



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Rhonda McLaughlin, like a majority of nurses across the country, wears many hats. McLaughlin, who has special training in obstetrics, also serves as shift manager and is floor nurse throughout the hospital. She said she loves her work as a nurse and working with patients to make them feel comfortable is her specialty.

## Nation honors nurses this week

By Vera Sloan  
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Nursing is the biggest health-care occupation in the U.S., with 3.1 million jobs, so the profession has good reason to dedicate one week a year to its members.

National Nursing week is May 6-12, through Thursday. Vickie Duffey, director of nursing at Citizens Medical Center in Colby, says she has planned something different for each day to recognize the 50 full- and part-time nurses at the hospital. She said there are 76 nurses overall, including Citizens' affiliates, the Family Center for Health Care clinic and the Prairie Senior Living Center nursing

home.

Colby Medical and Surgical Center has five nurses at the clinic at 175 S. Range.

"Our office is required to keep a list of all nurses in the county in case of a major disaster," said Kasiah Rothchild, administrator at the Thomas County Health Department, "and the official count according to state records stands at 77 registered nurses, 36 licensed practical nurses and eight advanced registered nurse practitioners after the last official county wide census of nurses taken two years ago."

Duffey said a nurse in a rural hospital – where there's not a doctor on the floor at all times – often has to be a jack of all trades. They

may be needed in the emergency room one minute, she said, and may be called to a different area of the hospital five minutes later.

"They are all required to take 30 additional hours of continuing education every year, she added.

Duffey noted that obstetrics nurses at Citizens take two weeks of training before they go to work in that department.

Most would agree that since the days of Florence Nightingale, nurses have become the vital part of the health care operation.

## Follow some simple tips to keep spring sports safe

Topeka – More than 30 million children participate in sports each year in the United States. Of those 30 million, approximately 3.5 million children under the age of 14 are treated for sports-related injuries in hospitals, clinics and emergency rooms. Safe Kids Kansas reminds parents and coaches to focus on the four components critical to keeping young athletes healthy and injury-free: preventing acute and overuse injuries, proper hydration before, during and after play, annual pre-season medical screenings for each athlete and finally, concussion awareness, prevention and screening methods.

Here are five important sports safety tips from Safe Kids Kansas that all coaches, parents and league organizers can use to prevent sports-related injuries:

- **Pre-season medical screening:** Every child should receive

an annual pre-participation physical evaluation. These exams may prevent or treat any underlying conditions.

- **Safety gear:** To prevent acute injuries, children playing sports should have access to and consistently use well-maintained safety equipment during both practices and games.

- **Qualified coaching:** athletic coaches should be trained in both first aid and CPR, have a plan for responding to emergencies and have current knowledge of both safety rules and proper equipment use. Sports programs with certified athletic trainers on staff are ideal because they are trained to prevent or provide immediate care for athletic injuries.

- **Proper Conditioning:** to prevent acute and overuse injuries, coaches should teach young athletes proper routines for warm-ups and cool-downs before and

after practice and play. Sixty-two percent of sports-related injuries occur during practice rather than in a game.

- **Hydration:** Athletes should be encouraged to drink water before, during and after practice and competition.

- **Rest:** If young athletes are very tired or in pain, coaches and parents should encourage them to rest, not to play, as this valuable recovery time can help prevent acute and overuse injuries.

"Children ages five to 14 account for nearly 40 percent of all sports-related injuries treated in hospital emergency departments," says Cherie Sage, State Director for Safe Kids Kansas.

For information on sports safety and preventing dehydration, call Safe Kids Kansas at (785) 296-1223 or visit [www.safekids.org/](http://www.safekids.org/) sports.

## Ministry holds grief retreat

Rachel's Vineyard Ministry will have a retreat Friday through Sunday, June 11-13, at the Heartland Center for Spirituality in Great Bend for anyone affected by abortion.

"This retreat is not only for women who have had abortions, but for men, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, married couples – anyone affected by the loss of abortion," said Donetta Robben, retreat coordinator.

Theresa Burke, a psychologist and founder of Rachel's Vineyard Retreats, women those who have had an abortion often have what psychologists call "complicated grief," a sense of disbelief accompanied by anger and bitterness over the death. To cope, many exhibit acting-out behavior with drugs, alcohol, promiscuous activity, anger or sleeping and eating disorders.

Studies indicate that people

suffering from an abortion decision often endure life in confusion and silence. Many begin hurting immediately, while others begin facing their grief five to 25 years later.

For information, contact Robben at (877) 447-4383, or by e-mailing: [rachelsvineyard@salina-diocese.org](mailto:rachelsvineyard@salina-diocese.org). All correspondence is confidential.

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## New Spine Surgeon Brings a World of Experience to the Orthopedic Institute at Hays Medical Center



When everyday activities such as bending, looking overhead or simply shaking your head become a challenge due to back pain, turn to Vivek Sharma, M.D., at the Orthopedic Institute at Hays Medical Center. Dr. Sharma, the newest physician at the Orthopedic Institute, is an expert on the very latest surgical and non-surgical treatment options for problems of the back and spine. His focus is on finding the most effective way to address your spinal disorder and get you back to living your life.

Dr. Sharma has extensive experience in the diagnosis and treatment of a broad spectrum of spinal disorders including:

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- Spine tumors
- Surgery for spinal stenosis
- Inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services

Dr. Sharma graduated from the G.S. Medical College and K.E.M. Hospital Program at the University of Mumbai in India. After completing his internship and residency, he earned his diploma in orthopedic surgery at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Mumbai. He moved to the United States in 2005 and completed several clinical fellowships.

Dr. Sharma's fellowships include: Orthopedic Spine Surgery: The Christ Hospital, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, University of Cincinnati, (Cincinnati); Orthopedic Sports Medicine and Arthroscopy: Boston Children's Hospital,

Harvard Medical School (Boston); Pediatric Orthopedics: B.J. Wadia Hospital for Children (Mumbai, India), Cincinnati Children's Hospital, University of Cincinnati (Cincinnati); and Joint Reconstruction and Arthroplasty, University of Minnesota (Minneapolis).

He's also put his expertise to work as an orthopedic physician for the Boston Ballet, the Boston Marathon and NCAA games in Boston.

Now he's putting that same expertise to work for you. Right here in western Kansas. For more information about Dr. Sharma or available services at the Orthopedic Institute, go to [www.haysortho.com](http://www.haysortho.com).

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First Wednesday  
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**Ear, Nose & Throat – Dr. Black**  
Fourth Wednesday  
(785) 628-3131

**General Surgery – Dr. Hornick**  
Monthly  
(785) 623-5945

**Mobile Echo**  
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(785) 460-1250

**Orthopedics – Dr. Ahad**  
Third Wednesday  
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**Orthopedics – Dr. Bassett**  
First Tuesday  
(866) 428-8221

**Urology**  
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(785) 462-7511 or (785)432-3332

Call the number listed for specific clinic locations.