

# Congressman to visit Wednesday

First District Congressman Jerry Moran (R-Hays) plans to stop in Goodland Wednesday morning as part of his Big First Listening Tour.

The congressman will talk with people from 9 to 10 a.m. at the Northwest Kansas Technical College Student Union, 1209 Harrison Ave. "This marks my 12th annual lis-

tening tour," Moran said. "Traveling the state provides an opportunity to listen to Kansans.

"I continue this tradition to make sure I know what is on the minds of Kansans and to bring their thoughts and concerns back to Washington, where I work to address them. I (plan to) visit all 69 counties of the 1st Congressional District."

# Colby nursing home among worst in state

By Kevin Johnson  
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A Colby facility placed high on a list of Kansas nursing home with problems put together each year by an advocacy group working from state inspection records.

Colby Care, 105 E. College Drive, owned by Deseret Nursing and Rehab with headquarters in Centerville, Utah, was the only area nursing facility on the list, but it placed toward the top with 40 deficiencies identified by the state Department of Aging, which check homes for compliance with federal Medicare and Medicaid standards.

The new owner says its took over in June and have been working on the problems since then. He says he thinks they are making progress, but acknowledged that the violations are a problem.

The group Kansas Advocates for Better Care issued a news release Dec. 28 with its annual list of nursing homes with "poor inspection trends." The group said the list includes Kansas nursing homes with 10 or more deficiencies for each of their three most recent inspections.

Homes statewide ranged from no deficiencies to 53, with the the group said, while national average is eight. Over 20 percent of Kansas nursing homes are on the list, the group said, and many were cited for problems which could cause actual harm, immediate jeopardy and/or deficiencies classified by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as "mistreatment" of residents.

"We have had admittedly our share of difficulty over the past year in getting our programs up to their standards and up to our own standards," said Chad Hansen, vice president of operations for Deseret. "We want to exceed the minimal state standard, and we have had some difficulty in doing that over the past year."

Some of the standards not met at Colby Care, listed in the Nursing Home report at medicare.gov, include:

- Give each resident care and services to get or keep the highest quality of life possible.
- Give residents proper treatment to prevent new bed (pressure) sores or heal existing bed sores.
- Make sure each resident who enters the nursing home without a catheter is not given a catheter, unless it is necessary.
- Make sure that each residents' abilities to take care of themselves does not lessen, unless a change cannot be avoided.
- Prevent a loss in range of motion among residents who enter the home with a full range of motion.

All of these deficiencies, compiled over a series of visits, are considered "actual harm" by the Medicare investigating entity. That put Colby Care in the status of a

"special focus facility," which because of a history of "noncompliance" is inspected every three to six months instead of yearly.

"Typically this means the facility is in trouble," Lenette Ham of the Kansas Advocates for Better Care said. "They are given the opportunity to do some serious review and work to get back up to par. They have had a number of changes over the past few years with ownership and management, and that may have attributed to a downturn."

Colby Care was taken over by Deseret in June, and Hansen said the previous owner, Infinia at Colby Inc., did not leave the firm in a good position

"It is no secret that we didn't come in here with a clean slate," Hansen said. "We knew that coming in, so we knew our work was cut out for us. I am not minimizing or brushing aside anything. It is all very important to us.

"We want to provide good customer service, provide an excellent place to work and be an asset to the community, but in some cases, because of the previous owners, we were kind of behind and we have tried hard to improve and are improving tremendously."

Hansen acknowledged the deficiencies at Colby Care on Thursday, saying he and his staff were working hard and taking the proper steps to get the facility back up to par.

"Right now we are on track," Hansen said. "We are surveyed every six months, and what they do is come in and look over our facilities and processes and give us their results and from there we have to write a corrective plan for each issue. We will have this issue corrected by a certain time and they can come back any time after that said time and resurvey and re-evaluate what we've done and if it the problem is fixed then they clear it; if not, then they address that appropriately.

"The bottom line is that since the original survey, which I think was in May or June, we were cited for a significant number of things that were not up to standard, and I don't want to minimize what was cited, or brush it aside or anything. There were some significant issues that have required a substantial amount of effort, resources and money to improve, and we have made some tremendous progress since then.

"We are working hard to make improvements necessary to what has been identified by the (Kansas) Department of Aging, as well as the problems that have been identified by us.

"When they come in to identify something, it is the standard, it is the way it needs to be. We don't feel picked on or anything. The issues pointed out and brought up are legitimate. I kind of look at this business as we are continually trying to improve and continually trying to make our programs and services better for the residents, become a better employer for people who work here, become a better asset for the community.

"This isn't the kind of a project where you begin and end and it is all done; this is the kind of thing you start, you manage, you improve, like a tree that sometimes has to be pruned or gets infested with some type of disease that has to be treated, that is sort of the stage we are in right now.

# Historic house bright in winter dress



The historic Ennis-Handy House sparkled in the snow last month. December provided a downy backdrop with 14.2 inches of snow during the month to make it the 10th snowiest December on record in Goodland. The weather was expected to be clear and

warmer through the weekend, but the National Weather Service predicted a small chance of light snow early this week.

Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

# Brewster girl fights back from tumor

By John Van Nostrand  
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Christmas celebrates the miracle birth of Jesus Christ from his virgin mother Mary, but in Brewster, another parent-child relationship involves a miracle for one family.

Whitney Schultz, 15, a freshman at Brewster High School, is getting her life back to what it was before she was diagnosed with a brain tumor on Labor Day weekend.

"She was very lucky," said Dawn Schultz, Whitney's mother, works at Prairie Land Insurance in Colby. "The cancer had not spread. I prayed for a miracle." Whitney's father is Mike Schultz, Brewster city superintendent and a farmer.

Whitney's life changed during the summer.

"In July, I went to a volleyball camp and had headaches and was dizzy," she said over her school lunch. "And it kept coming on, even after the camp."

During the Thomas County Fair, she said, the symptoms returned, but she thought she was just dehydrated. During preseason volleyball practices, the headaches continued.

"I would dive for a ball and feel dizzy," she said.

Bouncing off the floor for loose balls, Whitney thought she developed some back problems. She went to a chiropractor for treatments, which she said made her feel better, but only temporarily.

"After a volleyball game against Wheatland, she said she wanted to go back to the chiropractor," Dawn said. "On the way home, she said she had thrown up and had a headache."

Dawn said she decided to take Whitney to a doctor. Tests for mononucleosis and West Nile Virus were negative. She had symptoms for a sinus infection. The medication didn't help, though, and the headaches continued. Dawn took Whitney to the Citizens Medical Center emergency room in Colby Sept. 3.

"They did blood work and other tests," Dawn said. "I thought she was just dehydrated. I blamed it on starting volleyball, starting school."

Whitney was treated and released, but later in the day, Whitney and Dawn were eating at a relative's

house in Brewster. Whitney told her mom she had lost feeling in an arm, leg and half her face.

"She was starting to slur words," Dawn said. "That made me panic."

Whitney was shocked. "I was getting bad," she said. "I lost my balance and was having seizures."

Even before the loss of feeling came on, Whitney said, her 7-year-old cousin, who was playing with the families' dogs, noticed a change in her.

"Why are you so lazy?" Whitney said her cousin asked.

"Labor Day weekend was not fun," Whitney said. "All I wanted to do was sleep."

Dawn, 48, took Whitney back to the emergency room.

"This will be a repeat of what we did earlier," Dawn remembered telling others.

Andy Rose, a physician's assistant, was on call and ordered a CAT scan, a high-tech, detailed body X-ray. Nothing abnormal appeared on the results.

"Her eyes looked wild, like she wasn't focusing," Dawn said. After the CAT scan, Whitney had a seizure. Rose ordered another CAT scan, which revealed the brain tumor.

"Remember him saying, 'I've got to see you in the hall,'" Dawn said. "Oh my gosh. ....no."

After Rose explained the tumor, he said Whitney should be flown to Children's Hospital in Denver for treatment. About 90 minutes later, Whitney was on a flight to Denver left.

Whitney, who just a few days before had been putting volleyballs over nets, was preparing to have part of her skull removed to allow doctors to get to her brain. Dawn said she handled the surgery well.

"I wasn't scared for surgery," Whitney said, "but I had my moments. I thought I'd never be the same."

It wasn't a physical change Whitney went through. Whitney said what helped her through her ordeal was what had happened to her mother five years ago.

"I had breast cancer," Dawn said. "I went through chemo and radiation. She knew by watching me what it's like. We are very close."

The timing of Whitney's incident is intriguing to Dawn.

"She's at the age kids want their independence, but she is depending upon me. We traveled this journey together. She is amazing."

Whitney remembers a conversation she had with her mother.

"Mom, is that why you got it, to prepare me for this?" she asked.

The three-doctor team in Denver that handled Whitney's case said her surgery was a success and they were able to remove the entire tumor.

"She woke up perfectly," Dawn said. "She moved everything. They have to tell you everything that could go wrong."

Doctors noticed four lesions on Whitney's spine, more possible cancer, but three of them eventually faded away.

While in Denver, a friend of Dawn's visited Whitney in the hospital. Dawn said they talked about why people are put in certain situations.

"It has strengthened her faith and spirit," Dawn said. "I believe to get through what she is going through, you have to have faith and attitude. Both of them are working."

Whitney agrees.

"God is great," she said.

For the following two months, Whitney stayed in Denver to begin "maintenance chemotherapy" to ensure the cancer would not return. While there, Whitney said she met another girl who was also facing cancer. Whitney said they talked about each other's situations.

Whitney and Dawn noticed another patient who was in a wheelchair and had noticeable disabilities.

"She turned to me and said, 'Mom, I've got a lot to be thankful for.'"

Whitney's older sister, Avery, a 2007 Brewster graduate, dropped out of the University of Kansas and returned to Brewster to help Whitney and the family. Avery had started college with a bout of pneumonia.

"I was getting better, but went back to Brewster and noticed Whitney was getting worse," she said.

The cancer diagnosis influenced Avery to quit school on Sept. 21. She

offered to help around the house, and she goes with Whitney to chemotherapy treatments in Denver. The time spent has improved their relationship, not that it was bad to begin with.

"We are a lot closer," Avery said.

Avery will begin classes at Colby Community College in January. What happens two years from now, when she finishes, isn't important, she said; being there for family now is.

"I don't want to think long-term, because it can change like that," Avery said with a snap of her fingers.

Knowing she would be in Denver for weeks, a relative bought Whitney a computer to use in the hospital so she could keep in touch with friends and family in Brewster. Flowers, balloons and gifts filled her room.

Whitney was eventually able to go home on weekends, which seemed strange.

"I felt like I was living in Denver but visiting Brewster," she recalled.

While she was in Denver, she said, the hospital mail clerk told her he had never seen so much mail for one person. Hewas surprised to hear about how small Brewster is, just 300 people.

"The people of Brewster and northwest Kansas are amazing," Dawn said. "It's not the quantity of people you know, it's the quality."

Whitney returned home in mid-November, missing all but two matches of the volleyball season. She is still catching up with missed school work and her physical activity is limited. She is not to play basketball or other sport for fear of injuring her head. She can't ride horses, she said, but she is allowed to be a cheerleader.

"I love volleyball," she added.

Whitney's chemotherapy treatments in Denver will continue every four to six weeks through October.

Dawn said she will always remember that Labor Day weekend, but a friend of hers, who is also a cancer survivor, sent her a Christmas card that she will always cherish.

"The card says the virgin birth is a true miracle. You have witnessed one, too."

## corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

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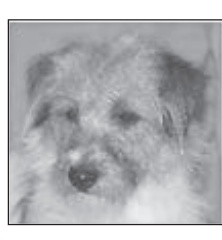
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