School students will perform excerpts of their upcoming musical, "The Music Man," at the reception.

The theme of the photography exhibit is Bent's Fort, a trading post of the American West in southeast Colorado on the Arkansas River. The

post is noted for its adobe walls, and it was an important stop on the Santa Fe Trail. Historical information about each photograph will be provided.

Phillippy's ability to capture nature's beauty in sculpture is an added benefit to the display. He specializes in the "lost wax technique" of creating bronzes, a technique that dates back thousands of years.

His mother's appreciation for fine art and an artist neighbor, who allowed him to paint with her when he was very young, motivated him to begin lessons at age 6. He received his first camera at age 10.

He spent his early years in Texas, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and earned a Master of Arts in photography from Fort Hays State University.

His exhibit is sponsored by Adronics/Elrob Manufacturing Corp. and will be displayed through Friday, Nov. 30.

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Dogs shot on I-70

Two dogs were shot multiple times last month and left for dead in a ditch on Interstate 70 near east Exit 19, Sherman County Sheriff Kevin Butts said Monday.

The dogs belonged to Goodland resident Juan Yanez, 19. They were two large dogs of undetermined breed, Butts said.

One dog was shot 10 times and the other dog was shot 12 times, said Butts.

Deputy Jason Showalter discovered the dogs while on routine patrol

Wednesday, Oct. 3.

Yanez told the Sheriff's office he went outside to feed the dogs on Sept. 30 and they were gone.

Butts said investigators were unable to recover any slugs to determine what type of weapon was used. Investigators also have not determined if the dogs were shot on I-70 or at another location.

Butts is asking that anyone who saw something or has information about the shooting call the Sheriff's Office at 890-4835.

corrections

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news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.



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