

COLBY
FREE PRESS

Deep Rock Cafe returns to Colby business scene

By **PATTY DECKER**

Free Press Editor

There was disappointment when the cafe closed. Today, however, there are cheers — as it reopened.

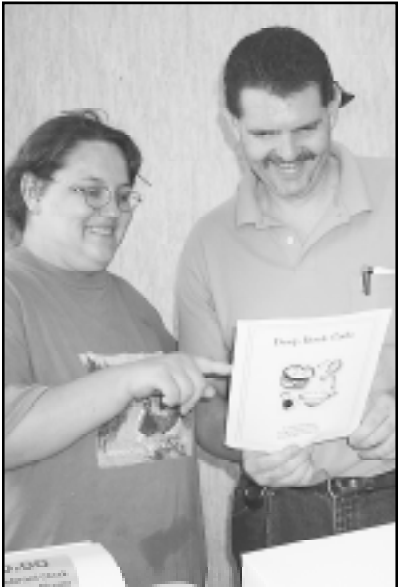
One of Colby's most popular family restaurants and hang outs for many a coffee klatch for more than 35 years — the Deep Rock Cafe — reopened its doors today under new ownership. The former owners hung up their aprons, turned out the lights and locked the doors in late July.

Wes and Rhoda Sherman, who moved to Colby in May, bought the restaurant 10 days ago and on Wednesday were busy getting ready for today's reopening.

"I grew up in St. Francis and graduated from high school in 1984," Wes said. "I have been in the restaurant management business since 1986 and we are so glad this opportunity came along."

The Sherman's said they have no intention of changing the name of the restaurant and plan to keep up the long-standing tradition that Deep Rock Cafe has held for so many years.

"This will truly be a family-run business," Wes said. "My mother, who moved here a year ago, will be the breakfast cook, my brother-in-law, Nic Foster, will cook too, and my wife and I will also share the cooking responsi-



Wes and Rhoda Sherman, new owners of the Deep Rock Cafe, looked over the new menu on Wednesday. The restaurant reopened today.

bilities during breakfast, lunch and dinner."

Many people might be familiar with Wes' mother, Sharon Sherman, who owned and operated "Sainty's Cafe" in St. Francis during the late 1970s.

Rhoda said they plan to offer breakfast from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. daily and lunch and dinner from 11 a.m. until

close.

"We have a homestyle menu and it's geared toward the family," she said. "There will be a buffet daily from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and we've changed as little as possible regarding the restaurant."

The couple will still have homemade pies, like the old Deep Rock, a take-out menu, and the buffet.

"We will serve great food, good service and a lot of the old familiar faces before the restaurant closed will be back," Wes said.

One way the couple hopes to draw families is with their "early bird dinner special" from 4 to 6 p.m., that will offer a selection of five items, beverage and dessert for one set price.

During the week, the restaurant will be open from 6 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. On Friday and Saturday from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and on Sundays, 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Prior to the Shermans buying the restaurant, there were six previous owners during its 35-plus years in Colby.

Rhoda is originally from Minnesota and together the couple have three children: Chance, 5; Brooklyn, 4; and Kaleb, 2.

"We were tired of the big city life and wanted to move to a small town," said Rhoda. "I am so glad to be here and we look forward to meeting people here."



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Thomas County Sheriff's deputy Jim Engel quickly dropped a fake knife during training on the department's latest non-lethal technology — pepper ball launchers.

A new weapon in arsenal

Law enforcement gets pepper ball launcher

By **PATTY DECKER**

Free Press Editor

Law enforcement officers in Colby and Thomas County recently purchased the latest in non-lethal weapons that will incapacitate a person without causing permanent injury.

Known as a pepper ball launcher, the weapon inflicts a kinetic energy force when the small ball (the size of a marble) comes out at 350 feet per second striking the individual, said Colby Police Chief Randy Jones. The ball, he said, is filled with dye, water or pepper and affects the sinuses and breathing.

Officers from the county and city were trained on the use of the launcher earlier this week and many of them experienced firsthand what it would feel like to be shot with the pepper ball — but that wasn't mandated in the training.

As part of the training, it was noted that the launcher is not for use above the shoulders or below the waist. This type of weapon, officials said, has been used not only by smaller police departments, but also by larger areas in crowd control during unruly protests.

"I don't know what the initial reaction of the public will be with the purchase of these new launchers," said Thomas County Sheriff Tom Jones. "I am a conservative per-



Colby Police Officer Ron Alexander showed the result of being hit by the pellets.

son and I was truly impressed with the capability of the launcher system and how it's a good alternative to using lethal force."

Before the use of the launcher system, officers had few options in dealing with suspects or deranged individuals.

Police Chief Jones talked about the recent incident in Colby when a man yielded a knife at officers. Prior to the pepper ball launcher, officers might have been forced to use nightsticks, batons, bean bag rounds, or even lethal force by pulling out a revolver.

"It certainly is a new avenue and approach for us," he said, "and allows officers to do their jobs safely when people are armed with less than firearms."

Officials did say, however, that in the case of someone carrying a firearm, they would obviously not be pulling out the pepper ball launcher.

"We want people to understand that a good cop doesn't want to hurt or kill anyone," Sheriff Jones said, "but rather subdue the suspect long enough so that they can be taken into custody."

Chief Jones said that after 10 or 15 minutes of clear water and fresh air, the affects of the launcher is over.

During the demonstrations, the training rounds were not pepper rounds, but officers did experience the impact of the hit.

Using the special law enforcement trust funds, the city police bought four of the launchers and the county bought five. The cost of each launcher was \$500, Chief Jones said, and included the system, training and ammunition.

Census reveals lifestyles improved during past decade

By **CARL MANNING**

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — For the most part, Kansans prospered during the past decade, but that prosperity came with a price.

Like the rest of the nation, Kansas benefited from good economic times during the 1990s — and a profitable stock market, new and expanding businesses and technology not dreamt of a decade before.

The Census 2000 Supplemental Survey indicates Kansans were living in bigger, more expensive homes and making more money.

"This is an indication of rising prosperity, which was the case everywhere, including Kansas," said Joshua Rosenbloom, director of the University of Kansas Center for Economic and Business Analysis.

The median value of an owner-occupied house in 2000 was \$84,267 — 43rd in the nation. The 1990 median price was \$51,800.

"One of the first things you see as a sign of prosperity is the characteristic of housing," Rosenbloom said.

"Economic theory tells us that as we get richer we spend more on all sorts of things and one of those things is buying larger, more luxurious housing."

Based on value, the largest group of homes — 75,384 — was in the \$100,000-\$124,000 range. At either end of the spectrum, 159 homes were valued at \$1 million or more and 7,600,

"One of the first things you see as a sign of prosperity is the characteristic of housing."

Joshua Rosenbloom,
University of Kansas

at \$10,000 or less.

Houses also got bigger. The median number of rooms in 2000 was 6.1, up from 5.4.

Jeanette Johnson is president of the Kansas Association of Realtors and has been selling houses in the Topeka area for 21 years.

"The market is still brisk. Interest rates are down," she said. "There are more single people buying and more younger people buying."

Johnson said the most popular houses in Topeka have three bedrooms, two baths and a two-car garage.

"Growing families want bigger homes, and as people get a little older they want to downsize," Johnson said. "Some people would like a bigger house because they can afford it and others because they need it."

Location is key in determining the price of a house.

The average price of a condo in Johnson County — the fastest growing part of the state — was about \$85,000 last month, according to the Kansas City Association of Realtors. But that

figure could net a large house in some rural parts of the state.

Some locations are more desirable than others for many reasons — schools, jobs or recreation.

"You see housing prices in those areas go up because that is how in our free market system a scarce commodity is rationed out," Rosenbloom said.

Median household income increased from \$27,291 to \$40,438, a 48 percent jump. The biggest percentage of wage earners — 11.1 percent — was in the \$60,000-\$74,499 range.

But as salaries increased, so did the cost of homeownership.

The median monthly mortgage was from \$628 to \$879. The biggest bloc — 56,671 — was the \$1,000-\$1,249 range. "One thing to bare in mind is the inflation of the last decade," Rosenbloom said. "You have had a 32 percent increase the cost of living, so household incomes have done a little better than that."

The supplemental survey was distributed to 700,000 households in 1,203 counties nationwide.

Powerball jackpot could reach \$280 million after no winners

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Powerball mania is certain to intensify in the coming days as players across the country get another chance Saturday at winning a jackpot that could approach \$300 million.

The unofficial prize for Saturday's drawing is \$280 million, Joe Mahoney of the Multi-State Lottery Association,

said Thursday.

"And that's a conservative estimate at this point," he added.

No tickets matched all six numbers in Wednesday night's highly-anticipated draw, which was worth \$193.5 million.

Mahoney said that while no one won the jackpot, more than a million people

will get prizes for matching some of the winning numbers: 2-28-30-36-39 and Powerball 10.

A total of 42 tickets matched the first five numbers but missed the Powerball to win \$100,000 each.

The biggest Powerball jackpot ever is the \$295.7 million won in 1998 by a group of factory workers in Ohio. The

richest lottery prize in U.S. history is the \$363 million Big Game jackpot, won last year by two players in Illinois and Michigan.

In Washington, D.C., and the 21 states where Powerball is played, people braved long lines and dreamed of hitting the jackpot, despite odds of 1 in 80 million.

The Rev. Clarence Dameron figured his odds of winning the jackpot were a little better than those of the average player.

"The Lord knows my heart," he said as he stood in line at a Des Moines convenience store, waiting to buy tickets for the drawing. "I could do a lot for the Lord."

Jane Baker, a Des Moines retiree, said she only needs \$5 million and would give the rest to charities and universities.

The long odds, she said, are "really about the same as getting struck by lightning."

"But I think the outcome is better," she said.

Briefly

Weather: Normal for August

The Colby region forecast through Sunday calls for partly cloudy skies, a 20-30 percent chance for thunderstorms, lows around 60, highs 85-90, and winds generally out of the south 5-15 mph. Wednesday's high was 89 and the overnight low this morning was 64. Precipitation remains at 0.73 inches for the month. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 78 degrees. The records for Aug. 23: 106 in 1943 and 41 in 1964. *(The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)*

Drug bust on I-70

A traffic stop on I-70 six miles east of Colby resulted in the seizure of 97 pounds of marijuana by the Kansas Highway Patrol Tuesday afternoon. Sgt. Rick Langdon said the stop occurred at milepost 59 at 2:28 p.m. after a Ford Explorer with California plates failed to maintain a single lane. Officers became suspicious when the driver, Pacheco Duran, 30 and his passenger, Adalberto Chavez, 29, both of Fullerton, Calif., gave conflicting stories. They gave officers permission to search the vehicle and the drugs were found in a duffel bag in the back. Both were booked into

the Thomas County jail. Sheriff Tom Jones said the pair had been fined court costs, time served and placed on one-year unsupervised probation.

Meals On Wheels needs help

The Meals On Wheels program, a service of Citizens Medical Center, is again in need of volunteers. The program receives no outside financial support. Recipients pay a minimal fee for a hot, nutritious meal delivered to their home. Volunteers generally sign up for one day per week, every other month. However they do have some volunteers

who share a position, i.e. each delivers three months out of the year. If you can help, or are interested in finding out more about the program, please call Jeanene Brown, Citizens Medical Center, Inc., (785) 462-4850.

Siren tests set for Colby

Thomas County will be testing tornado sirens at 10 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 27 and Sept. 10, said John Lygeros, emergency management director. "These aren't our usual times and we won't be testing on Labor Day (Sept. 2)," he said. Questions may be directed to Lygeros at 443-7031.

