



RHONDA BARTON

Marilyn Luebbers drove out from Leoti Dec. 16 to join her mother, Georgie Bever, a resident at Deseret Health and Rehab, for a Christmas party at the nursing home.

# Inspection shows improved center

By Sam Dieter  
Colby Free Press  
sdieter@nwkansas.com

Deseret Health and Rehab in Colby is celebrating a recent state inspection during which the nursing home was cited only for a few relatively minor issues. And while that may not sound like much, it shows the home has come a long way in the last two years. There was a time when state officials were considering closing the facility after a string of bad inspections. The Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services inspected Deseret Nov. 5. The inspector wrote the home up for 13 "deficiencies," all for lesser issues, such as residents not getting their mail on Saturday. Deseret was required to submit a plan on how it would correct these issues, but was considered to comply with state regulations as of Dec. 5. This was the first time the nursing home had been inspected since the

state took it off a "special focus" list for substandard facilities in 2011. Joe Ewert, commissioner of survey and certification for the department, characterized the survey as normal. "I would say that sounds fairly middle of the road, pretty average," Ewert said. "It just sounds like a typical survey." Ewert said that the survey was average both in terms of the number of deficiencies given and their severity. He said on average, a skilled nursing facility like Deseret will get 10 deficiencies. "The number is probably about average," Ewert said. "That means that we saw all those deficiencies would be potential for harm but not actual harm." The department rates deficiencies on levels of "A" through "L," he explained. The 13 deficiencies on Deseret's report were rated from a "C" to an "E." Rhonda Barton, director of the home, said that this means the in-

spection did not turn up any major issues. "It could be so much as dust on a vent," she said. "There's no substandard care, no harm. These are minor deficiencies." Deficiencies rated "A" to "C" indicate that there was little potential for harm, Ewert said, while those rated "D" through "F" mean that the potential for more than minimal harm existed, but no actual harm occurred. Deficiencies rated between "G" and "I" would mean "actual harm" had occurred, while the highest tags of "J" to "L" would indicate that an issue had put a resident in "immediate jeopardy," such as having someone get out of the facility. "I'm very proud of our survey," Barton said. "That is an excellent survey. We aren't that facility that was here two years ago." Audrey Sunderraj, director of survey and certification for the

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# Hoxie native starts social network site for kids

Joni Albers, a Hoxie native who now lives on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, is reaching out to her Kansas roots for help as she launches a new, safe social network for kids called "Change My World Now."

Building on a 14-year business partnership with best-selling children's author Gina Otto, Albers is now director of operations of their company. Together, she said, the team has build a social network to teach kids how to change the world for the better. "Growing up in Hoxie was the best possible place to help me to do all that

I am doing now in New York," she said. "It takes a strong work ethic and a good personal compass to navigate Wall Street and the tech world in Manhattan. "I moved to NYC in 2008, the week that the stock market crashed. I actually moved into an apartment on Wall Street. It was like a ghost town, and I remember how helpless I felt. Gina and I both believe that almost everyone wants to change the world for the better, but we

don't always know how and we don't always have time. "That is why we created "Change My World Now," to empower kids to find their voice and to help them become individuals of consequence. We expose kids to issues that affect their world and then systematically take them through the steps of how to lend their time, their energy and their creativity to any problem." With multiple layers of security, Albers

and Otto say they have created a safe social network for kids. To launch the Internet site, they are starting a "crowd-funding" campaign to ask people everywhere to help them build something they feel parents and children want. Crowd-funding has become one of the quickest ways to launch a company or project, Albers said. It allows anyone to

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# Fewer banks failing at year end

By Marcy Gordon  
AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. banks are ending the year with their best profits since 2006 and fewer failures than at any time since the financial crisis struck in 2008. They're helping support an economy slowed by high unemployment, flat pay, sluggish manufacturing and anxious consumers. As the economy heals from the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, more people and businesses are taking out — and repaying — loans. And for the first time since 2009, banks' earnings growth is being driven by higher revenue — a healthy trend. Banks had previously managed to boost earnings by putting aside less money for possible losses.

Signs of the industry's gains: • Banks are earning more. In the July-September quarter, the industry's earnings reached \$37.6 billion, up from \$35.3 billion a year earlier. It was the best showing since the July-September quarter of 2006, long before the financial meltdown. By contrast, at the depth of the Great Recession in the last quarter of 2008, the industry lost \$32 billion. • Banks are lending a bit more freely. The value of loans to consumers rose 3.2 percent in the 12 months that ended Sept. 30 compared with the previous 12 months, according to data from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. More lending fuels more consumer spending, which drives about 70 percent of economic ac-

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# Weird occurrences pop up in Florida

By Brendan Farrington  
The Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — In 2012, Florida was the state where a lifeguard got fired for saving a life, a woman got arrested for riding a manatee and a man repeatedly used 911 as a phone sex service. Think that's weird? It gets worse — and more tragic. In one of the state's most horrifying stories of the year, a man stripped a homeless man naked

and attacked him in Miami, chewing off most of his face before police shot him dead. And it wasn't the only story of its kind. In Manatee County, deputies used several Tasers to subdue a naked man who bit off part of another man's arm. Later in the year, a man won a roach-eating contest outside a Deerfield Beach pet store and then dropped dead in front of the store when body parts of the roaches he swallowed blocked his airway. "We tend to be a magnet from every direction for all kinds of sketchery," said Billy Corben, a documentary film director whose

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# Traffic slows in Colby

Recent snow storms did not deter traffic last week, Sheriff's Deputy Lexi David (above) stopped drivers at Franklin and Fifth to reroute traffic for a funeral block. Even after the storms had ended, a snow plow (left) could still be seen driving past the college Friday.

SAM DIETER  
KAYLA CORNETT  
Colby Free Press

