

# Emergency services changes discussed

By Karen Krien  
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The new emergency medical service director, while still only working part time, was present at the April 15 Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting to discuss plans for the department.

Reid Raile, director, reported that he had only been on the job for nine days, but it was a joy to be working there. However, the job came with a whole set of new challenges, including priorities, billing, scheduling, and transfers.

In May, Mr. Raile will become full time in the department, and he will focus on billing and accounting. He talked briefly about billing collections and going through a specific company which is also connected with the clinic and hospital. The county already uses the Kansas Setoff program for collections, and some bills are taken care of with write-offs. Ernie Ketzner, commissioner, said the word about "write-offs" has gotten around. Business is business, said Brett Poling, commissioner.

Mr. Raile wanted to talk to the commissioners when the county attorney was present so the matter was tabled.

The next item of business was transfers. Wendy White, emergency medical technician, will carry the transfer phone, and has taken over making arrangements for transfers.

There was only one transfer that the county was not able to take, and that was due to staffing, Mr. Raile said. There

are approximately four nurses who are interested in taking transfers when not working. They will start training in May, he said.

He said they will discontinue county cell phones in the ambulances. Everyone has their own cell phone. He will also purchase a rollover 800 number to make sure every transfer call is answered.

The commissioners agreed to purchase emsCharts, a software program, which provides electronic data collection and management. The subscription for a year is \$2,000.

They agreed to purchase the Certified Ambulance Coder online program, with the cost not to exceed \$1,200. They also agreed for Mr. Raile to take 25

hours of training in billing.

There are several pieces of equipment that need repair. Mr. Raile had taken the Bird City backup ambulance to Yost Ford to have a diesel leak fixed.

The Zoll Defibrillator has failed, and it is not covered by the annual maintenance. The estimate to fix the equipment is \$2,000. The commissioners agreed to have it fixed, with the cost to not go over \$2,500.

Mr. Raile talked about raising mileage fees on ambulance runs. Mr. Ketzner questioned that the ambulance was a service, and not to earn money. The matter was tabled until the next meeting.

Other items addressed:  
• Mr. Raile was appointed to the Emergency Medical Service

Region 1 Council with Ryan Murray, emergency director, as the alternate.

• The commissioners agreed to change the ambulance expense purchases limit to \$1,500, instead of \$500, and have a debit card with a limit of \$500 in the office to use for purchases.

• The emergency medical technicians will be visiting the grade schools during Emergency Medical Service Week.

• The commissioners agreed to the purchase of a Emergency Medical Service Redline contract for \$500. The service provides items and equipment at a much reduced price. Mr. Raile felt like the contract would pay for its self several times and would benefit the county.



KAYTEN FLANAGAN is in deep concentration balancing the jelly bean egg in the spoon.  
Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

## The Gardener By Kay Melia

Lightly salted and lavishly buttered, just snapped off in the garden, briefly steamed asparagus is such a delight! It must be sinful! Every spring, I wolf down tender spears with shameless gluttony... at least until my wife reminds me that she's hooked on the stuff, too! There never seems to be enough.

I think back about 30 years ago when I planted that "much too small" patch of the old Mary Washington variety of asparagus. It certainly wasn't easy. My instructions were to dig a foot-wide trench, at least a foot deep, add 3 or 4 inches of horse

manure, plus a little old straw or rotten hay. Then carefully lay out the spider-like roots and crowns of a dozen plants. Cover deeply with good soil, and then wait.

I waited most of the summer because that's what the book said to do. A few skinny spears emerged. The next spring more skinny spears showed up that grew into frilly fern-like plants, but still nothing to eat.

But the second year! Along came scattered half inch diameter spears that were crammed into the steamer and enjoyed for dinner. It has been much the same procedure for the last 23 years; light pickings of absolutely delicious steamed, or occasionally creamed goodness, the true gustatory pleasure of the spring garden!

And that's the true story of my "much too small" asparagus patch. I'm writing about asparagus today to encourage you not to make the same mistakes I did.

For one thing, don't be so chintzy! Plant TWO dozen crowns, and you just might harvest enough for TWO hungry adults. For another thing, don't plant Mary (or Martha) Washington crowns, which were actually the only varieties available when I started my patch. Plant the highly productive all-male crowns called Jersey Supreme, or Jersey Giant, or any other variety that has carries the Jersey name.

Here's another thing. You do

not have to spend so much time preparing the bed when you plant asparagus. Not anymore. The book has changed! A six inch deep trench is plenty deep enough. Scatter a little chicken or horse manure in the trench, or even a sprinkling of commercial fertilizer with a label of 0-20-0. Avoid adding nitrogen. And another thing. You do not have to carefully spread out the spider-like roots in the trench. Most folks just toss the whole crown in the trench and get perfect results. You no longer have to coddle those things! You can if you want to but you don't have to!

And wait 2 years for the first harvest? You just don't need to. Snap off a few tender spears that very next spring, and then in two years, you too can aspire to a severe case of asparagus gluttony.

Here's the main thing. If you dislike the taste of asparagus, then don't dig trenches in your garden and don't worry about spider-like roots and stay away from the chicken and horse manure.

The best and final thing about establishing an asparagus bed is the almost certain result. We used to make hard work out of planting asparagus, but with improved varieties and planting methods, the heavy work has been eliminated.

So, go ahead and plant THREE dozen crowns this spring. You'll make new friends and happier neighbors!

## Obituaries

### Lola Ellen Marrs

July 1, 1926 - April 17, 2014

Lola Ellen Marrs, 87, of Brewster, died Thursday, April 17, 2014. She was born July 1, 1926, to John and Faye (Everett) Oard on a farm near Longford, Kan. She married Eugene H. Marrs on July 11, 1944 in Colby.

Lola was a member of the Brewster United Methodist Church. She enjoyed gardening, bowling, sewing, board games and puzzles, and especially loved her grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents; infant brother Duane Oard and grandson Aaron Hudson.

She is survived by her husband, children Dwight (Mona) Marrs, Goodland, Sonia (Tim) Dahl, Algonia, Iowa, Linda Hudson White, Brewster and Marvin Marrs, Winslow, AZ; grandchildren Justin (Genevieve) Marrs, Megan (Russ Mikessell) Marrs, Jacob (Cheryl) Dahl, Jasmine Marrs, Billy Joe (Sonia) Hudson, Caleb (Amy) Hudson; great grandchildren, Sidney Marrs, Sarah and Kaylee Marrs, Peyton and Kolt Hudson, Piper, Paige and Talyn Dahl, Luke, Eli and Noah Lohrmeyer, Rhianna and Patience Mikessell.

The funeral service was held Saturday, April 19, at Baalmann Mortuary, Colby with a burial following in the Brewster Cemetery. Memorials are suggested to the Brewster United Method-

ist Church or the Wounded Warrior Project in care of Baalmann Mortuary, PO Box 391, Colby, KS 67701. Online condolences: www.baalmannmortuary.com

### Steven Charles Merklin

Nov. 27, 1972 - April 12, 2014

Steven Charles Merklin was born in St. Francis, Kan., on Nov. 27, 1972, to Charles and Barbara Merklin. He died at the Dundey County Hospital in Benkelman,

Neb., on April 12, 2014.

Steven attended Cheylin schools in Bird City and obtained his General Education Development degree (GED) in 1992.

He enjoyed working cattle and being a ranch hand. He worked as a driller and moved up to a rig manager for many years with JW Oil. He was also a self-employed truck driver for a brief period of time.

Steven's real passion was his family. He was a wonderful son, brother, uncle and father.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, and his father, Charles Merklin.

He is survived by his beloved Genie Cole and children Kimberlee, Austin and unborn child of Haigler, Neb; daughter Bailey Merklin of St. Francis; daughter Lacey Merklin of Moriarty, N.M.; mother Barbara Merklin of Bird City; sisters Belinda Serrano and husband Frank of Bird City; Sonya Turner and husband Jody of Douglass; Stacey Hazuka and husband Dale of McDonald; and five nephews and two nieces.

Memorial service was held on Saturday April 19, at the Immanuel United Methodist Church in Bird City. A private burial to follow at a later date.

Memorials can be given to Barbara Merklin for expenses.

### Dianna Joy (Neitzel) Carpenter

Dec. 7 1957 - Feb. 13, 2014

Dianna Joy (Neitzel) Carpenter was born on Dec. 7, 1957, in St. Francis. She died on Feb. 13, 2014, in Hays, at the age of 56.



Carpenter

Dianna was born to Melvin and Margola Neitzel. She married Edgar Carpenter on July 3, 1987, in Colby. They had one son, Eddie Lee.

She graduated from Cheylin High School in 1976. She attended Colby Community College and received her degree in Early Childhood Development.

Dianna worked for many years in daycare, and then became a stay-at-home mom. When her family moved back to Bird City in 1996, she then worked with her nephew, Weston, with respite care and as his personal care assistant until 2008, when her health started failing.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Margola, and father Melvin Neitzel; her father-in-law, Ed Carpenter; step-mother-in-law, Gail Holbrook; and brother-in-law, Richard Carpenter.

Dianna is survived by her husband, Edgar, and son Eddie Carpenter; sisters Gerri Comstock and Jack, Brenda Hunt and Ray Lumpkin, Betty Williams and Ron; sisters-in-law, Kathy David, Veronica Dominguez and James, Emiliana Carpenter; brothers-in-law Roy Carpenter, Lewis Carpenter and Bonnie; and mother-in-law, Eileen Carpenter.

She was known as Aunt "Niner" by her nieces and nephews; Jessica, Trevor, April, Kody, Jason, Cole, Weston, Christopher, Dani, Larry, Ray, Rose, Steven, Candace, Helen, Cammie, Abbie, Destiny, and Cheyenne Gail, and many great nieces and nephews, aunts, uncles, and friends.

Services were held at the St. John Lutheran Church on Feb. 22.

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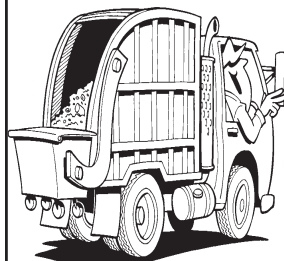
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for

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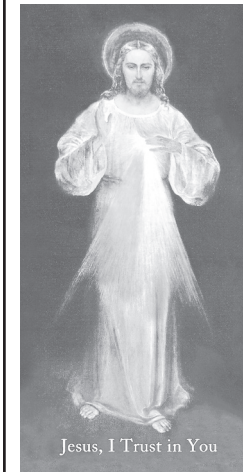
- We call it ETERNITY

Saturday, April 26

9 a.m. - Noon

(A light lunch will be served)

St. Joseph Catholic  
Church Hall  
Bird City



Jesus, I Trust in You

\*Confession will be available for anyone who requires this sacrament or has not been able to attend the Reconciliation Service offered during Lent.

Presented by: Roberta Lambert, a lay contemplative from Abilene, Texas. She is certified by the John Paul II Institute of Divine Mercy for completing the theology and spirituality course in DIVINE MERCY ESSENTIALS and has been dedicated to promoting this spectacular Feat of Mercy since her miraculous conversion 29 years ago.

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