



Betty Schroeder (above) of Colby signed up as a volunteer for the Area Citizens for Healthcare, which has several plans in the works in its efforts to affect the current climate surrounding health care in Colby. Officials for the group declined to say what those plans are at this time. LEFT: Nurse practitioner Janet Myers addressed the crowd at Thursday night's meeting.

DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

# Hundreds turn out for healthcare meeting

## Unity is goal of new organization

By DARREL PATTILLO

Colby Free Press

"This is all real good, but nothing has changed!"

That was the comment from John Kern as he addressed a crowd of 200-300 people Thursday night at the Colby Community Building. Kern, president of the Area Citizens for Healthcare, presided over a public meeting which had been organized by the group, in an attempt to air issues which have in the past months opened a deep divide between supporters of Dr. Victor Hildyard and the Colby Medical and Surgical Clinic, and the board and administration of Colby's hospital, Citizens Medical Center.

Kern was referring to Thursday morning's court decision by District Judge Jack Burr in Goodland, which denied the hospital's request for an injunction against Hildyard practicing at the hospital. A temporary restraining order against the hospital which currently allows Hildyard to see his patients at the hospital remains in effect until Nov. 6, at which time Hildyard and the board will meet again.

Area Citizens for Healthcare called a public meeting in an attempt, according to its mission statement, to bring about unity between the citizens of Colby and CMC and its board of directors.

"If Doc (Hildyard) has to send patients to other hospitals in the area, we are going to lose our hospital," Kern said. "We need your help to insure that

all doctors are allowed to serve their patients in our local hospital."

Kern then introduced Janet Myers of Colby, who is an advanced registered nurse practitioner at Colby Medical and Surgical Clinic. Myers read a letter from Dr. William Inkret, who practices medicine in Denver and also sees patients in Colby.

The letter outlined his support for Dr. Hildyard and the Colby Medical and Surgical Clinic. Myers then told of her background as a native of northwest Kansas, her qualifications in the health care field, and her negative experiences as the director of nursing at the hospital from the summer of 1999 to the fall of 2000. She added that she had been the one to seek out employment with Dr. Hildyard at the clinic.

She concluded her remarks by stating that, "Despite all that's occurred in the last six months, I feel very fortunate as a healthcare provider to be among a community that cares about and feels ownership of its hospital."

"Simply put, we do not agree with, condone, or accept the actions of CMC's current administration or board."

"Your presence here tonight is evidence of your commitment to the preservation of a quality health care system in Colby," she said.

Myers then introduced Kathy Diederich of Colby, who left the hospital after negative experiences and sought employment with Colby Medical and Surgical Clinic. Grady Garrett,

a registered technician, also told how he left the hospital to seek employment because of negative experiences.

Physician's assistant Brian Unruh — the nephew of Dr. LaDonna Regier — who practices at the clinic, told the audience how he had got a call to come to work in Colby, and found that working at Colby Medical and Surgical Clinic was a rewarding experience.

The final speaker of the evening was Dave Jennings of Colby, whose son Dr. Jeff Jennings worked at the clinic before his untimely death in December of 2001.

"One of the proudest moments of my life," Jennings said, "was when I found out that Jeff was coming back to Colby to practice medicine. Jeff saw how Colby could become the center of regional health care, and he thought the medical care here was as good as anywhere."

"Now, I'm probably going to lose a few customers by being here tonight. But I'm here to tell you this situation won't be resolved in court. This will be resolved when everyone sits down at the table and works this out."

Kern said after the meeting, "We got enough people here tonight to spread the word. If we don't get this worked out, we're going to lose our hospital."

No further agenda was set by the group.

# Nobel Peace Prize awarded to former President Jimmy Carter

OSLO, Norway (AP) — Former President Carter won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday "for his decades of untiring effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts, to advance democracy and human rights."

The Norwegian Nobel Committee cited Carter's "vital contribution" to the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt.

And also his efforts in conflict resolution on several continents and the promotion of human rights after his presidency.

"In a situation currently marked by threats of the use of power, Carter has stood by the principles that conflicts

must as far as possible be resolved through mediation and international co-operation based on international law, respect for human rights, and economic development," the citation said.

The award is worth \$1 million. In a statement posted on the Carter Center's Web site, the 39th president said, "My concept of human rights has grown to include not only the rights to live in peace, but also to adequate health care, shelter, food, and to economic opportunity. I hope this award reflects a universal acceptance and even embrace of this broad-based concept of human rights."

Earlier, he told CNN, "When I was

at the White House I was a fairly young man and I realized I would have maybe 25 more years of active life," adding that he decided to "capitalize on the influence I had as the former president of the greatest nation of the world and decided to fill vacuums."

He has said his most significant work has been through the Carter Center, an ambitious, Atlanta-based think tank and activist policy center he and wife Rosalynn founded in 1982 and which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.

Perhaps his crowning achievement as president was the peace treaty he negotiated as president between Egypt

ian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Premier Menachem Begin. Carter kept them at the Camp David presidential retreat for 13 days in 1978 to reach the accord, and Sadat and Begin shared the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Nobel committee said Carter, who was in the White House from 1977 to 1981, did not share in the prize because he was not nominated in time.

The secretive, five-member committee made its decision last week after months of secret deliberations as it sought the right message for a world still dazed by the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, the war on terrorism that followed and concern about a possible

U.S. military strike against Iraq.

Carter, a Democrat and former Georgia governor, rose from life as a small-town peanut farmer to the nation's presidency in 1976 after a campaign that stressed honesty in the wake of the Watergate controversy.

He returned home after a landslide loss to Republican Ronald Reagan in 1980, his candidacy undermined by double-digit inflation, and an energy crunch that forced Americans to wait in line for gasoline, and the 444-day hostage crisis in Iran.

# Woman awarded \$2.2 billion in KC pharmacy case

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — More than 400 lawsuits against former pharmacist Robert Courtney may never go to trial after a jury awarded more than \$2.2 billion to a woman whose cancer drugs he diluted, an attorney for many of the plaintiffs says.

Jurors in Jackson County Circuit Court awarded Georgia Hayes \$2 billion in punitive damages Thursday and more than \$225 million in actual damages in her case against Courtney.

Hayes has promised to share any

money she receives with the plaintiffs in other lawsuits filed against Courtney, said Michael Ketchmark, an attorney for many of the Courtney victims, including Hayes.

Ketchmark said he must first consult with his other clients, but "as a practical matter, this would probably bring an end to the separate lawsuits against Robert Courtney."

Hayes' attorneys had asked for an award of about \$1.2 billion against Courtney, who has admitted weaken-

ing the chemotherapy drugs he mixed for Hayes and other patients.

As the jurors left the courtroom Thursday, each of them hugged Hayes.

"We wanted to send a message out to the world that it shouldn't have happened in the first place," juror Keith Freeberg said outside the courtroom.

Most of Courtney's assets, once estimated at \$12 million, were seized by the federal government for a victims' fund after he pleaded guilty to criminal charges of adulterating, misbrand-

ing and tampering with chemotherapy medications.

"Though we probably will never see a dime, I feel justice has been done," Hayes, 44, said outside the courtroom Thursday afternoon.

Ketchmark said he now plans to work on collecting whatever money he can from Courtney, which would include anything Courtney may receive from any book or movie deals and any money he may have hidden from authorities.

## Briefly

### Church activity is Saturday

The second annual *Chili & Pie Feed, Bake & Craft Sale* will be held Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the First Christian Church Fellowship Hall in Colby. Everyone is welcome and should bring a friend. A free-will offering will be taken for the meal.

### Tootsie Roll Drive begins

The Colby Council of the Knights of Columbus began handing out specially marked Tootsie Tolls today while seeking donations for the mentally challenged. The members of the Knights are positioned at several locations in Colby, so look for these gentlemen in their bright yellow and red aprons and please — be generous. The drive continues through Sunday. Donations may also be sent to the local Knights of Columbus Council in care of Dick Parnell, Tootsie Roll Chairman, at 2820 N. Range in Colby.

### Legion feed on tap Saturday

A pancake and sausage feed is on Saturday's menu from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Colby American Legion. Cost is \$3. Proceeds will

be used for community service projects. The public is encouraged to come out and support community needs.

### Beims benefit at Atwood Oct. 20

A benefit for Braden Scott Beims, infant son of Mitch and Cortney Beims, Colby, will be held in Atwood at the Knights of Columbus Hall from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 20. Chicken noodle soup, chili, desserts and soft drinks will be available. This will be a free-will offering. Everyone in the area is invited to attend.

### Auxiliary still needs items

Donations of good new or used holiday items are needed for the *Recycled Holidays Sale* sponsored by the Citizens Medical Center Auxiliary. Donations may be left at 545 Woofert Avenue in the evenings after 5 p.m. or call 462-7777 or 462-6896.

### Amusement group to meet

The next meeting of the Thomas County Amusement Associa-

tion will be Monday at 7 p.m. in the Thomas County Office Complex. One of the items on the agenda will be the rides local representatives saw during a visit to Sterling, Colo. All interested persons are urged to attend the meeting.

### School fun night planned

The public is invited to the Fall Festival and Family Fun Night hosted by Heartland Christian School in Colby on Oct. 31 from 6:30-9 p.m.. "Join us for an evening of games, prizes, and fun for the entire family at 1995 West Fourth Street," said a school spokesman.

For more information call the school at 462-6419.

### School needs help with prizes

The Colby Grade School Parent Teacher Organization is seeking donations from area businesses for the raffle which will be held during the PTO Carnival on Oct. 26. Donations can either be mailed in or the PTO will pick them up.

Contact Becky Butts at 462-2774 or Julie Price at 462-3506.

## WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley area

### The numbers

Thursday's high, 68  
Low this morning, 50  
Year ago today, 71 and 29  
Colby's 24-hr. rainfall, 0.00  
Records for Oct. 11, 90 in 1955, 17 in 1896

### The forecast

Tonight, clear, lows in the 40s, windy with gusts to 35 mph, might see a sprinkle or two. Saturday, some sun, cooler with highs only in the 50s, windy with gusts again up to 35 mph. Saturday night and Sunday, clear, lows in the upper 20s and highs in the upper 50s. Columbus Day, clear, highs in the lower 60s..**Colby Water Usage**  
• Oct. 10 = (not available)

