

Businesses feel healthy living better answer

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News
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If doctors, surgeries and pills are what you've always thought of as health care, several area businesses are out to change your mind.

It's not that they don't want you to go to doctors, take medicine or have surgery when you need it, but they say if you take better care of your health every day, you can avoid many problems that require traditional medicine.

Health Essentials in Burlington, owned by a registered nurse and

acupuncture technician, provides services including acupuncture, reiki, live blood analysis, kinesiology, massage therapy, ear candling, manicures, pedicures, facials and body wraps.

The Treasure Trove in Burlington offers "therapeutic-grade" essential oils for aromatherapy and other treatments, and the Health Cottage in Colby offers vitamins, herbs and gluten-free foods.

"We have a lot of things to help people help themselves," said Health Cottage owner Kerri Blatt. "We focus on preventative medicine rather than treatment."

When it comes to treating existing problems, Blatt says, the store can give people information on vitamins and herbs to help them make informed decisions to help themselves.

"Without a medical degree," she said, "we are not allowed to prescribe."

Treatments at Health Essentials keep the body's energy balanced, said owner Melissa Clapper, which keeps the immune system boosted and if you're sick, they help you fight disease. They are holistic treatments, she said, which means they involve the whole body, mind and soul.

The wide variety of treatments offered are to help a variety of people, she said, adding they have an initial consultation with new clients to determine the best treatments for them.

The Treasure Trove, a gift store, has a line of Spirit of the Shaman essential oils, said Ron Mehling, who owns the store with his wife Tricia. He said they sell aromatherapy lamps to diffuse scents from the oils and essential oils with different therapeutic values. Different blends can energize you, he said, give you clarity or pacify you.

If you have a particular ailment, he said, some can be treated with

aromatherapy. Drops of essential oils can be added to carrier oils and rubbed into sore muscles, bee stings and things like that. They can even be used to treat infection, he said.

The store offers books on aromatherapy and its benefits, Mehling said, and people can buy oils to mix up their own treatments. He said aromatherapy has been an interest of Tricia's for a long time, and she has studied it and wants to take a course to be a certified aromatherapist.

She has sold the oils for about four

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Legislative compromise could be foundation for future changes

COMPROMISE, from Page 6

that may be available through their employer. If the family insurance costs about \$300 a month, the state would help with about \$150 to help them buy into the employer program. This is buying down the cost of insurance for that family, and the family would have to pay the other portion.

"We can look at some states who have done this well, and some who have not done this well.

We think we have designed a good program for Kansas, and will keep working to make it the best for our people."

She said the compromise would try to do this together with expanding the Children's Health Insurance Plan that was supported by the Senate. She said the House wanted to support the employer insurance program, and the idea is to try to marry the two proposals.

"We want to take kids who otherwise would not be able to get medical coverage under the

employer-sponsored programs for the expansion of the children's health insurance program," she said.

Other parts of the compromise would expand the definition of a safety net clinic; transfer the small-employer cafeteria plan development program and the association assistance plan to the Health Policy Authority; extend the period for employees to keep their medical coverage after losing a job from six to 18 months; and increase the lifetime limit in the high-risk insurance pool

from \$1 million to \$2 million.

The budget cost of the health reform proposals is about \$6 million from the state general fund if everything is adopted, she said.

KanView (www.kansas.gov/kanview) is an online web site that shows state revenues and expenditures for all state agencies and programs. The Kansas Health Policy Authority's total revenue for all programs under the agency for this year is a little over \$2 billion, and the expenditures for all the programs is \$2.3 billion.

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REGISTERED RESPIRATORY THERAPIST Duane Robb (left) used a body box on a patient for plethysmograph (instrument for recording variations in volume of an organ part or limb) studies at Citizens Medical Center in Colby.

— Photo by Joey Falkoff/Colby Free Press

Citizens Medical Center serves northwest Kansas

By Joey Falkoff

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Citizens Medical Center of Colby may not

be a regional hospital in name, but that hasn't prevented it from operating like one.

With six staff physicians and many health care services available, the 25-bed critical access hospital at 100 E. College Drive has the resources to make northwest Kansas residents reconsider driving to Hays or Denver for medical attention.

"One of our missions is to serve the people of northwest Kansas," said President Janice McCart. "We are proud that we are able to meet that mission. If we can provide services other hospitals can't and keep people from driving to Denver or another big city, we think that helps us."

Based on last year's numbers, it appears people in Colby and surrounding towns are forgoing these lengthy commutes more and more often.

From 2006 to 2007, Citizens Medical Center's profit was up nearly \$13,000 to \$658,199. The budget rose from \$28 million past \$32.5 million.

"Our hospital continues to grow," said McCart. "The reason for the growth is due to services and quality of services we offer. You don't have



- Beds 25 as critical access hospital
- Budget 2007 Revenue \$32,554,516
- Profit 2007 \$658,199
- County money None. Citizens Medical Center is a private, nonprofit community hospital
- Doctors Six physicians, three physician assistants, three nurse practitioners and 62 consulting physicians
- Phone (785) 462-7511

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SHEILA SMITH HELPED JORDIE MANN with her ear candling. Ear candling helps remove wax and draw out blockages and infections. It is one of the treatments offered at Health Essentials, a holistic health center in Burlington.

— Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

Healthy living good way to avoid medical problems

HEALTHY, from Page 7

years, he said, and offers nearly 140 blends as well as pure essential oils. She was ordering hand-made soap to sell, he said, but has started making soap herself with essential oils blended in. You can use one bar in the shower in the morning to wake up, he said, and a different one at night in the bath to relax and go to sleep.

She also offers facial creams and salt scrubs, he said, and will soon offer herbal teas.

Blatt said her mother, Darlene Ackerman, started the Health Cottage 27 years ago after having trouble finding help for her health problems. She couldn't find the solutions in the medical field, Blatt said, and went to a naturopathic doctor. She wanted to help others find what they need, Blatt said.

Blatt worked with her mother in the business and then took over when she retired. Blatt said she found many people have celiac disease, problems with gluten, which is found in wheat and some other grains. It usually shows up in digestive and stomach problems, she said, but sometimes in hives

breaking out.

Besides gluten-free foods, she offers weight-loss supplements, vitamins and herbs, but Blatt says she has no magic weight-loss pill.

"People want to just take a pill," she said, "but I recommend eating a better diet and getting exercise."

A lot of people need help with energy, she said, and overall, people don't feel good. Once they get on a good regimen, she said, many notice a big difference. Everyone needs a good multivitamin, she said, but otherwise, each person needs something different. People are often on medicine as well as using vitamins and herbs, she said; these supplement what doctors do.

Clapper said while working as an emergency medical technician and nurse for over 12 years, working at hospitals in Goodland, Burlington and Hugo, Colo., developed a desire to promote healthy lifestyles and health maintenance, preventive measures, rather than to correct things after something went wrong.

"I could see the pills and surgeries weren't working," she said. "People

wanted a magic pill — they didn't want to take care of their health but wanted to fix it after it was ruined. They wanted to correct things that couldn't be corrected."

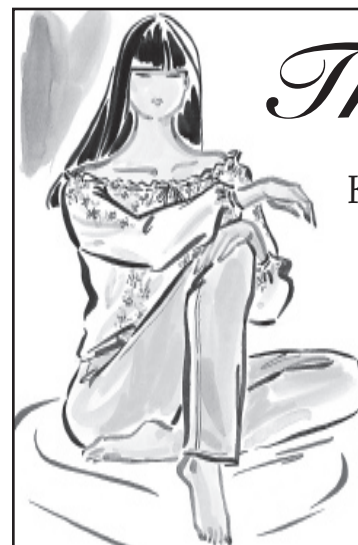
She said she doesn't shun traditional medicine, but rather, works with area doctors, referring people to doctors when needed and with doctors referring patients to her for preventive measures.

The way many people get disease is through lifestyle, she said, through poor nutrition, lack of exercise, stress and incorrect medication and vitamin supplementation. Health Essentials will enter its fifth year of helping people correct these things this summer, Clapper said, and has been extremely busy.

The business has several other businesses within it, she said, with all of them working together as a team.

Other business owners are Corinne Rehor, registered nurse and certified massage therapist; Irma Silkman, certified massage therapist; Melody Alhm, certified massage therapist; Lisa Schaal, massage therapist; Tess Lucke, licensed esthetician; Amy Mitchek, certified nail technician; Bonnie Hilt, ear candling therapist; Debbi Lucas, certified holistic health care practitioner; Arin Hayden, chiropractor; and Amy Twiss, neuro-emotional technique therapist.

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Colby hospital serves area

COLBY, from Page 8

to travel a great distance when you can be seen by specialists right in your hometown.”

Among the specialists the hospital has on hand is orthopedic surgeon Dr. Mekki Saba. Saba is available to perform surgeries on hips, knees and backs Monday through Friday.

“We’re very fortunate to have Dr. Saba,” said McCart. “Towns of this size don’t usually have specialty doctors that reside here.”

Saba has outreach clinics and provides care in five area towns.

Other surgeons and specialists can be brought in if a specific need arises, McCart said. A physician schedule can be found on the hospital’s web site at www.nwkshealthcare.com.

“If we know people travel to another community to get medical services because of a speciality we don’t have, we try to get that specialist to come here to keep them from driving to get that service,” said Jennifer Scott, vice president of ancillary services.

Since last year, the hospital has added a skin specialist, Karen Johnson, who flies in from Denver the first Monday of every month, she said.

They also have a group of urologists who come in every month from Hays. Though surgery would have to be done at another hospital, said Scott, the initial consult and follow-up procedures can be done at Citizens.

Heart patients who require surgery also have to go to a bigger hospital, she said, but Citizen’s has specialists who can come to Colby and follow up with patients.

Scott said the hospital is picking up more cancer specialists. Citizens has three oncology nurses to administer chemotherapy treatments and a full-time pharmacist who mixes the drugs.

The oncology department is one of many things the hospital has been able to add or revamp since last year, McCart said.

“We’ve pretty much increased, updated and replaced all the technology in the radiology department,” she said.

The hospital replaced its one-slice CT scanner with a 16-slice version. They’ve replaced their magnetic resonance imaging machine with a 1.5 magnet permanent system.

“It’s pretty rare for a critical access hospital to have that,” said McCart,



CITIZENS MEDICAL CENTER specialist Dr. Meki Saba (right) performed orthopedic surgery on an amputated leg. — Photo by Tama Unger/Citizens Medical Center

adding that the hospital is working on updating lab and physical therapy equipment this year.

In the fall of 2007, the hospital started a counseling and health services program. New Life, a Christian organization out of Colorado Springs, and Turning Points, out of Hays, are the two counseling services available. Turning Points, targeted toward teenagers and adults, is available in Colby once a week. Geared for families and small children, New Life comes to town once a month.

For an appointment, call the hospital at (785) 462-7511.

Geriatric psychology is available for seniors at Prairie Senior Living Complex, a retirement community, at 1625 S. Franklin, run by the hospital.

The complex is a 68-bed nursing home, with 39 of the beds devoted for patients who need long-term care.

In the last year, the nursing home has seen upgrades in carpet, vinyl and other general maintenance. They’ve also added a few pieces

of physical therapy equipment.

The hospital employs two full-time physical therapists, who offer physi-

cal, occupational and speech therapy to hospital patients and residents at the senior center.



“We have a big concentration with women therapy,” said Scott. “We’re seeing a lot more outpatients than we did. It’s a progressive rehab department.”

The hospital also runs the Family Center for Health Care, a medical clinic at 310 E. College Drive. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and the phone is (785) 462-6184.

The clinic has two physicians, Dr. Bruce Kellogg and Darren Matchell, and two nurse practitioners, Luetta Flanagan and Jenny Niblock.

Kellogg, Matchell, Salba, Dr. Gary Slavens, Dr. LaDonna Regier and Dr. Ratchnee France are the six active staff physicians, five of whom are board certified.

“That’s always a gauge of a physician’s competency and knowledge,” said McCart. “I think you’ll find the same caliber of doctors here as you would in Topeka, Kansas City or anywhere else.”

While the hospital continues to grow and maintain a standard of excellence among its physicians, McCart said, it has other changes in mind over the coming year which the board hopes will make people even less inclined to leave the area for health care reasons.

“What we’re looking at is becoming more outpatient-friendly and less institutionalized in appearance,” said McCart. “We would like to provide best environment we can, plus increase the services we currently offer. We’ll look for other specialty doctors, people might travel to and get them to come here.

“I don’t care why you come to a hospital or what you’re going to have done, it’s stressful to you. We’d like to make it less stressful however we can.”

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Thomas County has many medical options

By Joey Falkoff

Colby Free Press
jfalkoff@nwkansas.com

In addition to Citizens Medical Center and its two operating facilities, Colby features an array of other health care and medical options.

The community has two senior complexes in Colby Care Center and Fairview Estates Retirement Community.

Colby Care Center is at 105 E. College Drive, and its phone number is 462-6721.

Fairview Estates, 1630 Sewell Ave., can be contacted at 462-2154.

Family Center for Health Care is one of three medical clinics in town. The other two are Colby Medical and Surgical Center and Docs on Call.

Colby Medical and Surgical, 175 S. Range, has a family practice clinic. The clinic has two physicians, Dr. LaDonna Regier and Dr. Victor Hillyard II. Two physician assistants, Amanda Reed and Brian Unruh and nurse practitioner Dianna Sulzman. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 9 a.m.-noon on Wednesday.

The clinic has family practice service, an on-site lab and X-ray. Call 462-3332.

Docs on Call, formerly Slavens Family Practice, has moved to a new clinic at 1005 S. Range, Suite 200.

Dr. Slavens works with Dr. Ratchnee France and physician assistant Andy Rose. He has a walk-in clinic every weekday morning from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Regular hours are from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number is 460-8000.

Colby's two chiropractic businesses are Franz and Tubbs Chiropractic, 135 W. Sixth St., and Wiley Chiropractic Health Center, 990 S. Range Ave.

Franz and Tubbs is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7 a.m. to noon and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday

they're open from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturday they are open from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. For an appointment, call 462-7236.

Wiley Chiropractic is open from 8 a.m. to noon and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. Tuesday and Friday they are open from 8 a.m. to noon. Appointments can be made for after hours if need be.

Physical Therapy is available two locations in Colby besides the hospital.

Tina Harris Physical Therapy Center, 270 N. Franklin, is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Harris will see patients as early as 7 a.m. on special occasions.

Services include general physical therapy, a whirlpool, pain management and wound care, weight training, sports and work injury rehabilitation, electrical stimulation and ultrasound. Harris has one full-time physical therapy assistant and one part-time.

To make an appointment, contact the center at 462-8008. There is a two-three day waiting period in most cases.

Northwest Kansas Physical Therapy is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday or by appointment. They have one physical therapist, Dawn Stephens, and two physical therapy assistants. They offer wound care, sports injuries, neuro and orthodontic treatments, pool therapy, back and neck injuries, custom orthotics, care for total joint replacements and manual therapy. There is no waiting list and Stephens says she can usually see patients within 24 hours. Call 468-7848.

Pharmacies in Colby include Dillons, 1605 S. Range; Palace Drug Store, 460 N. Franklin; and Wal-Mart, 115 W. Willow.

The Thomas County Health Department, 350 S. Range Ave., offers services such as lab setting, blood



RADIOLOGY TECHNICIAN Kristin Brooks worked with the hospital's digital system, which allows doctors to view diagnostic images almost immediately.
— Photo by Tama Unger/Citizens Medical Center

pressure checks and immunizations. It offers classes including breast feeding for new mothers. The number is 460-4596.

The Thomas County Emergency Medical Service office is at 1275 S. Franklin Ave. The office number is 460-4585, but in emergency call 911 to get an ambulance.

The service has two ambulances

based out of Colby with one each in Rexford and Brewster.

Treatment for drug and alcohol abuse is available through the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council, 1523 W. Fourth St. Its number is 462-6111.

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, 1675 W. Fourth St., can be reached at 462-3012. They offer work services, help with jobs and

vocational rehabilitation. Those who qualify for vocational rehabilitation can also call the main office in Hays at 785-625-5678.

High Plains Medical Center in Colby offers mental health evaluations and counseling. It's at 750 S. Range Ave. Call 462-6774.

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