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Officer Jeff Illk has 28 years of service

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Jamie Augustyn has career-high game

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EMPORIA GAZETTE WEEKEND

NOVEMBER 28 AND 29, 2009

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Keeping Families Together

Corner House project would serve mothers and children



MICHAEL K. DAKOTA/GAZETTE

Ray Toso of the Clint Bowyer 79 Fund board and Sara Hansen, executive director of Corner House, stand in between Corner House on the right and the site where Corner House wants to build residential housing for women in treatment and their dependent children.

By RUSS MORGAN
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Corner House, Inc., an organization that provides housing and treatment services for people in recovery, soon will expand its service offerings to female veterans and mothers with dependent children.

The Mother Child Project is a sizeable, years-long project, one that will result in a new facility that will be built to house mothers along with their children, according to executive director Sara Hansen.

"The Mother Child Project is essentially a transitional housing and support services program that will be available to women who are mothers with dependent children and single mothers," Hansen said. "We will provide for them up to 24 months of housing and other supportive services to help get them back into the community."

The project is expected to cost approximately \$1.1 million, and the campaign to raise the money is coming to an end. The organization only has to raise about \$169,000 to reach that mark. Corner House recently got a big boost

when it received a challenge grant for \$117,500 from the JE and LE Mabee Foundation of Tulsa.

That grant wouldn't have been possible without some last-minute help from the Clint Bowyer 79 Fund and a few other individual donors.

"It was a squeaker," Hansen said, explaining that Corner House had to have a certain amount of money toward its goal even to be considered for the grant. With little time left for the application deadline at the end of October, the organization was more than \$10,000 short.

"So we made an appeal to the Clint Bowyer 79 Fund and asked them for a gift to help us reach that goal," Hansen said. "Without their gift of \$10,000 and some smaller gifts from individual donors, we would have lapsed the deadline and Mabee wouldn't have looked twice at us."

With the continuing fundraising progress, Hansen said construction on the new facility may be able to start sometime after the first of the year. Property for the structure, which will be located north of Corner House's current center at 418 Market St., has already been acquired.

The project came about because of the state's overwhelming need for support for mothers seeking treatment. After researching the availability of such services, Hansen said at the time she found there were eight designated women's programs in Kansas, only two of which were able to accept women with dependent children.

"When we started to review the local area, we noticed that

"As these female veterans are returning home, their needs are very specific."

SARA HANSEN
Corner House executive director

there were about 120 women from our seven-county area who could have accessed this service had it been available," Hansen said. "If they weren't able to secure a bed at a facility that took their children, they had to find someone to care for their children."

With the help of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the organization also researched services available for female veterans. According to their data, in 2007 there were about 17,500 female veterans in the state, a number that is expected to increase.

"As these female veterans are returning home, their needs are very specific," Hansen said. "They're generally primary caregivers, and they experience significant trauma during wartime activities."

Citing research on returning veterans, Hansen said that although post-traumatic stress disorder is significant to all veterans, women experience it differently.

"Their type of trauma therapy needs to be specific to women who've been engaged in active duty combat," she said.

One method Corner House is using to raise money is through the Kansas Community Service Tax Credit Program. But time is limited to use those tax credits — they expire at the end of the year.

With the tax credit program, donations over \$250

will be reimbursed by the state for 50 percent of that amount. Since the Kansas tax code is married to the federal tax code, the donor can receive another 25 percent of the amount of the donation, depending on the donor's tax bracket.

"The beauty of this is because we used so many resources to make this project happen, we're able to take the credits and a donor could utilize the credits and also help us meet our Mabee Challenge Grant all at the same time," Hansen said. "It's all for the same project."

The proposed 4,500-square-foot structure will include six bedrooms for mothers and their children, a commons area, a kitchen area and dining room and an outside play area. According to information from the Corner House Web site, the new facility will be expected to serve more than 550 women and children in its first five years.

"What we anticipate providing with this new facility is very specific, and it's stuff we're not able to do right now," Hansen said. "... We're also hoping to link (women) up to suitable long-term housing, which we do a little bit right now, but it will be a little bit more robust."

The ability to serve women and their children will provide Corner House with the opportunity to help families in ways they currently cannot.

"It's to create that sense that they are still a family that's connected, so they can be together," Hansen said. "The idea is that we set them up for success to get out on their own."



MICHAEL K. DAKOTA/GAZETTE

Drs. David Kemp and Trish Wood agree with the findings of a recent study that suggests not all mammograms are necessary, although they did not want to discourage women from getting appropriate care when necessary.

LOCAL DOCS SUPPORT SCREENING RECOMMENDATIONS

By BRANDY NANCE
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For women with no other breast issues, new recommendations to not begin mammogram screenings until age 50 make sense, two local physicians said this week.

The Nov. 17 issue of *Annals of Internal Medicine* published the recommendations, which were met with both acceptance and a firestorm from the public. The report recommends against routine screening of women 40-49 years old and recommends biannual screening for women 50 to 74 years old.

The study states that "there is convincing evidence that screening with film mammography reduces breast cancer mortality more for women aged 50 to 74 years than for women aged 40 to 49 years. The strongest evidence for the greatest benefit is for women aged 60 to 69 years."

The study goes on to state that women are harmed by unnecessary screenings.

"The harms resulting from screening for breast cancer include psychological harms, unnecessary imaging tests, biopsies in women without cancer and inconvenience due to false-positive screening results," it stated.

Drs. David Kemp and Trish Wood, obstetrician-gynecologists with Cotton-O'Neil/Medical Arts in Emporia, spoke this week about the recommendations. Kemp said the findings are based on epidemiology and are focused on reducing costs and reducing the incidence of breast cancer in women.

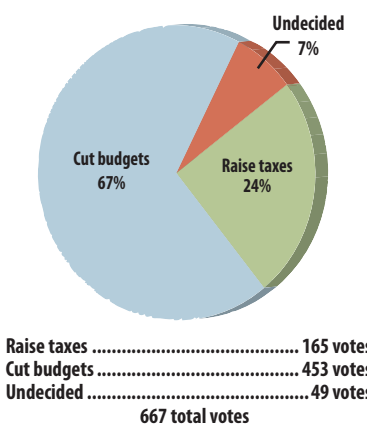
Wood said as hard as the recommendations are for women to hear and accept, the research and the people who did the research are reputable.

Please see **Screening, Page 7**

THIS WEEK ON www.emporiagazette.com

THIS WEEK'S POLL
Where do you plan to do most of your Christmas shopping?

LAST WEEK'S POLL
How do you think the state should solve its budget problem?



Raise taxes 165 votes
Cut budgets 453 votes
Undecided 49 votes
667 total votes

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On a proposal to close Admire school to cut costs in USD 251:

What about the Reading students who transfer to other towns after junior high? At least the Admire students stick around and stay in 251.

When a district consolidates schools to save money, they find out that they have even less money and fewer students after the people who worked at the closed schools have to relocate to other cities or states for employment. Of course, they take their children with them. Shortly after that, the town dies altogether.

There are many kids that live closer to Osage, Lebo and Mission Valley that I'm sure will never again be counted at roll call in the (North) Lyon County school system.

Why was the information presented based off of the 2006 study? This study is almost 3 1/2 years old. Things have changed since then. Maybe a new study should be conducted before making the final decision.

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