

Welcome to Colby's Rod Run



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Addiction facility cuts service

By Patty Decker

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For almost 20 years, Colby has been home to a reintegration facility aimed at helping men transition back into life after struggling with alcohol and drug abuse, but effective Monday it will shut down.

The Thomas County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council opened the facility in the late 1980s, but due to rising costs in salary and operating expenses because of mandates and other factors, the board of directors had no choice but to shut it down.

"It's never been about the money, but that's all managed care was concerned with," said Wendi Wacker, ADAC director.

Although the reintegration facility will be closing its doors, the rest of the services provided through the council will continue.

In addition, she wanted to assure the community the current clients will have their needs met.

"Efforts will be taken so they do not lose ground or the progress they have made while here," she said.

The reintegration facility was able to house seven men, ranging in age from 18 to 65.

"We want to thank the entire community for its support all these years," she said.

The Thomas County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council has been providing services to northwest Kansas since 1973, she said.

"Many changes have taken place in recent months, but the mission has stayed the same — to provide the highest possible level of professional and confidential services," Wacker said.

Even with the closing of the reintegration facility, she said all other services, such as counsel-

"We want to thank the entire community for its support."

Wendi Wacker,
ADAC director

ing, assessments, referrals, alcohol and drug education classes, outpatient services to include individuals, families and groups are available.

"We also encourage anyone in the community to stop by and use our resource center filled with information to help with this illness," she said.

Wacker said the agency can also provide free consultations to those who are experiencing problems or concerns about a loved one who is struggling with alcohol or drugs.

She emphasized the council uses certified substance abuse counselors on a face-to-face basis with the client.

"It is my belief," she said, "that if you want a person to benefit from treatment you have to offer a skilled, unbiased professional to work closely with them in a therapeutic environment."

Any groups or organizations interested in learning more about the council are encouraged to call Wacker at 462-6111 or stop by the office, 1523 W. Fourth St., Colby.

The board officers include Brian Unruh, president; Larry Washburn, past-president; Allan Taylor, vice-president and JoAnne Vaughn, secretary. At-large members of the board are: Dr. Victor Hildyard, Rex Van Horn, Melinda Fikan, Lois Struckmeyer, Tom Jones, Carol Jones, Pastor Jeremy Gundling, Kris Bishop, and Lee Fleckenstein.



JAN KATZ ACKERMAN/Colby Free Press

Ronald and Frances William, along with their children, Larry and Susan William of Topeka, and Vic and Lila William of Overland Park, laid a wreath and placed photos at the Moving Wall during the opening ceremonies of the wall being in Hoxie from June 12-16. The William's son, Ronald, was the only Sheridan County serviceman to be killed in the line of duty during the Vietnam War. His name appears on the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D. C. and on the Moving Wall among 58,000 other service men and women who died during the Vietnam War.

War memorial display in Hoxie

By Jan Katz Ackerman

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Sheridan County, area veterans and their supporters gathered Thursday night in Hoxie for the opening ceremony of one of the country's famous memorials for Vietnam veterans.

Mistress of Ceremonies Joanne Emerick welcomed about 100 Sheridan County veterans and nearly 800 members of the public to the Moving Wall, also referred to as the Traveling Wall, the half-scale replica wall and the Healing Wall, the two walls contain the 58,000 names of veterans as listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D. C.

"Vietnam veterans," Emerick said. "We are here tonight to tell you that we recognize your efforts and that we honor those whose names are on this wall."

Paid for entirely by donations, the wall is 252 feet, slightly longer than one-half the length of the granite memorial in the nation's capital. At the vertex of the Moving Wall, the joint of the two walls, the panels are 6-feet tall, while same panels on the memorial in Washington, D. C. measure 10.2 feet in height. The Moving Wall will be in Hoxie at the 4-H Fairgrounds located one-quarter mile north of Hoxie on K-23 Highway until June 16.

Featured speaker for the ceremony was Angela Matthews, the Director of Development at Plymouth State University, Plymouth, New Hampshire. Matthews'

fiance, the late Joe Sintoni, has his name listed on the Moving Wall. Their love story is Chapter Two of the book *Shrapnel in the Heart*, by Laura Palmer, the book used by students of former Hoxie High School history teacher Joanne Emerick to prepare History Day presentations for competition. Emerick will serve as mistress of ceremonies for the Moving Wall events.

"Vietnam took away the innocence of a generation," Matthews said. "My generation."

Telling how she, like many veterans, had to grow up fast due to the war, Matthews said the grief of Vietnam "went underground" and even the mere mention of the country's name sparked debate in 1982 when the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D. C. was dedicated.

"Soldiers do not start wars," Matthews said.

"No you do not, but you accepted the duty of what you are called to do. The Moving Wall, how ironic, moves around the country, but it has the capacity to move us to heal."

Vietnam veteran Howard Cass of Hoxie attended the ceremony.

"I think it's a shame these guys have to have their names on the wall for such a non-cause war," Cass said. "We are here tonight to honor these guys. I respect those 58,000 vets."

Cass served in the Army from 1967 to 1969, and spent just over a year in Vietnam as a Scout Dog Patrol member.

"I walked patrol for the infan-

Moving Wall events planned

The Moving Wall is being sponsored by the Hoxie Chamber of Commerce and Sheridan County Economic Development Corporation.

From 6 to 8 p.m. tonight, the Sheridan County 4-H Clubs will host a barbecue supper for the public at the 4-H Building located on the fairgrounds one-quarter mile north of Hoxie.

At 8 p.m., Wayne Purinton, a Vietnam veteran from Wakeney will present the audiovisual program, "Once Enemies, Now Friends." The program, a slide show Purinton developed as a way for high school students to understand the Vietnam War, will take place in the 4-H Building. The flags will be re-

tired for the day during a flag ceremony at 9 p.m.

Other events scheduled while the Moving Wall is in Hoxie include at Flag Day ceremony at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 14, sponsored by the Hoxie Elks Lodge. The ceremony will take place at the fairgrounds. On Sunday, June 15, the Hoxie Area Ministerial Alliance will host an interdenominational church service at the Moving Wall starting at 9 a.m. At 5 p.m. a drawing will take place in the 4-H Building for a Patriotic Quilt. The closing ceremony for the Moving Wall will take place at 2 p.m. on Monday. Volunteers will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day of the event.

try," he said.

Sheridan County Sheriff Brian Fenner, while not a Vietnam veteran, served in the Navy from 1972 to 1975. He said he was thrilled the Moving Wall was in Hoxie.

"The significance of it is hard to explain," Fenner said. "All these guys lost their lives for what we have today."

Horesky said she has seen the memorial in Washington, D. C. and is thrilled the replica is in Hoxie.

"It's a great tribute for the vets," Horesky said. "The turnout is wonderful and I hope it helps some of our vets, because I know some of them are struggling."

Event co-organizer Leanna

Sloan of the Hoxie Area Chamber of Commerce agreed that the Moving Wall heals. She said while the wall was being erected Thursday morning, a lone veteran watched and was obviously moved by the wall.

"He got off in the distance," Sloan said. "But he couldn't come any closer. It's the wall of healing. We hope it touches some lives and does some healing."

Emerick also read a proclamation from Gov. Kathleen Sebelius making June 12-16, 2008, Moving Wall Week in Sheridan County. Hoxie Mayor Lori Horesky signed a proclamation in front of the veterans and audience doing likewise.

INTERSTATE 70 TRAVEL SECTION

June 2008

Off the Beaten Path

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Colby FREE PRESS Goodland Star-News

In today's edition of the Colby Free Press

Briefly

Commissioners to meet

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m., Monday, in the commissioners room of the courthouse. Agenda items include Eric Heath, OneOk representative to discuss a contract from 9 to 9:30 a.m.; Emergency Management Director Susan McMahan regarding a grant, storm spotting, use of county vehicle, and working with the city of Colby from 9:30 to 9:45 a.m.; Household Hazardous Waste Director Larry Jumper on disposal of materials from 10:15-10:30 a.m. and Elmer Zerr at 10:30 a.m.

Donations sought

Kiwanis Club of Thomas County is asking for do-

nations to defray the cost of fireworks for the annual Fourth of July fireworks display, said Rick Dickman, event chair. Anyone interested in helping can mail checks payable to: Kiwanis Club of Thomas County, P.O. Box 501, Colby, Kan. 67701. This year's display is at 10:15 p.m., Friday, July 4, at the Thomas County Fairgrounds.

Food available Wednesday

Hi-Plains Coop in Colby is again serving free hot dogs and all the trimmings at Picnic in the Park, starting at noon, Wednesday, in Fike Park. Free-will donations will be accepted and given to the Kiwanis Club of Thomas County to help pay for the Fourth of

July fireworks display. In recent years, the Coop has donated the food and given all proceeds to the Kiwanis Club to make this community event possible.

What's the best?

What, or where, is your favorite spot in Thomas County?

Now is your chance to let the rest of Thomas County know what you think makes our place on the map special.

In collaboration with the Hays Daily News and Thomas County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Colby Free Press wants to know the Eight Wonders of Thomas County.

Inside this Colby Free Press is a ballot to list what you think are the best eight places in the county.

Voting will be held in two phases during the summer months. The paper ballot will be available in the Colby Free Press in June, so keep watching this paper. Ballots can be submitted to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth St., during regular business hours. Ballots can also be filled out and submitted online. Address is listed in the ballot. Voting will end June 30. Photo copies of ballots will not be accepted.

The second phase of the voting will list the top 16 sites from all of the entries. From that list, people will vote on the top eight. Ballots will also be available in the Colby Free Press and online. The 8 Wonders of Thomas County will be announced Aug. 29.