

# Hospital nurse goes above and beyond

By Sharon Corcoran

*The Goodland Star-News*  
If you have to go to the hospital, you'll want Amy Breininger on duty.

The night nurse at Goodland Regional Medical Center took a family under her wing following a fatal car accident this summer, has given special attention to families of sick children and reaches out to take care of everyone around her, including co-workers.

Breininger has been a registered nurse 24 years, but spent nine years away from the profession before going to work at the Goodland hospital two years ago.

"I don't think I realized how much I missed nursing until I got back into it," she said.

Breininger was named employee of the month at the hospital for July, the hospital's newsletter said, in recognition of her dedicated work as a member of the night nursing staff and for her efforts on behalf of a family in the aftermath of a fatality auto accident May 29.

One person in the accident died, the newsletter said, and the other occupants of the car were treated at the hospital. They had no way to get around town.

Breininger helped find them mo-

tel rooms, took them to the motel, picked up personal items they lost in the accident and even prepared a meal and brought it to the family.

"You do what it takes to make the best outcome that you can," Breininger said. "That means going the extra mile."

Most of the accidents that send people to the hospital, especially along I-70, Breininger said, involve people from out of the area. The nurses frequently make phone calls, she said, to arrange transportation and places to stay.

"I want to do the best I can do," she said. "If I had that happen, I would like there to be people who would go the extra mile to help us."

Breininger said always knew she wanted to be a nurse and that she wanted to help people.

"When I was young," she said, "I remember wanting to fix things and make them better."

As a child growing up in Texas, she got a nurse's kit for Christmas, and her pets were her patients. She had to give every one their shots, she recalled.

Her great uncle was a doctor in Oklahoma — she called him Uncle Doc — and Breininger said she told him she would become a nurse and work for him.



Breininger

## Nurse owns computer business, too

Amy and Rick Breininger own a pair of businesses in one location.

They opened Sunflower Computers at 210 E. 17th in September and then Cyberland in November. Sunflower Computers sells computers, printers and equipment and provides service, networking and training on such.

Cyberland is a gaming center with several computers and a large-screen television with X-boxes for the young and not-so-young to play and/or compete at various games.

They have computer-game leagues and have held

overnight game marathons, where they took responsibility for other people's kids for the night.

Amy said Cyberland provides a fun, enjoyable activity where parents know their kids are safe.

She said she likes seeing and listening to the children enjoying the games, and it has been fun watching the business grow and evolve.

She said the older of their two sons, Matt, 20, was managing the store before taking a job with Nor West Press.

His brother Zachary, 17, a junior this fall, has taken over much of that role.

Breininger said by the time she became a nurse, Uncle Doc was ready to retire, but he sent her one of his stethoscopes. It works, she said, but she keeps it in a box in her cedar chest.

Breininger said she had been thinking about teaching or nursing as a career and heard that she would be able to get a job as a nurse wherever she went.

She said she enjoyed science and math and enjoyed being around people, so she could see a natural progression into nursing.

She said she got a letter around her birthday of her senior year saying that she had been accepted to nursing school.

"It was the right choice," she said. "I do enjoy working with people,

helping them."

Breininger went to the Moline, Ill., Public Hospital School of Nursing then took her state boards and was licensed in Iowa, where she worked in two hospitals in Davenport. They were 200-bed hospitals, she said, with separate units for everything.

"Most of my time was spent in pediatrics," Breininger said, "my first love."

She said she moved to Florida, where she worked for a children's hospital in Jacksonville. She said she worked in hematology/oncology, the department for patients with cancer and diseases of the blood.

Breininger said it wasn't depressing; the children were full of hope

and had dreams for the future. But she didn't just work with the children. Pediatrics encompasses caring for the whole family, she said.

Breininger was away from nursing because her husband Rick, a career Navy man, was stationed in Guam, California and Germany, places where she didn't have the time or the opportunity to work. When Rick retired, the couple moved to Colorado Springs, but Breininger still didn't get to return to nursing. Believe it or not, she said, the hospitals there were not looking for nurses.

But then Rick, who was an electronics technician in the Navy, got a job teaching computer and electronics technology at the Northwest Kansas Technical College, where

he worked for a year and a half.

"He mentioned I was a nurse," Amy said. "Dale Schields (personnel director at the hospital) called me in Colorado and asked if I'd interview."

That was in spring of 2002, and Breininger doesn't regret accepting.

"I'm really enjoying it," she said. "We have a really good team of nurses at night."

Overall, she said, there is a wonderful staff at the hospital. The nurses are capable and talented, she said, and work together and support each other.

She said she enjoys the variety of patients at the Goodland hospital, contrasted with the division of departments at larger hospitals.

"I enjoy that challenge," she said. "You never know what's coming through that door."

She also enjoys her opportunities to teach the newbies. She said as a charge nurse (a supervisor), she works with the new graduates. They are full of questions, she said, and it's a neat thing to get to be a part of their beginning as a nurse.

And Breininger reaches out in other ways to those she works with. Amy had special shirts made for the night-shift nurses for the Fourth of July, Rick said, and another time, she took them out to breakfast at the end of the shift.

## Chamber still struggling to pay for fireworks

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

*The Goodland Star-News*  
The Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce is still struggling to pay for a rained-out fireworks display during Freedom Fest this year.

At a meeting Tuesday, the Chamber board learned they still owe \$3,500 to Joe Diaz, a native of Goodland who puts together the fireworks display every year.

The Chamber has not yet settled the bill because their fund-raising dinner at the Freedom Fest on the Fourth of July was rained out. Courtney Warden, executive director for the Chamber, said they raised some money in their first few hours, but the rain forced them to stop early.

She said they have already paid half of the fireworks bill, but they can't cover the balance.

Last month, the Chamber sent a letter to member businesses asking for contributions. Warden said they have received some response, but it hasn't been enough.

Although Diaz is not pressuring the Chamber to pay, she said, the bill needs to be settled soon.

"He's been very understanding," said Donna Swager, Chamber chairman.

Chamber members are asking for donations from several key business to raise money. The goal

is to raise \$100 each from 10 businesses.

"We should be able to raise that, I would think," said Kenneth Clouse, president of the Northwest Kansas Technical College.

As Chamber members visit each business, they will ask if they can set up a donation container to help pay for next year's display.

Warden said she also will talk to Diaz to request an extension until after the Chamber completes fund-raising through a planned night golf tournament and the Flatlanders Fall Festival.

If they can not round up enough donations, they will consider borrowing money from other Chamber accounts or a short-term bank loan.

Next year, Swager said, the Chamber might partner with others on the fireworks. Members agreed that it is not feasible or fair to expect the Chamber to cover the entire event. Swager suggested that members take an entire Freedom Fest expense breakdown to the city, county and other groups to ask for money.

"We all want to see the fireworks continue," she said. "We need a plan of action that will get (the fireworks) paid for ahead of time."

## Flatlanders Festival planners to offer visitors special souvenirs

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

*The Goodland Star-News*

The Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce plans to offer visitors to the annual Flatlander Fall Festival a good time, with refillable collectors' cups, commemorative pins, a clean environment with ample trash cans and toilets, lots of vendors and fun activities.

Members of the Chamber's business promotion committee agreed to purchase collectable cups that will be printed with a Flatlander logo. On the backside of the cups, Chamber manager Courtney Warden said, they will print the names of restaurants throughout town that will fill the cups at a discounted price. The cups will cost the Chamber roughly \$1 each and they will be sold at the festival for \$4. Refill prices will be determined later.

"They're really kind of cool," said Donna Swager, chairman of the Chamber board.

Warden said the cups should help to bring people into restaurants they otherwise might not have found.

"People will go into these businesses," she said.

The committee also looked into purchasing commemorative pins to

sell at the festival. Although it has received a request for spoons, the committee wants to make sure they offer a souvenir that appeals to a wide base of visitors. The committee was unsure about a design for the pins for this year, but they want to set up a contest to design next year's pins.

Offering a clean environment is a key aspect of the festival for the Chamber, Warden said. They plan to step up the number of toilets this year.

"Last year we had four," she said, "and that really wasn't enough."

The Chamber is looking to add food vendors because in the past providing enough food for festival visitors has been difficult. Swager said that many of the vendors run out of food shortly after noon. The Girl Scouts have offered to buy chicken wings left over from Freedom Fest from the Chamber to sell at Flatlanders, but organizers are still hoping to add more vendors.

The committee members discussed the Chamber information booths. They agreed to set up two again this year, one on the south end of Main and one on the north. They plan to make the booths more vis-

ible and easily accessible.

Keeping the festival clean of litter is a priority. Swager said in the Can, the county's trash contractor, will pick up from dumpsters. In response to overflowing trash cans last year, the committee agreed to add more receptacles in high-traffic areas around the food vendors. Committee members also decided to look for nonprofit organizations that might want to help pick up trash.

For new activities and events, the committee has looked into a minnow race, carnival rides and a give away.

Carolyn Applegate, Sherman County Economic Development director, said a minnow race would have participants using straws to spur minnows to race down a stretch of a half pipe filled with water. Chamber members will run the booth.

The group is looking into using a ticket system instead of cash for games and food vendors. Profit from selling the tickets would ensure that the Chamber will meet its costs or even profit during the festival. Although an all-ticket method would be best for the Chamber,

members decided to start with tickets just for the minnow races.

The Chamber attempted to get carnival rides open at the fairgrounds on Friday night during the festival, but they have met with some opposition because Goodland High School Homecoming is that night. Organizers told Chamber representatives they would have trouble getting people to work the rides. Members of the board were disappointed because they wanted to offer entertainment for out-of-towners.

"That's been one of the complaints from the car and motorcycle people," she said. "There's nothing to do Friday night."

### corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that 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.

## Thomas County approves 911 contract

By Tisha Cox

*Colby Free Press*

The Thomas County commissioners Monday renewed the county's contract with 911 Inc. of Denver for annual technical support at \$1,975, despite some reservations by the sheriff's department.

The one-year contract takes effect Sept. 1, and commissioners plan to look into dealing with a local firm.

The commissioners had a memo from Undersheriff Mike Baughn about renewing the contract. Commissioner Ron Evans said Baughn had reservations about continuing with the Denver company.

The commissioners called dispatcher Marlene Pfeifer, who said they need a 911 provider or the county won't have 911 services. She said if the county switched, new equipment would have to be purchased and put in.

She also said they need a new

computer for the system because one they have is old and parts aren't available anymore.

Commissioner Glen Kersensbrock said he wanted to talk with S&T Communications to see if they would be able to provide 911 service. Someone from the company will be at the Aug. 31 commissioners meeting to discuss the matter.

The commissioners also discussed a new phone system for the courthouse. Judge Glen Schiffner has been working to get new phones because the court phones were damaged by lightning.

Evans wanted to know if new phones were going in for just the courts or the entire courthouse and wondered if they would be compatible with the old ones.

Commissioner Duane Dawes said the whole building will be getting new phones at some point.

"They're doing the whole courthouse for \$32,000," he said.

## Man faces charges after car hits pole

A Goodland man faces a drunk-driving charge after running his car into a light pole Tuesday night.

Erick D. Knight, 22, was taken by ambulance to Goodland Regional Medical Center after the wreck.

Police said he is expected to be charged with driving under the influence in municipal court.

Officers reported that Knight was heading south on Main Ave. at 8:22 p.m. in a white 1987 Ford four-door.

He apparently lost control and the Ford hit a pole on the west side of Main at the intersection with Third Street.

Knight, the only occupant in the vehicle, was not wearing a seat belt.

Alex West, owner of Alex's Radiator and Repair, went out to remove the car.

He said the pole was cracked, but the light was still working. Al-

though part of the car's bumper was wrapped around the pole, West said the removal didn't require special equipment.



**90th Birthday**  
Open House  
for Troy T. Dillinger  
August 21  
2-4 p.m. CDT  
Brewster  
Community Church  
No gifts, please.  
Cards may be sent to  
P.O. Box 146, Brewster,

## Edward's Annual Truckload Fruit & Veggie Sale

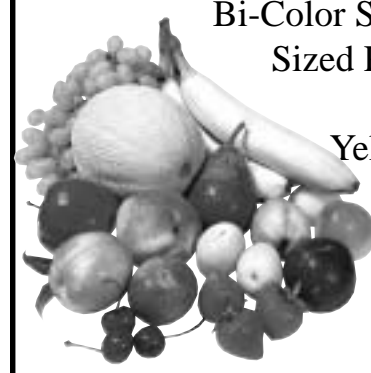
\*\*\*ONE DAY ONLY!\*\*\*

Friday, August 20

"Starting at 7 a.m. sharp till Mid-Afternoon!"

### Sharon Springs

- Colorado Tree ripe Peaches
- Colorado Bartlett Pears
- Vine - Ripe Tomatoes
- Fresh Yellow & White Onions
- Super Sweet Onions
- Green Beans
- Italian Prune Plums
- Bi-Color Sweet Corn
- Sized Pickles



- Slicing Cucumbers
- Yellow & Zucchini Squash
- Green Cabbage
- Boiling, small Potatoes
- Chilies
- Cantaloupe/Watermelon

One Day Only - Friday August 20

Location: Junction of Hwy. 40 and Hwy. 27,  
**Sharon Springs, Kan.**

## Thank You

Thank you for all your support in the primary election and all the support you have shown to our family.

Thank You  
Kevin Rasure

Paid for by Kevin Rasure