

Weather

Inspection shows improved center

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department, said that in June 2006 Deseret was labelled for "special focus," which means the state imposes tougher penalties on nursing homes for issues found during inspections and inspects a home every six months, instead of once a year.

During an August 2010 survey, the home was cited for improperly managing a resident's pain medication, a "G" deficiency, and for allowing residents to be near water in a piece of therapy equipment that reached 170 degrees, rated as a "K".

"They never got to the point where they lost their certification," Ewert said. "(But) they were on a bad run."

To get off the special-focus list, the home had to complete two consecutive inspections with no deficiency rated "F" or higher, Sunderraj said. Deseret was taken off of the list in August 2011 after passing such a survey and another one in February of that year.

"We've given the facility a face lift," said Barton, who said she started as an assistant

administrator at the home in January 2010 and took over the top job in June 2011. "We've changed every aspect of the facility. That's why it's so much better than it was."

One challenge Deseret faces, she said, is that it's certified as what is known as a skilled nursing facility, subject to tougher series standards than many others. The home has to keep nurses on the premises all day and its staff are skilled at complex medical procedures such as intravenous medication and occupational therapy.

The other most common type the state inspects is an assisted living facility, which caters to people who can still more or less live on their own, helping them with meals, laundry, managing their medication and providing social opportunities.

"Nursing facilities have basically the oldest of the old, and the most at-risk folks," Ewert said. "The risks are higher."

Assisted living facilities are inspected only according to state regulations, Ewert said, but skilled nursing homes must undergo a computerized process of inspections

handed down by the federal government. This includes 358 categories under which a skilled nursing facility is inspected, each of which could result in a deficiency.

"It's very difficult to compare a skilled nursing facility to an assisted living facility," Ewert said, "and as far as the survey goes, I wouldn't even try to compare the two."

Nursing homes which are heavily cited during inspections are sometimes required to send the state a plan of corrections to fix the issues that turned up, Ewert said. The state will consider pulling a nursing home's license if it goes six months without correcting an issue.

The state might also hit a nursing home with fines, start monitoring it or deny Medicare or Medicaid coverage to new residents coming to the facility. Deseret was not given any of these penalties. On the recent survey, Sunderraj said, the home was asked to submit a plan saying how it would correct the deficiencies it did receive.

Weird occurrences pop up in Florida

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works include "Cocaine Cowboys," about Miami's cocaine wars in the 1980s.

Corben, whose "The Billy Pulpit" website compiles weird Florida news, said Floridians tend to show up in high numbers on "The Jerry Springer Show" and "America's Most Wanted." And odd stories elsewhere always seem to have a Florida tie — like former CIA director David Petraeus's extramarital affair being exposed through a Tampa socialite. And when anti-virus software founder John McAfee ran from authorities in Belize

who wanted to question him about the death of a neighbor, he wound up in Miami Beach, where he shopped, ate sushi and posed for photos with tourists.

Then again, this is the state where Gov. Rick Scott mistakenly gave the media a phone sex number to promote a meningitis hot line.

After a broadcaster posted it, at least one caller was greeted with a recording of "Hello boys..." from a lusty sounding lady.

Several gaffes involved hunting Floridians.

There were the two guys in Santa Rosa County who used a

bow and arrow to kill a neighbor's pet turkey, which they planned to eat on Thanksgiving. Then there was a Flagler County man who shot his girlfriend in the legs because he thought she was a wild hog.

A mother and daughter were sentenced to two months in jail for using two dogs to kill a farm-raised pig in their backyard. They posted video of the attack on Facebook, which led to their arrest.

Ah, Facebook! It caused trouble for several other Floridians.

A Sarasota County man was kicked off a jury after a judge learned he'd sent the defendant

a Facebook friend request. The juror further infuriated the judge with a Facebook post bragging about getting dismissed from jury duty. He got three days in jail.

A Manatee County music teacher was issued a verbal warning for a Facebook conversation in which she described an 8-year-old student as the "evolutionary link between orangutans and humans." A high school science teacher also had some explaining to do when she put a cone-shaped dog collar on at least eight students and the "cone of shame" photos appeared on Facebook.

Hoxie native starts social network site

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contribute by giving any amount of money. It can be \$5 or \$5,000. Contributors get perks and rewards in return for their support.

"I think one of the coolest perks we are offering," says Albers, "is for a kid to be

able to work directly with our game designers to create a fun, high quality game of his or her creation."

Albers said she's hoping people in Kansas can help bring the network to life.

"I know that you are the people who understand the value of giving our children the tools and resources to become the leaders of

tomorrow," she said. "With your help, we can truly make a difference in the lives of the next generation, our most precious resource."

For information or to participate, go to www.IndieGoGo.com/ChangeMyWorld-Now.

Fewer U.S. banks failing; banks make best profits since 2006

From "BANKS," Page 1

activity. At the same time, overall lending remains well below levels considered healthy over the long run.

Fewer banks are considered at risk of failure. In July through September, the number of banks on the FDIC's confidential "problem list" fell for a sixth straight quarter. These banks numbered 694 as of Sept. 30 — about 9.6 percent of all federally insured banks. At its peak in the first quarter of 2011, the number of troubled banks was 888, or

11.7 percent of all federally insured institutions.

Bank failures have declined. In 2009, 140 failed. In 2010, more banks failed — 157 — than in any year since the savings and loan crisis of the early 1990s. In 2011, regulators closed 92. This year, the number of failures has trickled to 51. That's still more than normal. In a strong economy, an average of only four or five banks close each year. But the sharply reduced pace of closings shows sustained improvement.

Less threat of loan losses. The

money banks had to set aside for possible losses fell 15 percent in the July-September quarter from a year earlier.

Loan portfolios have strengthened as more customers have repaid on time. Losses have fallen for nine straight quarters. And the proportion of loans with payments overdue by 90 days or more has dropped for 10 straight quarters.

The biggest boost for banks is the gradually strengthening economy. Employers added nearly 1.7 million jobs in the first 11 months of 2012. More people

employed mean more people and businesses can repay loans. And after better-than-expected economic news last week, some analysts said the economy could end up growing faster in the October-December quarter — and next year — than previously thought.

That assumes Congress and the White House can strike a budget deal to avert the "fiscal cliff" — the steep tax increases and spending cuts that are set to kick in Jan. 1. If they don't reach a deal, those measures could significantly weaken the economy.

Banks have also been bolstered by higher capital, their cushion against risk. Banks boosted capital 3.8 percent in the third quarter, FDIC data show. And the industry's average ratio of capital to assets reached a record high.

On the other hand, many banks are no longer benefiting from record-low interest rates. They still pay almost nothing to depositors and on money borrowed from other banks or the government. But steadily lower rates on loans other than credit cards have reduced how much banks earn.

Briefly

Hospital plans classes for expectant mothers

Citizens Medical Center will offer four weeks of childbirth classes from 7 to 10 p.m. Thursdays starting Jan. 10. Women due to deliver before May should attend with their labor support partner. The next classes won't begin until April. For information or to register, call Jeanene Brown at the hospital's Education Department, 460-4850.

No trash routes; landfill closed on New Year's

The Colby Sanitation Department will not pick up trash on Tuesday for New Year's Day. People on Tuesday routes should put trash out by 8 a.m. Wednesday. For questions, call Public Works Director Omar Weber at 460-4420.

The Thomas County Landfill will be closed Tuesday for New Year's Day. For questions, call supervisor Larry Jumper at 462-8139.

District court will close today for end of year

The Thomas County District Court will be closing at noon today, New Year's Eve, to finish end-of-the-year accounting. For information, contact Clerk Kim Schwarz at 460-4540.

Free adult classes to begin next week

The Adult Education Department at Colby Community College is offering free General Educational Development classes for anyone who needs to finish a high-school degree beginning next Monday in the lower level of the library on campus. The department also will provide an "academic bridge" to prepare those who want to enroll in health-care programs. For information, call Director Nance Munderloh at 460-4663.

College offers four beginning craft classes

Colby Community College plans four weeks of introductory craft classes beginning Monday, Jan. 14. The three-credit-hour class will meet from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Mondays in Room 502 of Ferguson Hall. Rod Rodenbeck will teach stained glass, Rebel Jay variety crafts, including print making and assemblage sculpture from junk, Chris Thummel acrylic painting and Donna Roberts paper making and book binding. Enrollment is limited to 15; there will be a \$30 charge for materials. For information, call Jay at (785) 269-7065.

Volunteers needed to deliver home meals

The Colby Nutrition Site at the Senior Progress Center needs volunteers to deliver meals to homes from 10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays or Thursdays. Call Kaila DeBoer at 460-2901 for information.

Group needs 'bigs' to work with children

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Thomas County is looking for people able to volunteer one to two hours a week as mentors for kids who need a "big." For questions, call Orvella Romine at 460-9125.

LOCAL TV Listings Sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Table with columns for Tuesday Evening and January 1, 2013, listing various TV channels and programs from 7:00 to 11:30 PM.

Wednesday Evening January 2, 2013. Includes American Profile section with the headline 'We Celebrate Hometown Life' and a grid of program listings.