

Help Gem native celebrate 93 years

Velma Barnett of Gem will celebrate her 93rd birthday on Thursday, Sept. 15, 2011, with a card shower. Her family would like to invite family and friends to send cards to 2654 County Road 27, Gem, Kan., 67734.

Her children are Ron and Norma Barnett of McCook, Neb.; Marvin and Alberta



Velma Barnett

Barnett of Gem; and daughter-in-law Sondra Barnett and the late Bill Barnett of Rexford. She also has many grandchildren and great-grandchildren who will share the day with her.

A native of Gem, she is an involved resident, an active gardener and knits caps for hospitals in the area and around the world.

Open house to honor couple's 50th Saturday

Ron and Sharon Stramel of Colby will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with a reception from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 17, 2011, at the Heartland Christian School in Colby.

The couple has four children who would like to invite family and friends to join them in celebration: Tami (Lynn) Goossen, Lori (Lonnice) Wilson, Todd (Melissa) Stramel and Bert (Lisa) Stramel.

They also have 14 grandchildren. The couple was married on Sept. 9, 1961, in the Lutheran Church in Page City. They lived on a farm south of Colby until 2000 when they moved to a residential area north of Colby where they live today.

For those unable to attend, cards may be mailed to the couple at 225 La Hacienda, Colby, Kan., 67701. They prefer no gifts.

Response time appealed

Forty-nine advocacy groups representing the interests of family farmers, ranchers, and consumers have formally requested that U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack extend the public comment period for a controversial new proposal that would require livestock producers in the U.S. to incur significant expense tracking animals that cross state lines. The comment period on the proposed "Traceability for Livestock Moving Interstate" is scheduled to end Wednesday, Nov. 9, and the organizations have requested an additional 60 days.

"The period for public comment coincides with the fall harvest and comes during the worst drought ever recorded in some major livestock production regions," said Judith McGeary, executive director of the Farm and Ranch Freedom Alliance and vice-chair of the Department of Agriculture secretary's Advisory Committee on Animal Health. "Our farmers and ranchers are struggling to get their crops in and save their animals, and they need more time to assess the impacts of the proposed rule."

The groups' letter to Secretary Vilsack pointed out that many farmers and ranchers are not online, slowing the speed of communication. "According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, more than 40 percent of farms do not have internet access," stated the letter.

"We have a significant number of Amish and Mennonite members, who can only be contacted by mail or through print publications," explained Mark A. Kastel, senior farm policy analyst at the Cornucopia Institute. "They, in

turn, will have to mail their comments to USDA. If the agency actually wants to hear from these livestock owners, it needs to extend the comment period."

Some groups have questioned the agency's willingness to respond to producers' concerns.

"A coalition of cattle groups presented USDA with a reasonable plan for cattle identification, but the agency persists in proposing unworkable rules," contends R-CALF USA Chief Executive Officer Bill Bullard. "The least the agency can do is extend the comment period so that the cattle-men can comment on the proposal when they're not in the middle of the calf weaning and shipping seasons."

The proposal has raised concerns about the economic impacts on both livestock producers and related businesses.

Gilles Stockton, a member of the Western Organization of Resource Councils said, "It will take a significant amount of time to pencil out the true costs of this proposal. Livestock producers, sale barns, and states deserve adequate time to figure these costs and give comment."

"A lot of our farmers and ranchers are deeply concerned about animal health," concluded McGeary. "They work hard every day to keep their animals healthy, and the agency needs to take the time to understand their concerns about this new proposal and address them."

The organizations' letter is posted at <http://farmandranchfreedom.org/ltr-Vilsack-extension>.

Animal ag summit coming

Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback has scheduled a summit meeting later this month on the economy and animal agriculture.

The daylong meeting will be Wednesday, Sept. 28, in Garden City. It's one in a series of gatherings Brownback is holding on expanding the Kansas economy.

The summit will focus on helping Kansas retain existing farms and ranches and help them expand while attracting more from out of state.

Topics on the agenda include the state's advantages and disadvantages for business, food safety, animal health and animal welfare.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day Hi-Plains Co-op	
Wheat (bushel)	\$7.48
Corn (bushel)	\$7.31
Milo (hundredweight)	\$12.34
Soybeans (bushel)	\$13.16

New winter squash a blast from the past

Growing winter squash in our backyard garden these days is a bit like smoking a pipe. Hardly anyone does it anymore.

Actually, my Dad was an avid pipe smoker, but he never planted a winter squash in his entire life. Which has nothing to do with anything, but to be perfectly honest, you've got to search diligently around northwest Kansas to find anyone who will harvest one of those big blue, warty Hubbard squashes, the kind that has the wonderfully sweet flesh inside, and will store safely all winter when placed in a cool dry area.

Nowadays, gardeners, especially younger ones, will more likely devote space in their small garden for a couple of hills of pumpkin rather than to mess around with some kind of ugly winter squash. At least with a pumpkin, you have something the kids will enjoy, as a Jack-o-lantern, not to eat.

Early last spring, a longtime area gardener knocked on my door one Sunday afternoon and handed me a packet of cushaw winter squash seed. The name was cushaw. I had never heard of it. The lady explained that she just didn't have a decent growing area in her small backyard, and would I please grow some cushaw for her? She said she and her late husband used to grow them each year, and enjoyed them more than any other winter squash they had ever grown. She found the seed last winter on the Ferry-Morse rack at the store.

The only winter squash I had ever grown was the well known butternut squash, the one with the thick orange flesh and the nice nutty flavor that makes a better pumpkin pie than a pumpkin does — in my opinion. Plus, they're almost as tasty as a sweet potato

Technology conference to meet again in Hutchinson

The second annual Small Town 140 Characters Conference will be held in Hutchinson at the Historic Fox Theatre on Tuesday, Sept. 20, with speakers from a dozen states and one foreign country.

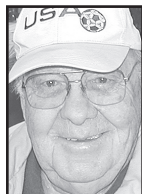
The focus of the 140 Characters Conference is how real-time technology, such as Twitter and Facebook, is changing business, agriculture, media, education, sports and celebrity. Jeff Pulver, the founder, says, "The take-aways from this event will provide the attending delegates knowledge, perspectives and insights to the next wave of effects Twitter will have on business." The all-day event will be streamed live on the internet.

Pulver started the 140 Character Conferences in June of 2009 in New York. Other conferences have been held in London, Los Angeles and Tel Aviv. The first small-town one was held in Hutchinson last year and during the event Pulver committed to bringing it back this year.

Becky McCray, a small town entrepreneur from Alva, Okla., was instrumental in encouraging development of the first small town conference.

McCray says "Small town people and rural people are a lot more technologically savvy than anyone gives us credit for. We use the same tools and technology available to everybody else."

"Sometimes broadband access is an issue and we continue to work on improving it. Most of us have great access and use this technology as well as or better than any one from L.A. or London. It's re-



Kay Melia

• The Gardener

when baked and properly seasoned — in my opinion. Several gardeners I know grow those nice looking acorn winter squash, as well as the buttercups and the newer Delicata. all are winter keepers, as opposed to summer squash such as zucchini, scallop, straight neck, crookneck, and scads of others. Most winter squash require 90 to 100 growing days to reach maturity while those quick-growing summer squash are usually ready in 45 to 50 days.

So, on May 14, I planted three hills of cushaw winter squash, five or six seeds to the hill. When they came up, I thinned them to two or three plants per hill, formed a "well" around them, mulched them heavily, and watered them regularly. They showed a good fruit set and sent out long runners all the way into the zucchini which, unfortunately, didn't seem to bother the zucchini. The cushaws grew rapidly into a beautiful cream-colored fruit with green stripes. They were big, too, with a crook neck and a very large lower bowl. I picked them last Monday, a bit earlier than I expected, because they were beginning to sunburn.

The largest cushaw weighed 13 pounds and I picked 13 of them and delivered them to my gardener friend. I kept one, and am anxious to cut in to it. I also harvested a dozen Waltham butternuts and will store them for the winter.

Winter squash. Cushaws. Something new in my garden this summer.

shaping small towns just as much as it's reshaping big cities."

Pulver says there is no dividing line of population. "We want to include small towns and rural areas, outlying suburbs and exurbs. Plus, plenty of people who live in a big city have some important small town connection, whether that's where you grew up, where you plan to move, where your parents came from, or where your clients are."

An entrepreneur, Pulver co-founded Vonage, and was listed as a Tech Guru by *Business Week*. He is the chief writer of what is called the "Pulver Order," adopted by the Federal Communications Commission as its first ruling regarding Internet Protocol communications.

Speakers will present in 10 or 15 minute segments. The day will move quickly and many voices will be heard. People will be sharing what's heard at the conference on Twitter, using what's called a "hashtag" of "#140conf." Twitter users all over the world will be able to search for #140conf and see everything being written from Hutchinson in real time.

For information, go to <http://patsyterrell.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5ab2748c5baff131c5217ec00&id=a0e767e6b0&e=33a3c5048c>

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Deaths

Marshall Carlisle St. John

Dr. Marshall Carlisle St. John, 63, Signal Mountain, Tenn., brother of Martha (Ed) Collins of Colby, died Friday, Sept. 2, 2011, at Erlanger Hospital in Signal Mountain.

He was born Sept. 23, 1947, in Marshalltown, Iowa, the son of Virgil and Betty St. John.

A National Merit Scholar at Mason City High School in Mason City, Iowa, he graduated from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. He received a Master's of Divinity at Faith Theological Seminary, Elkins Park, Pa., in 1975 and a Doctorate of Ministry from Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis in 1987.

From 1976 to 1989 he was pastor for the Bible Presbyterian Church, Concord, N.C. From 1989 until his early retirement in June, 2011, he was pastor of Wayside Presbyterian, Signal Mountain, Tenn., when he was appointed pastor emeritus

to the church.

He also served as a professional cellist and was a former member of the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera.

Preceding him in death were his mother and a sister, Leslie Jasper-son, both of Le Grande, Iowa.

Other survivors include his wife of 38 years, Grace St. John; his father, of Le Grande, Iowa; a daughter, Rebekah (Sloan) Rogers; a son, David St. John; a sister, Regan Kohls, Le Grande; and two granddaughters.

Services were Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2011, at the church, with pastors Gary Phillips and Travis Hutchinson officiating.

The family suggests memorials to Wayside World Missions, 2502 Fairmount Pike, Signal Mountain, Tenn., 37377, or to the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, 701 Broad Street — Tivoli Center, Chattanooga, Tenn., 37402.

Agency clarifies limits of revenue payments

Adrian J. Polansky, State Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency, announced that legislative authority for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program ends on Sept. 30. Producers must meet specific eligibility requirements to receive assistance for disasters on or before Sept. 30 that affect fall 2011 and 2012 crops.

"The SURE program compensates producers for production and/or quality losses during times of disaster," said Polansky.

Producers can apply for a 2011 or 2012 payment if a crop of economic significance located in a primary or contiguous disaster county under a Secretarial Disaster Designation suffered at least a 10 percent loss.

Crops are not required to be harvested on or before Sept. 30 to maintain eligibility. Producers should follow the crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program requirements for reporting their losses. Losses that result from disasters after Sept. 30 will not be eligible.

Producers with 2011 and 2012 crops that suffer losses caused by disasters that occur on or before Sept. 30 must also meet the fol-

lowing criteria:

- For insured crops, the insurance policy defines the coverage period as beginning on or before Sept. 30, 2011.

- For Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program crops, the coverage period begins on or before Sept. 30.

- The final planting date according to RMA and FSA (NAP crops only) occur on or before Sept. 30.

Polansky points out that, "If the crop is planted prior to Sept. 30, 2011, but the final planting date is after Sept. 30, 2011, the crop will not be eligible for SURE benefits."

The sign-up period for 2011 and 2012 will not begin until after the national average market prices are determined for each respective crop year, which is normally one year after the applicable crop year. For questions, please contact the local Farm Service office.

Corrections

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.

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Contact the
Thomas County Learning Center

for eligibility and enrollment information:

485 N. Chickamauga, Colby, 465-7900

Cub Scout Activities starting for fall in Colby for boys 1st to 5th grade.



Photo courtesy by
Jeff Cooper
Salina Journal

Cub Scout Family Information Meeting

6:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 13th

Colby Grade School Activity Room

Grade school boys and their families are invited to come learn about Cub Scout activities planned for September 2011 through April 2012 in Colby.

Regular weekly meetings for Colby Cub Scout Pack #140 will begin on Monday, September 19th with a Pack Meeting at the Colby United Methodist Church, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Starting times for regular den meetings may be adjusted on a group-by-group basis to accommodate seasonal youth sports and other community activities.

More information on the 2011-12 Colby Cub Scout Pack #140 schedule of activities can be found at the following website: www.scoutlander.com (follow directory) or by contacting Pack 140 Scoutmaster Dan O'Brien at colbydobrien@gmail.com.



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