



COLBY FREE PRESS

New owners for old business

Voss brothers sell hardware store to Beringers

By **PATTY DECKER**

Free Press Editor

One of Colby's oldest businesses changed hands last week after being owned and operated by the same family for more than 60 years.

Dave and Todd Voss sold Voss Western Auto and Ace Hardware, 165 W. 4th, to Mark and Ardath Beringer, who also own Colby Photo at 420 N. Franklin.

For three generations, the hardware store, established in 1939, was part of the Voss family, but according to Dave, the time was right to sell.

"My brother and I had mixed emotions about leaving the business," Dave said Thursday. "It was simply the right deal coming along and a good opportunity for everyone concerned."

Both Dave, and his brother, Todd, said they were grateful for all the support Colby has given them and their family through the years and are confident the Beringers will also do a fine job.

Dave and Todd said they are both undecided on their plans now that the business has been sold.

"Colby is just too good a place to leave," Dave said. "It's a place to live and raise a family and we'll both be around."

Ending an era that spanned so many years, both Dave and Todd reflected on the beginning of Voss Hardware. Their grandparents, Keith and Opal

Voss, originally from Norton County, moved to Colby in 1937 and opened Voss Hardware in 1939 in what was formerly the Commercial Federal Bank building.

"At that time, our grandparents rented half of the building and the other half was occupied by Farmers and Merchants Bank," Dave said.

In the fall of 1954, Keith and Opal moved the store to its present location. In the early 1970s, Bill, who is Dave and Todd's father and one of Keith and Opal's five children, took over the store.

Keith and Opal's other four children, Dave said, included, Roger, who worked with Bill for many years at the store; Dick of Norton; Janet of Lancaster, Tex.; and Joann Moss of Westminster, Colo.

Following the death of their father in 1984, Dave said, he returned to Colby after living in Hays to take over the business, and along with his brother, the two have owned and operated the



Dave Voss



Todd Voss



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Dave and Todd Voss' family owned Voss Hardware since 1939, but now another local family, Mark and Ardath Beringer, who recently purchased the store, said they plan to build and expand on the tradition of service and products. Above: David Lovelady (right), the Beringer's son-in-law and assistant manager of the store, looked on as Mark, co-owner went over some numbers. Along with the ownership change, the store's new name will be Beringer Hardware Priced Right Everyday, Mark said.

store for the past 17 years.

"Something noteworthy," Todd said, "is that Voss Hardware's Western

Auto affiliation is one of the oldest stores in the country."

The new owners said they are

equally optimistic about acquiring the business and plan to give their customers services that will be "second to

none."

Mark Beringer said under the new ownership they have dropped their affiliation with Ace and gone with the affiliate, "Priced Right Everyday."

"We are very excited about this new affiliation because of its marketing concept," he said.

"The concept being that we have done the shopping for our customers in that the price is competitively marked."

The new owners are also planning to expand the home entertainment section by adding big screen televisions, DVD players, more stereos, and looking at adding a video rental department.

"We will expand the whole power equipment line, add the Honda lawnmower line and continue carrying a wide variety of Benjamin Moore Paints," Mark said.

Both Mark and his wife, Ardath, said they want to continue in the tradition of the Voss family by building on the already good customer service and expanding.

Also in the family tradition of Voss, Mark said his son-in-law, David Lovelady, will serve as assistant manager with Loren Schmidtberger, J.R. Boehme, Reed Hartford and Curt Beringer assisting in the store.

"We have a lot of good things coming," Mark said, "and encourage people to stop by and see the changes occurring."

Alley work halted

By **JAY KELLEY**

Colby Free Press

Colby Street Department workers have been delayed in replacing the alley between Fourth and Fifth/Franklin and Lake streets after they found what they believe is oil contamination in the soil last week.

"We think it's just oil," said Gerry Bieker, public works director. "The (Kansas Department of Health and Environment) is still testing the samples."

Bieker added he had hoped to get an answer from the state by Thursday, but hadn't heard anything.

If the contamination is oil, the state health department has already told Bieker they would be able to pour concrete over it and replace the alley.

"If it's more, we'll have to decide then," said Bieker.

As for the source, officials may never know. The contamination was found in the south end of the alley, near the building that currently houses Hot Topics, a novelty store.

"We checked some history," Bieker said, "and that building used to house Lewis Motors, a tire store and some other things."

State lab under attack

TOPEKA (AP) — An explosion of methamphetamine cases and a lack of chemists has caused such lengthy delays in processing evidence at the Kansas Bureau of Investigation laboratories that prosecutors are forced to dismiss charges against some drug manufacturers, according to a state audit.

A state audit released Thursday quoted an unidentified law enforcement officer as saying, "KBI lab results

take so long that suspects remain at large and keep manufacturing meth and teaching others before they are finally incarcerated."

Evidence in 227 methamphetamine cases is awaiting tests at the laboratories. It takes at least 4 1/2 months to complete the detailed analysis of evidence required to prosecute a case. Some of the cases have been in the KBI labs for more than two years.

An artist at work



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Corbin Stephens signed his name to a door that was his part of the mural to be located in the Bedker Memorial Complex at Colby Community College on Sunday, Aug. 5. Stephens, the son of Curt and Jackie

Stephens, Colby, worked for "about three hours" on the doorway he is signing, said artist Ken Mitchell. Mitchell, Stephens and college president Dr. Mikel Ary will be on hand for the unveiling from 2-4 p.m.

Entries sought for Thomas County fair parade

By **MAXINE NELSON**

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Fair Board encourages all who want to take part in this year's big parade, scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tuesday in downtown Colby. The theme is *Generations — Leading into the new Millennium*. Prizes will be offered and a category will be found for almost any entry.

Before the parade, participants must stop at the registration table at Colby Glass to get an entry number and be told where to line up.

The parade will proceed south on Franklin to Cedar Street, then west to the fairgrounds. At this time, some of the activities being offered at the fair include a bungee runner and moon walk, an inflatable air castle, an inflat-

able clown head for jumping, soccer kick, duck pond, snow cone machine, cotton candy, pop corn, dart throw, ring toss, baseball through basketball toss, and the 4-H are doing a sucker game. Some other organizations are also bringing games.

"The Colby Lions Club has been very helpful," said Vera Sloan, fair board member. "They are even going

to drive to Junction City to pick up some things."

The fair board is still accepting games and booths for the fair. While there is normally a charge for booth space, inside and out, there will be no charge for the outside gaming area. Those interested should contact Laura Cook, board secretary, at 462-6961 to reserve space.

Briefly

Weather: Add 0.30 inches

Another shower, leaving 0.30 inches in Colby Thursday night, moves the rainfall total for the month to 3.08 inches. There is another chance for thunderstorms tonight, the National Weather Service forecast center advises, but then dry weather is expected through at least Tuesday of next week. Low temperatures during the period will be in the 60s and highs in the 90s, with partly cloudy conditions and winds generally out of the south 10-20 mph. Colby's high Thursday was 87 and the overnight low this morning was 63. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 83 degrees. The records for July 27: 108 in 1931 and 51 in 1950. (*The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.*)

McDermott recovering

John McDermott, injured in a car accident on Tuesday at Fourth and Franklin in Colby, is recovering at Hays Medical Center.

According to his wife, Carlotta, he suffered a broken knee and pelvis when his scooter struck a pickup driven by Sherry Edmundson, Colby. "It's going to be slow," she said, "but he will be all right." According to Colby Police Chief Randy Jones, Edmundson was westbound on Fourth and made a left turn in front of McDermott, who was riding a Cushman scooter. He didn't know what citations had been issued since the accident was still under investigation.

McDermott was taken by ambulance to Citizens Medical Center, stabilized and transferred by ambulance to the Hays hospital.



Drivers taken to hospital

Two people were taken to Citizens Medical Center in Colby on Wednesday after their cars collided at College and Country Club Drive in Colby. According to Colby Police Chief Randy Jones, Kala Mengel, 17, Colby, was southbound on Country Club and Elsie Wolters, 70, Oberlin, was eastbound on College. Wolters stopped for the stop sign, then pulled out into the intersection. Mengel was unable to stop her 1996 Dodge Neon and struck Wolters 1992 full-size Chevy van. Mengel and Wolters were both transported to the hospital by a Thomas County ambulance.

The Colby Fire Department Rescue Squad was also called to help get Wolters out of her van. Hospital spokesman Michael Boyles had no word on either Wolters or Mengel's condition.

Thomas County Fair 2001 Schedule of Events

Saturday — 9 a.m. Open Class Horse Show
Sunday — 1 to 5 p.m. Booth Construction
Monday — 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Booth Construction
9 a.m. 4-H Horse Show; 8 p.m. PRCA Rodeo
Tuesday — 7:30-11 a.m. 4-H Livestock Weigh-In; 11 a.m. Deadline for entry of all 4-H Exhibits; 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Open Class Entries Taken; 11:30 a.m. Judging of all 4-H & Open Class Exhibits (2:00 p.m.); 2 p.m. Cat, Rabbit, Hand Pet, Poultry show; 5:30 p.m. **Fair Parade** - Downtown *Generations — Leading into the new Millennium*; 8 p.m. PRCA Rodeo



Thumbs up!

- ✓ Bob Barton — the honors were truly deserved
- ✓ Pam Geihlsler — newest employee at the Colby Community College Endowment Association.
- ✓ Blood Drive Organizers — volunteer helpers, and most importantly all donors, for giving the gift of life.
- ✓ Josh Buffington — good luck in your quest to become a paramedic.
- ✓ (Retired) Judge Keith Willoughby — on the honor bestowed.
- ✓ Karen Higerd and Theo Kleinsorge — members of the Kansas Masonic All-State Marching Band.
- ✓ Response Drill Participants — for your continuing efforts to keep on top of any potential problems.
- ✓ Fair Board — your hard work and efforts are appreciated.

(Please call the Free Press at 462-3963 if you know of any individual or group that should be considered for this weekly salute.)

