

Board discusses improvement plan

By Karen Krien
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The facility improvement plan, which had been changed slightly, was discussed when the Cheyenne County Hospital Board met on April 22.

Kent Carmichael, architect, had made some changes which would help the hospital be more private as well as give the nurses' station more functionality.

Les Lacy, administrator, asked the board how they felt about the plans? Jerry Toler, board president, said he felt the plan would serve the community well in the future. He liked the plan.

Traci Neitzel, board member, also said she liked the plan.

Mr. Lacy said he had talked with J.R. Landenberger, city superintendent, about making the street in front of the hospital a little narrower. Mr. Lacy and Mr. Landenberger had discussed a variety of options, but the city council would ultimately need to make a final decision. Mr. Lacy was directed to approach the city council for a decision.

Scott Houtman, who owns the house across the street from the hospital, said he was not interested having parking on the north side of his house.

Scholarships

Scholarships and how they are paid back was discussed. Heather Kane, St. Francis, applied for a nursing scholarship. The board would pay a portion and the rest is

paid through the Kansas Nursing Scholarship program if approved.

They then turned to discussing scholarships for those wanting to go into medical coding. At the present time, the hospital sends the medical coding work to three different coders.

Kari Gilliland, board member, felt like a contract could be set up for non employed community members interesting in coding that would provide some support for local people seeking training while protecting the hospital. However, it was also pointed out that there is not currently enough medical coding work at the hospital to employ a coder full time.

Mr. Lacy said he would work on the matter and come back with more information at a later board meeting.

Administrator's report

In the administrator's report, Mr. Lacy said the inpatient volume had been better recently and those seeing visiting doctors had been strong.

He said that the hospital had not used any hospital board funds since March 12 and the hospital still owed money to the funded depreciation account. He hoped to be able to repay a portion of this with the cost report settlement from Medicare.

The hospital, he said, won a Community Connection Award from the Kansas Hospital Association in Northwest Kansas for its' Primary Care Clinic. The award was based on leadership, meeting community need, community benefit, creativity, and impact. Twelve other hospitals had applied for the award, he said.

Mr. Lacy reported that Steve Six, attorney general, had appointed him to the board of the Sunflower

Foundation. The Sunflower Foundation was created in August 2000 as part of a \$75 million settlement between Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas, the state attorney general and state insurance commissioner. The Foundation's mission is to serve as a catalyst for improving the health of Kansas.

There are four new employees at the hospital. They include: Brenda Weverka who works at the front desk; Katora Sherlock and Jennifer Austin, certified nurse's aides, and Ray Martinez, housekeeping.

Great Plains Health Alliance report

Jackie John, area director for Great Plains Health Alliance, reported on the Alliance and how health reform will affect the Cheyenne County Hospital and other hospitals ran or leased by the Alliance. She said initiative being considered included recoupment of payments if patients are readmitted to the hospital within 30 days for the same diagnosis, hospital acquired infections, medical errors described as "never events" and other quality issues that will be identified through an estimated 26 to 30 required quality indicators that have been included in the "Meaningful Use Standards." During the years to come, she said, there will be an increase in the focus on accountability as measured through quality of care and business practices.

There will be increasing attention paid to hospitals not only identifying quality and other risk factors but to proactively examine how their work processes can be altered to improve outcomes.

Hospitals, she said, have

April Statistics

Total Patient days: 118 – This would be an average of 3.8 patients in bed each day.
Lab tests: 2,109
Outpatient specialty clinic visits: 108
Emergency room visits: 35
Outpatient services: 1,790

historically had those practices in place but now will be evaluated to determine if they are using "best practices" that have been proven to reduce error rates. The Great Plains Health Alliance staff, she said, is working to identify best practices for our hospitals to use as resources in their quality improvement practices.

In other business

Heidi Tice, chief financial officer, reported on her department. It was noted that she and Shawna Blanka, administrative secretary, had moved to a room in the basement. She said they liked it because it was so much bigger.

Executive session

The board went into executive session to discuss personnel. No decision was made during the executive session.

The board approved Ms. Kane for support in the Nursing Scholarship Loan Program.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the board has been set for 3 p.m. on Thursday, May 27, in the board meeting room in the clinic basement, St. Francis.



Mr. and Mrs. Norman Dorsch

Couple to celebrate 60th anniversary

Sixty years of marriage will be celebrated by Norman and Mary Dorsch on May 14. A reception will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. on May

16 at the United Methodist Church in Bird City. A smile and greetings are their gift. Join them to celebrate this milestone in their lives.

Candidate for congress visits

By Karen Krien
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Tracey Mann and his wife, Audrey, were in St. Francis early Wednesday morning, April 28, visiting with business owners, workers and people on the streets and telling them about the "Mann Plan." Mr. Mann, a Republican, is running for Congress.

He is a fifth generation Kansas, raised on the family farm in Quinter where his parents still live. He knows about small Kansas towns and rural areas, and the problems they are facing. He was an intern for Congressman Jerry Moran while attending Kansas State and he served as student body president. He assisted members of Congress in establishing

faith-based leadership programs. Today, he a small businessman and commercial real estate agent in Salina.

The Mann Plan, he said, is what we need to get our country and Congress back on track.

He said he wants to stop runaway spending in Washington and pay down the national debt. He noted that the founding fathers did not intend for people to become career politicians but, to serve by representing their constituency, then return to their farms or businesses.

"Many members of Congress have lost touch with the rest of the country," he said. "They are more concerned with winning the next election than doing what is right

for America."

He suggests the voters elect people with experience in business and agriculture; make sure that legislators abide by the same rules as other government employees in regards to benefits and that includes the healthcare plan they passed; pass term limits and no longer allow projects paid for with federal funds named after elected officials.

As far as the health care, he feels that the present system needs to be reformed but said the healthcare reform legislation passed by Congress (Obamacare) is a disaster.

Cost and coverage, he said, are the two main problems in healthcare. The largest issue, he said, is increasing costs which hurt businesses and make it difficult for people to afford coverage but the president does not address this.

He is opposed to tax increases, wants to abolish the death tax and cut tax rates to create jobs.

If elected, he said he has been told he will be on the Agriculture Committee. "I want to defend Kansas agriculture, be an advocate to the livestock industry and promote family farms.

He said he is also concerned and wants to protect Medicare and Social Security.

"I want to keep America strong, safe and secure," he said.

McDonald News

By Vera Kacirek

On Tuesday evening Jerry and Betty Knapp, Eleanor Swihart, Betty Lewis and Joan Tongish entertained with a supper and an evening of fellowship at the home of Joan. Guests were Rita and Lynn Officer, Diane Montgomery and the hosts.

Phyllis and Kenny Wilkinson

were Friday visitors of Agnes Reeh.

On Sunday, Phyllis and Kenny Wilkinson and Lisa Johnson were dinner guests of Ruby Tracy at the Goodland Good Samaritan. They were celebrating her 79th birthday. They spent the afternoon visiting and playing dominoes.

South of McDonald

By Sandy Binning

Tom and Kelly Dewey and children visited grandma, Pat Polock in Hope, Saturday.

Sunday afternoon, Tom, Kelly, Tayten, and Tru Dewey attended the Creative Movements Recital in Atwood where Tayten performed and received her first year medal. Dan and Margie Hubbard spent

the weekend in Topeka visiting Margie's mother, Lola Rogers, and their daughter, Rachelle Williams and family.

Tuesday evening Katia Kramer's first birthday was observed at the Joe and Charlene Kramer home with a Mexican dinner prepared with Katia's parents, Dennis and Eida Kramer.

The new Fifth Street Apartments in Bird City, Kansas, will have four 2-bedroom duplex apartments for rent and two single family 3-bedroom homes for rent to own. Applicants must income qualify for this property. Please contact N.W. Kansas Housing, Inc. at 785-421-2151 for more information and application, or see Century II in Bird City for applications.



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The Saint Francis Herald

To apply or for more information, contact Karen Krien at the Saint Francis Herald, 785-332-3162 or stop by the office at 310 W. Washington, St. Francis.

Part-Time Summer Help Needed

The City of Bird City has an immediate opening for a temporary, part-time Maintenance worker. Employment applications are available at City Hall 111 E. 4th, Bird City, KS. 67731 and must be submitted no later than May 14, 2010. For more information call 785-734-2616.

*** May 23 ***

Mark your calendars.

Trap shoot - Rifle shoot - Horse Shoes - Bocca Ball - family fun afternoon for all ages. Look for more details in upcoming papers. The Bird City Quasiquicentennial

Happy Mother's Day

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