

Weather

Women braved barren plains

Briefly

From "WOMEN," Page 1

family's hardships in Germany only made their dream to live in America even stronger. The parents were married in Germany and had three children before moving to America in 1881.

Withers described the family's two-week voyage as being extremely difficult. At the time, Emily was 4, her older brother Henry was 6 and the eldest daughter, Emma, was 8. The youngest son, Fred, was born in December 1881, the only natural-born U.S. citizen.

Being poor, the family traveled in the ship's hold and was never allowed on deck. The size of their space was determined by the amount they paid, not by the size of their family, and they had to bring their own food and bedding.

The family claimed a homestead of 160 acres of Thomas County land, 19 miles southwest of Colby, from the Oberlin Land Office in 1886.

Misfortune struck, and before the family could build a house, they moved into a small six-foot-by-12-foot soddie with neighbors. For a month, 14 people shared this space. To make room so everyone could sleep, they had to move the furniture outside, said Carol.

Withers said that Emily later became a teacher in Levant and earned \$40 a month. She moved in with the John D.C. Stover family while teaching at a nearby school, and fell in love with a son, John Henry Stover.

They had four children, Raymond (Withers' father), Viola, Gerald and Alfred.

The homestead where Emily grew up has remained in the family since 1886, passed down for five generations, and is now owned by Jess Thiel.

KATIE EICHER

Erin (Eicher) Matthews, the daughter of Curtis and Beverly Eicher of Colby, shared information about the Eicher women from 1896 to the present.

She began by sharing excerpts



CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press

Chuck and Leilani Thomas of Colby browsed through a family recipe book and historical information about the Duffey Homestead compiled by Loreda Duffey Wagner in December 1977 and provided by Cindy Duffey. The couple attended this month's Food for Thought program at the Prairie Museum of Art and History honoring Women's History Month.

from the first edition of the Thomas County Cat, on March 12, 1885.

"Herds of wild horses are still seen in the western portion of the county," one story noted. It encouraged people to "send the Cat to your friends who are looking for rich, smooth government land in a healthy, bracing climate. The center of the county is only 20 miles from a railroad."

She said that her German ancestors, John and Katie (Rich) Eicher, immigrated from an area fought over by Germany and France. They arrived in the United States with their 13 children, but shortly after claiming a 160-acre homestead in the northwest part of the county, John died of pneumonia before he could return to the plot with his family, in 1887.

John's four older sons came to find the homestead, Eicher said, without GPS, no buildings for

landmarks, no gas station clerks to ask direction from and no street addresses.

She read from another clipping from the Cat, from April 7, 1887:

"Thomas County, which was the original Garden of Eden and from which Mr. and Mrs. Adam was hustled over the garden wall in that far-off ancient day of limited knowledge and less clothing."

MATILDA DUFFEY

Cynthia Duffey of Colby said her paternal great-grandparents, John Duffey and Matilda Atwood Duffey, came from Germany and moved to Kansas in 1885. Their homestead still remains in the family and is farmed today by Matthews' uncle.

John died in 1908 at the age of 47 and left Matilda to raise their three children: James, Myrtle and Ray, the youngest at age 11.

Cynthia's grandfather, Ray, eventually married Eva Moose

in 1919, and she later became the matriarch of a large family, raising 12 children during their 22 years of marriage.

They set high standards of honesty and integrity, Duffey said.

MELISSA WALLACE

Gary Adrian was the last to present, talking about his great-grandparents, James and Melissa (Alger) Wallace.

He said he is particularly proud of his great-grandmother. Unlike many other women who came to Kansas, he said, she was single and arrived alone. She had been a teacher in Missouri when she and two friends, sisters Alice and Mary Williams, left to make claims on land in Thomas County in 1885.

They came in a covered wagon, like many others, and had few personal possessions. Adrian said he feels he has a clock that Melissa brought with her.

He said that the law required potential landowners to spend six months of the year on the land for five years. Being afraid to stay alone at night, the women spent alternating nights at each other's homes.

The Williams girls eventually relinquished their claim, but Melissa kept hers, he said. She met and married James Wallace in October 1886. They were the 19th couple married in Thomas County and the second married in the Methodist Church. They had three children: Earl, Forrest and William. James died June 24, 1936, and Melissa died a short time later, on Sept. 14, 1936. Adrian said he was told she died of a broken heart more than anything else.

Fourth graders draw historic buildings here

A free exhibit of drawings by fourth graders at Colby Grade School will be on display at the Prairie Museum of Art and History from Tuesday through Friday, April 6. The drawings depict buildings important to the area's history. For information, call Ann Miner at (785) 460-4590 or e-mail museumed@st-tel.net.

Golden Plains juniors to have carnival Friday

The junior class at Golden Plains High School will hold its annual carnival at 7 p.m. Friday at the high school in Rexford. In addition to carnival games, there will be a cake walk and bingo. The Rexford Lions Club will have a soup supper at the school before the carnival, starting about 5 p.m. Donations from supper will go to help send students to Lions Band Camp. For information, call Mary Luna at (785) 687-3265.

College offers class on drawing the figure

A class in drawing a clothed figure will be offered from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesday and Thursday in room 502 of Ferguson Hall at Colby Community College. Cost is \$5 per session. Students must bring their own materials and be on time. For information, call instructor David Ketchum at (785) 687-2575.

Cemetery decorations need to be removed

All Christmas and nonpermanent decorations need to be removed from Beulah Cemetery by 5 p.m. Friday to allow for spring maintenance. For questions, call caretaker Deb Henry at 462-3188.

Aging board, advisors meet Tuesday in Oakley

The board and advisory council of the Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging will meet at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday at the Colonial Steakhouse in Oakley. For information, call Glenna Clingsmith at the agency at (800) 432-7422 or (785) 628-8204.

Commodities to be given out here March 26

U.S. Department of Agriculture commodities will be distributed from 1 to 2 p.m. next Monday at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center at Fike Park. Distribution is first come, first-served, but you may send a signed permission slip with another person. Bring a sack or box. Expected commodities include pasta, corn, cereal, apricots, chicken, figs and juice. For questions, call the office at 462-6744.

Free help with taxes offered by senior group

Free tax preparation will be available from experts trained by the American Association of Retired Persons Tax-Aide program, by appointment, Wednesdays through April 11 at the Colby Community College library. For an appointment, call Earle Rice at 462-2990.

Occupy protesters gearing up for the spring

From "OCCUPY," Page 1

Meanwhile, police were seeking a subpoena to identify an apparent Occupy protester who they said tweeted a threat to kill police officers, spokesman Paul Browne confirmed Sunday.

The New York Post and Daily News reported a message by an apparent Occupy protester saying they won't make a difference if they don't kill a cop or two was tweeted at about 11:40 p.m. Saturday.

The crackdown at Zuccotti happened late Saturday after hundreds of activists had gathered to mark the sixth-month birthday of the movement.

"There was a lot of silliness and just kind of singing and dancing and really very jo-

vial," said Chris Casuccio, who works for a nonprofit organization. "We had some banners up. There was one tarp that was up but it was tiny. It could fit like five people under it."

But Detective Brian Sessa of the NYPD said protesters had started breaking park rules against setting up tents and tarps.

Police said 73 people were detained. It was unclear how many were still in custody late Sunday. More than 70 people gathered at Union Square Park in lower Manhattan Sunday night and were still there early Monday morning.

Occupy activists said the officers moved in with little warning Saturday and beat some protesters. Police said Sunday they

had no information about any protesters being injured.

"They just came in swinging batons," said protester Sandra Nurse. She said a woman began having a seizure and another protester's head was "smashed into a building window."

Casuccio said protesters had little time to leave Zuccotti if they wanted to avoid arrest.

"They gave us one quick warning and then just came in, hundreds of people," he said.

Police responded to a request seeking a response to the accusations of brutality by releasing a video that they said showed Cecily McMillan, 23, elbowing a police officer in the face as she is led from Zuccotti Park.

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Table with columns for Tuesday Evening and Wednesday Evening, listing TV channels and programs from 7:00 to 11:30.

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