

Goodland man's grandson brings stories of Nepal

By Pat Schiefen
The Goodland Star-News
 You've graduated from high school, you're not sure about college, so you decide to go to tiny Nepal, nestled among the Himalayan mountains between India and China, for two years as a missionary.

the people live in poverty. Ryan Tedford, 21, just returned from this adventure, full of stories about the south Asian land.



Tedford

Ryan, a grandson of Lawrence Tedford of Goodland, said that when he graduated from high school in Castle Rock, Colo., he didn't know what he wanted to do.

Of course, the country, poor and isolated, is predominantly Hindu and takes a dim view of Christian evangelists.

A friend suggested he might think about going to Nepal as a missionary since he likes to hike. Parts of Nepal are rugged, and the tallest peak, Mount Everest, is a big attraction for climb-

ers. He went to the Evangelical Free Church in Castle Rock.

"It changed every aspect of my life," he said of the trip.

Since his return, Ryan said, he is planning to go to college and major in community development.

"I want to go back someday," he added.

In Nepal, he said, it is against the law for missionaries to evangelize or pass out religious materials. The official religion is Hinduism and only in the last 50 or so years have other religions been somewhat tolerated.

Most of the time, he added, they had no problems. The few times he and other missionaries was stopped

and taken to jail. He said his group always managed to talk their way out of trouble.

Tedford said he had a student visa for one year and a tourist visa for another. During his student year, he took language classes to learn the trade language, Nepali.

He said Nepali is similar to Hindi. The country has 120 languages and tribes, and the climate varies from tropical to mountain. The main groups that live in the country are immigrants from India in the lowlands, Tibetan immigrants in between and native tribes in the mountains.

A majority, about 75 percent, of the people are Hindu and 15 percent

Buddhist, he said, while the other 10 percent are Moslem, Christian and atheist.

The country has around 27 million people with 3 million in the capital of Katmandu. The country has a caste system, Brahman, Kshatriya, Napali and low caste.

Tedford said they would hike into remote villages for three weeks at a time.

"The people are very open and friendly," he said. "When you needed a place to stop and food, you would ask people and they would help. Their diet consists mainly of lentils, rice and vegetables."

In the villages, they have no television, telephone or filtered

water, he said.

Tedford said they carried religious tracts which they would sell for a rupee, about five cents.

The tracts meant more if people had to buy them, he said. When they would return, people would ask about the tracts and possibly convert.

The country has Marxist rebels called Maoists, who have caused instability, he said.

Tedford said he helped start the Samaritan's Children Home outside of Katmandu for kids whose families are not able to take care of them. He is raising money to support the home. He said it takes \$30 a month to support one child.

Aging population increasing

Today there are more than 35 million Americans who are 65 or older. By the year 2030, that age group is expected to increase to about 71.5 million.

Over the next 20 years, as the "Baby Boomers" age, the challenges facing senior citizens and their families will increase. Dealing with life losses and grief will be primary issues, but along with that is the need for good communication among family members in regard to the wishes and desires of their elderly members.

Many people have said that change is a constant and the price we pay the longer we live. As people age, some of the changes they deal with are physical in nature, such as a decrease in energy and loss of physical strength, and some changes are cognitive, such as difficulty remembering certain events and a decrease in the ability to concentrate. Inevitable and unavoidable changes as people age have to do with losses, particularly the deaths of family members, friends, neighbors or a spouse.

As parents age, good communi-



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cation among family members is vital, especially as a means of preparing for new circumstances before changes become major problems.

For example, a discussion with aging parents about living arrangements is a difficult conversation, but it can be much more difficult if family members wait for a health crisis to force such a discussion.

Some aging parents reach a decision to downsize or simplify their lives, which brings a good opportunity to talk with their adult children about finances, prized belongings and how to disperse or divide property.

Other issues to cover include what to do if one parent requires nursing home care while the other is still able to live independently in

their own home.

It is also a good idea to talk about funeral arrangements long before the service is actually needed. Although it is hard to face the mortality

of loved ones, when family members take the time early on to consider different ideas and opinions, this final loss can be dealt with better.

When major decisions are made ahead of time, those involved can then focus more on feelings and the emotional support needed when the changes actually occur.

Contributed by Ken Loos, Consultation and Education Department. The views expressed here are those of the individual writer and should not be considered a replacement for seeking professional help.

Mail questions to High Plains Mental Health Center, Plain Sense, Consultation and Education Department, 208 E. Seventh, Hays, Kan. 67601. Internet site: www.highplainsmentalhealth.com.

matters of record

Sherman County Sheriff
 The following accidents have been reported to the Sherman County Sheriff:

Nov. 16 — Richard J. Collier, 34, of Hereford, Texas, was driving north on Hwy. 27 at 159.7 at 6:05 a.m. when he fell asleep. The vehicle drifted right, entered east ditch and rolled on the passenger side. Driver and passenger Le Ann Breadley, 35, of Dumas, Tx., were checked by EMS and both refused treatment. Neither were wearing seat belts.

Nov. 22 — Melissa Leann Schritter, 19, was driving north .6 mile from County Road 77 on County Road 5 at 1:30 p.m. when she overcorrected her gray 2005 Mazda after going off the road, returned to the

road, lost control, went into the ditch and rolled once. She was wearing a seat belt and was transported to Goodland Regional Medical Center. Car was owned by Neil Schritter.

Nov. 27 — Kathryn A. Gustafson, 25, of Fort Collins, Colo., in her red 2000 Jetta was westbound on I-70 by the Ruleton exit when a deer appeared in the median, ran into the roadway, was struck and killed. Gustafson was using her seatbelt and was uninjured but her vehicle sustained major damage.

Dec. 8 — Ian J. Talbot, 22, of Edson was traveling west at 4 p.m. on Hwy. 24 in 98 Ford SUV when he hit Michael Johnson, 14, who pulled out into the lane of traffic in

a yellow 2000 Dodge. Talbot's passengers Daniel Munford, 21, and Brian Toohey, 21, both of Edson were uninjured and wearing seat belts. The SUV is owned by Farris Brothers Inc. Johnson had stopped at a stop sign at Hwy. 24 on County Rd. 21 and did not see Talbot's vehicle when he pulled out.

Dec. 18 — Sandy Vasquex, 25 was driving his white 2004 Pontiac Grand Am and was stopped in traffic at 16st Street waiting to turn on K-27 at 6:05 p.m. when she was struck in the rear by Michelle Bryce, 23 in a gray 1993 Mercury Topaz. Bryce said she had to swerve to the right to avoid to being hit by an unidentified vehicle. Both were wearing seat belts.

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