

Orthopedic surgeon joins staff at Colby

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press
Patients at Citizens Medical Center in Colby will no longer have to travel for orthopedic services since Dr. Mekki Saba, a general orthopedic surgeon, joined the staff Monday, July 10.

Janice McCart, president and chief executive officer at the hospital, said the opportunity to add services came along at the right time.

"It's a service we knew we could offer at the hospital if we could find the right surgeon," she said.

Saba, 66, said he is happy to be in Colby and ready to offer orthopedic



Saba

and trauma services

"I believe we can fix it and make a big difference to patients if we do it at home and not be transferred somewhere else," Dr. Saba said. "I'm very much excited. I aim to make Colby the orthopedic center for small communities."

He graduated from Baghdad Medical College in 1967 and continued his medical training in London. He received his specialty in general surgery from the Royal College of Surgeons before beginning his training in orthopedics. Saba has been practicing orthopedic surgery since 1980.

After completing his training, he waited for a permanent job in England, but there were limited vacancies. He said for every job that came open, there were up to 200 applicants.

After four years of waiting, Saba had two options — more training or go somewhere British training would be accepted.

A friend who trained with him heard about an opening in Fort Scott, and he applied. He interviewed for the job and received his license while working as a consultant and surgeon in the United Arab Emirates. Saba was in Fort Scott 15 years.

He chose orthopedics for one reason: "You can see results from your work immediately."

For example, he said, if he does a hip replacement, the patient can walk the next day "and will have a smile on their face."

"He does all orthopedic procedures except for the upper back," McCart said, including hips, ankles, feet, shoulders and the lower back.

Jennifer Scott, director of ancillary services, said surgery on the upper back requires a neurologist and equipment not available at the hospital.

Saba will evaluate orthopedic trauma, she said. If someone received a deep laceration damaging the muscle, tendon or ligaments, he will be able to determine if the problem can be treated in Colby or the patient must be taken elsewhere.

In the past, the hospital has had

services of specialty doctors from Denver and Hays who came to Colby to evaluate them, but patients have had to travel for procedures.

With the addition of Saba, McCart said, a second operating room is being added at the hospital. New x-ray equipment has been ordered, and an orthopedic operating table installed. Staff is also being trained to assist with orthopedic surgery.

McCart said a second operating room has been planned for some time, and the addition of Saba came at the right time.

"If an orthopedic procedure is being done, and someone needs, for example, an emergency Cesarean, that is where the second operating room will come in," she said.

The room, still under construction, is estimated to cost \$200,000. Some of the equipment will be intermixed with the current operating room.

"This is still adding a new line of service, which is exciting to us to have someone of his caliber on the staff," McCart said.

McCart said the hospital had considered a partnership with Rawlins County Hospital in Atwood to bring Saba here. He was going to help cover the emergency room there and offer orthopedic services at both hospitals, but Atwood chose to go in a different direction.

"We feel fortunate to have him," she said. "It's a win-win situation for northwest Kansas."

School board spends day in training session

The Goodland School Board explored what it thought were the strengths and weaknesses of the school district at a "whole-board training session" Tuesday morning.

Shelly Angelos, who took over as superintendent July 1, said at the last board meeting on Wednesday, July 5, that she wanted to have a session so that everyone would be "on the same page."

Dr. Bill Majors with the Kansas Association of School Boards in Topeka ran the session.

He divided and combined con-

cerns and goals of the board members, said Pat Juhl, school board clerk.

Majors took the condensed concerns and goals back to Topeka with him and will prepare an outline that can be discussed, added to or subtracted from for the board at a meeting on Monday, Aug. 7.

The things listed by the board members included technology, curriculum and budget concerns, Juhl said. Strengths included buildings. Air conditioning the buildings is top concern for some members.

School enrollment and how the Legislature will fund the schools is a big concern, Angelos said.

"It was really good," LeAnn Friedrichs, a board member, said of the discussion.

In other business, the board accepted resignations from Venesa Rinhart as a fourth-grade teacher at Central Elementary School, Yvonne Koehler as high school activities secretary and Nora Garcia as an English as a second language tutor at West Elementary School.

Candidates on public television for state Board of Education

A debate with the three candidates for the 5th District seat on the state Board of Education, representing much of western Kansas, will be broadcast at 6 p.m. Mountain Time on Thursday by Smoky Hills Public Television.

The debate includes incumbent Connie Morris, a Republican from St. Francis; her primary challenger, Sally Cauble, a Republican from Liberal; and Tim Cruz, the only Democrat, from Garden City.

The debate will take place before an audience at Fort Hays State University's Beach/Schmidt Per-

forming Arts Center.

Chapman Rackaway, assistant professor of political science, will moderate the discussion with Patrick Lowry, executive editor of *The Hays Daily News*, and Larry Dreiling of the *High Plains Journal* at press representatives.

A taped replay will be shown at 5 p.m. Mountain Time on Sunday, July 30.

Lawrence Holden, station general manager, said the debate would be the first of several in a *Kansas Candidates Debate* series leading up to the November election.

Three of the candidates seeking the Republican nomination for governor will be in a one-hour election special at 4 p.m. on Sunday, July 30, on the station.

Scheduled to appear are Jim Barnett, Emporia; Ken Canfield, Overland Park; and Robin Jennison, Healey.

Dale Goter, public affairs editor at KPTS, Wichita, and Bob Beatty, a political science professor at Washburn University, will moderate this program.

Colby man arrested for child molestation

A Colby man was arrested shortly after midnight last Thursday for allegedly having sex with a child.

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn, in a written statement, said his office was notified about an alleged case of indecent liberties with a child at 7:18 p.m. Thursday.

He said Melvin W. Myers, 59, was arrested at 12:22 a.m. after a search warrant was executed at a home in the 3400 block of County Road B.

Myers, who has been using the alias of Pete Helt, was arrested on charges of rape, aggravated indecent liberties with a child and criminal sodomy. Those charges have

been forwarded to Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick for review, the sheriff said.

Baughn said preliminary information indicates Myers may be

wanted in Oklahoma.

Baughn said the Logan County sheriff's office and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation assisted in the investigation.

corrections

An article on tornado response on Page 3 of the Tuesday, July 18, *Goodland Star-News* said incorrectly that Judy McKee is replacing Conger as emergency management assistant director. Conger, director of central dispatch, will handle communication during an emergency, said Director Gary Rogers, and McKee will help run the office. Rogers is based in St. Francis.

The director said people can make reports to emergency management through central dispatch, (785) 899-4575, or dial 911 in emergency. The number given in the

story is for Neighborhood Watch calls.

These mistakes were due to reporting errors.

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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.

Fair will be starting soon



Wednesday morning around 10:30 a.m., Josh Doke (above) and Emily Murray were painting store windows downtown for the Northwest Kansas District Free Fair. The Country Clovers 4-H Club has done the windows as a fund raiser for scholarships and club events for at least 16 years. Photo by Erica Harlan/The Goodland Star-News

**Classifieds
work!
899-2338**



Hays Medical Center
WELCOMES
Hrushikesh Vaidya, MD
to Pulmonology Associates
of Hays

Dr. Vaidya completed his Internal Medicine Residency and Pulmonary and Critical Care Fellowship at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, Arkansas. Dr. Vaidya is board certified in Internal Medicine and Pulmonary Medicine. Dr. Vaidya is accepting appointments for pulmonary and sleep patients beginning July 10th at Pulmonology Associates of Hays.

Please welcome Dr. Vaidya and his family to Hays!

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