

**CITY OF FORT COLLINS
SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES: MEETING OF MARCH 8,2000**

Chairperson: Erik Margolis 416-1411
Staff Liaison: Barbara Schoenberger 224-6026
City Council Liaison: Ray Martinez, Mayor 221-6506

- I. Attendance:** Erik Margolis
Florence Williams
Blanche Yakmas
Dorothy Kramka
Darren Gunn
Kristin Glenn
George Kress
June Tucker
- Excused Absence:** John Roberts
Marjorie McTaggart
Alyce Eckley
- Guest:** Don Matula – Senior Marketplace News
Jill Taylor - PVH Sr. Services
Eileen Hender - PVH Sr. Services
Kay Rios OOA
- Staff:** Barbara Schoenberger

II. The meeting was called to order by Erik Margolis at 2:00 PM

III. **Citizen Participation:** None

IV. **Guest Speakers:**

Jill Taylor & Eileen Hendee from PVH Sr. Services

Regarding the ASPEN Club , there are approximately 9800 members. They are averaging 125 new members per month. Approximately 12,000 per month use the wellness education, nutrition, screening and Medicare information services.

- The ASPEN club has done a prescription survey (the results were distributed).
- Most seniors do not qualify for assistance.
- Mail order is the best option, it is inexpensive, convient, and delivered to the door. By ordering through mail order the interaction and relationship with the local pharmacist is lost.
- Approximately 2000 people attended the 9News Health Fair.
- The ASPEN club is interested in working on a committee with the Sr. Advisory Board regarding prescriptions, pharmacies and how we can assist the seniors. Kay indicated that the OOA is interested in participating as well. Barbara will coordinate.
- They also spoke briefly about the Colorado Trust Program and what they have to offer to seniors.
- One service that they discussed which few people are aware is the Veterans Rx program. If you are an honorably discharged vet you are entitled to prescriptions for \$2.00.
- Handouts were given to everyone regarding all the services they discussed.

**Dana Matula, assistant Publisher, Larimer County Marketplace News
VP Loveland Senior Board**

- The Marketplace News is a free monthly newspaper that caters to senior topics. Marketplace is supported through advertising by local businesses. It reaches approximately 55,000 seniors per month. It is also distributed in over 200 locations throughout Larimer Country. The Marketplace works with all agencies. They support timely articles that are geared toward seniors and/or caregivers.
- The Loveland Senior Advisory Board is sharing and struggling with the same issues that we have and they report to the Loveland City Council.
- The Networking Luncheon is scheduled for September 29, 2000. There is a committee of 5-6 people that meet every 2 weeks for planning. The Fort Collins Senior Board is invited to participate. (A decision was made to appoint someone from our Board).
- A copy of the newsletter was given to everyone.

V. Correspondence:

Florence received a letter invitation from SAINT regarding the Annual SAINT Spring Get-Together to be held on April 7, 2000 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room 1 at the Senior Center.

VI. Approval of the Minutes:

- **There was a correction to the minutes from the meeting of March 8, 2000.**
They are as follows:
Per Florence: Larimer County Office on Aging Volunteer Ombudsman program Manager Shelly McGraw is interviewing to hire a replacement for the Volunteer Ombudsman Coordinator due to the resignation of Lynette McGowan.

After the correction was addressed a motion was made by Kristin to accept after corrections are made. Darren seconded.

VII. Old Business:

- **Transportation:**

Kay spoke about Dial-A-Ride's night service. There is a possibility of expanding its night service from 180 days to 310 days. There is a possibility that if seniors are not ADA certified they would not be able to use. The handbook and training are still being developed.

Florence spoke about the April 4th City Council meeting. During that meeting the alternative conceptual design for the transit corridor was approved. The council also upheld the P&Z decisions to approve the final plan.

On April 7th CDOT turned down the proposal for a roundabout at the Mulberry and LeMay intersection. City Manager John Fischback will pursue an appeal.

Federal govt approves plan to widen I25. Light rail funds are being looked into further, pending investigation of bridge structures.

There is an Open House meeting on May 4th at the Mulberry Street Holiday Inn from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. to review the plans to widen U.S. Hwy 287.

Traffic manager, Eric Branche said "shortage of manpower and money lie at the crux of not being able to operate the Traffic Safety Program and hasn't made a dent in controlling traffic (speeding)".

Dial-A-Ride: a series of meetings are planned to introduce residents to changes and invite comments with a City Council hearing and other opportunities for public comments.

SAINT: Please check your folders

- **Outreach:**

The presentation that was planned was cancelled due to snow. It will be rescheduled for next month.

- **Housing:**

Affordable Housing: There is a CDBG meeting scheduled for tonight to review applications.

OOA attainable housing: Surveys are being completed for the senior complexes.

The "groundbreaking" for "Care Housing" (Windtrail) the low-income senior housing complex has been completed.

- **Paint-A-Thon:**

The letter was sent to potential corporate sponsors.

A suggestion was made to have Rusty Collins speak at a future Sr. Advisory Board meeting.

- **Discounted Medications:**

Reviewed the survey form the pharmacies. The potential of a \$23.00 savings can be made if one wants to take the time to call various pharmacies and be willing to pick the medication up from a pharmacy that might not be the nearest one to their home.

June has a meeting with Congressman Bob Schafer to discuss seniors and the cost of prescriptions.

- **Human Relations Award:**

The award application was completed and submitted with 4 letters of reference and recommendation. Thanks to Florence and Darren.

- **New West Fest:**

OOA agreed to share our booth. The group decided that it would be appropriate to form a sub-committee to focus on the New West Fest and what we need to have at the Fest, etc. Darren was selected as the committee member from the SAB. He will work with the elected chair from the OOA.

- **Liaison Reports:**

OOA: Kay reported that the HB1092 was passed. Although the bill was originally submitted for 10M they only received 3M. The Miracle Bill was postponed indefinitely.

Foundation On Aging: No report

RSVP: The "I Remember Mama" fund raising is going well. Thomas Sutherland will be the guest speaker. They still have availability of tickets for older women who will be spending Mother's Day alone.

A new staff member for nutrition and RSVP was hired.

President Clinton's recent legislation to allow seniors to receive wages with out restriction that will not effect the Social Security benefits may affect RSVP funding.

Volunteer Fair for senior volunteers will be held on May 22nd at the Senior Center.

Community agencies will have booths at this fair.

City Line: Per Kelly DiMartino, the community outreach, publicity coordinator, the City Line number has been publicized in the *City News* that is mailed in with the utility bills, also in the *City Times* as well as the *Coloradoan* since January 2000. There were no calls last month.

AARP: Stan Ulrich, local AARP board member drives to Denver every Monday during the legislature sessions. He attends a meeting of AARP members who discuss pending bills affecting seniors. Then if necessary or feasible, committee members go to the State Capitol to discuss and/or argue with legislature members about these bills and how their Task Force wants them to vote. Per Blanche, she has attended these proceedings and can attest that AARP works very hard for senior legislation.

PVHS: Erik submitted the minutes from the Board of Directors open meeting. (Copies are in your folders) There is a bill before legislature to support universal access to health care in Colorado. The District will send a letter of support of this bill.

City of Loveland SAB: The Senior Spotlight is scheduled to start taping in July for broadcast in August. Shelly McGraw can provide programming.

Others: Alyce reported that the following events were held at the Senior Center:
March 9th Canasta Tournament, and lunch was served by Pat and the volunteers.
March 17th St. Patricks Day Dinner. Approximately 65 attended. Corn Beef and Cabbage, Potato Soup, and Irish Soda Bread was served. The entertainment was the Irish dancers. It was a great evening enjoyed by all.
March 20th Hats History, a display of 600 hats. Dessert was served.
April 1st White Elephant Card Extravaganza, which consisted of Pinochle, Bridge, Canasta, and Mah-jongg. There was a great turnout for this event.

Volunteer Ombudsman hired Deana Hutchinson as the new coordinator effective May 1st.
Health Care Administration: Increased Medicare payments of almost 61% starting October 1, 2000 was proposed by the administrator of the Health Care Administration, which runs Medicare for seriously ill patients who need expensive treatments.

VIII. New Business:

A. Chilli-Cookoff:

Will be held on October 7th at the Sundance. We need a team to represent us. The judging will be at 12 noon. We will continue to discuss.

B. Volunteer Appreciation Dinner:

Will be held on April 21st at 5p.m. at the Senior Center. The SAB members are invited and the cost is \$5.00. Bisetti's will cater the event. RSVP at the front desk.

C. Luncheon for Board & Commissions Chairs with City Manager and Mayor:

Erik attended and reported the following:

1. The Mayor stated that there would be no further discussions regarding the Boards & Commissions by City Council. The newspapers mishandled the information.
2. The Mayor brought up Boards & Commissions Day.
3. Best communication would be through letters to our council liaison.
4. Suggestion: Take a step back, find out more about the members of the Board, their background, their interest in seniors, why SAB?
5. Suggestion: Boards & Commissions meet BI-annually and communicate e-mail addresses to be able to communicate common issues.
6. Orientation: effective in getting new members up to speed on issues and philosophy of the Board.
7. Suggestion: The Mayor suggested writing a soapbox for the *Coloradoan* introducing the Board members and brief summary on what the Board does.

The directory of Chairpersons was given to Erik. (See attached)

D. Senior Center Events:

Barbara reported that On May 5th & 6th the annual SOAP production will be held. There will be two performances on Friday and one on Saturday and tickets are \$3.00 per performance. Also on May 6th the annual May Art Show will be held at the Senior Center. There will be a reception held at 4p.m.

Having no other business before us, Kristin moved to close the meeting. Florence seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by June M. Tucker

**Community Leaders Lunch
with the City Manager and Mayor
Council Information Center
City Hall, 300 West LaPorte Avenue**

**Thursday, March 30, 2000
12:00 noon- 1:30 p.m.**

AnnMarie Azul-Evans
Chairperson
Commission on Status of Women
6806 Deerhurst Court
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Charles Fielder
Chairperson
Building Review Board
436 Flagler Road
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Mary Brayton
Chairperson
Downtown Development Auth.
P.O. Box 1488
Fort Collins, CO 80522

John Fischbach
City Manager
City of Fort Collins
P.O. Box 580
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Ben Brooks
Chairperson
Youth Advisory Board
1628 Shenandoah Circle
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Randy Fischer – Not Available
Chairperson
Natural Resources Adv. Board
3007 Moore Lane
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Bob Browning – Not Available
Chairperson
Affordable Housing Board
1316 Hepplewhite Court
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Lance Freeman
Chairperson
Parks and Recreation Board
139 N McKinley Street
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Donald Colby
Chairperson
Citizen Review Board
2443 Hampshire Square
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Corrine Govan
Chairperson
Cultural Resources Board
1304 Shamrock Street
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Glen Colton – Not Available
Chairperson
Planning & Zoning Board
625 Hinsdale Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Per Hogestad
Chairperson
Landmark Preservation Board
1601 Sheely
Fort Collins, CO 80526

Jim Hume
Chairperson
Retirement Committee
2530 Sunstone Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Ed Jakubauskas
Chairperson
Library Board
801 Warren Landing
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Tim Johnson
Chairperson
Transportation Board
1337 Stonehenge Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Mark Kramer - Not Available
Chairperson
Commission on Disability
2319 Sunleaf Court
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Bob Lenk
Chairperson
Human Relations Commission
322 E Pitkin Street
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Eric Levine
Chairperson
Air Quality Adv. Board
145 N Meldrum Street
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Phil Majerus
Chairperson
CDBG Commission
1931 Kingsborough Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80526
221-1281

Erik Margolis
Chairperson
Senior Advisory Board
1019 Club View Road
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Ray Martinez
Mayor
City of Fort Collins
P.O. Box 580
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Mike Sanders - Not Available
Chairperson
Golf Board
3224 S. Lemay Avenue
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Thomas Sanders
Chairperson
Water Board
2201 Apache Court
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Roger Sherman
Chairperson
Art in Public Places Board
775 Eastdale Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Greg Smith - Not Available
Chairperson
Telecommunications Board
707 Rochelle Circle
Fort Collins, CO 80526

William Stockover - Not Available
Chairperson
Zoning Board of Appeals
1806 Westview Road
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Jim Swails - Not Available
Chairperson
Personnel Board
2400 Marquette Street
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Jim Welch
Chairperson
Electric Board
318 Whedbee
Fort Collins, CO 80524

Dr. Julian Whitaker's

Health & Healing®

TOMORROW'S MEDICINE TODAY

Special Supplement to *Dr. Julian Whitaker's Health & Healing*

April 2000

A Call to Arms

When Martha visits her daughter in Southern California, she always includes a jaunt to Tijuana to stock up on her prescription drugs. What she saves by purchasing her medications there rather than at her local drugstore offsets the costs of her yearly visits to California. Mexicans, Canadians, and Europeans pay less, sometimes much less, for the same prescription drugs that Americans buy. What's going on here?

The Pharmaceutical Monopoly

The pharmaceutical industry is a cash cow—and a sacred one at that. It is, according to *Fortune Magazine*, the most profitable of all industries. Profit margins for the big drug companies hover around 40 percent, with annual growth in earnings averaging 11 percent. Expenditures for prescription drugs have increased two to three times as fast as all other aspects of health care, as drug costs are escalating at four times the rate of inflation. Michael Fedyna, chief actuary for Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield in New York, reports that HMOs and insurers now pay more for drugs than hospitalizations!

I am a huge admirer of the free enterprise system, and I believe that it is one of the things that makes our country so great. However, these guys aren't playing fair. They get tax breaks that make other industries green with envy. Furthermore, the pharmaceutical giants have a long, incestuous, and corrupt relationship with the FDA, the regulatory agency that oversees them. The power wielded by this protected monopoly means we get dangerous drugs that must be pulled from the market months after they are given rubber-stamp approval, while being denied access to valuable drugs that are widely available elsewhere. The big boys get favored status and fast-track approval while "outsiders" seeking approval for nontoxic therapies get the bum's rush. And American consumers foot the bill by paying two to 10 times as much as the rest of the world for the same drugs!

We're Not Going to Take It Anymore

For years these abuses went unchecked. In the past few years, however, as more and more FDA atrocities have come to light, a grass-roots movement has gained momentum, and *Health & Healing* subscribers have been actively involved. You and hundreds of thousands of other Americans worked together to successfully thwart the FDA's attempt to ban many nutritional supplements several years ago. You're helping to put the brakes on FDA harassment of providers of safe, effective therapies, and fighting for the right of all Americans to have access to the medical care of their choice. Now it's time to tackle the issue of drug pricing and particularly how it impacts older Americans.

Drug Costs: Sticker Shock

Eighty percent of people over 65 take at least one drug, and many take several. For the 65 percent of them whose HMO or insurer pays for their drugs, price isn't a big deal. But if you are in the remaining 35 percent, it's a huge concern.

Listen to this story told by one of our patients at the Whitaker Wellness Institute. Patricia is periodically plagued with excruciating migraines, so her doctor gave her a prescription for Imitrex, a new migraine drug. She never filled it, as she is usually able to stop a headache by holing up in a dark, quiet room for several hours. However, an intense migraine crept up on her while she was traveling, so when she got off the plane she went to the nearest pharmacy, prescription in hand. The pharmacist filled the order, then gave her a bill for \$369. Eighteen bucks a pill!

Some of you have probably had a similar experience. And this scenario is likely to become more common as mounting financial pressures force healthcare providers to cut back on prescription drug coverage. If you pay for a drug out of your own pocket, you pay an average of twice as much as HMOs and other big customers.

More than 25 percent of American seniors shell out of their personal funds at least \$500 a year for prescription drugs; 12 percent pay more than \$1,000.

Why Do Drugs Cost So Much?

Drugs are getting more and more expensive. Although less costly generic drugs make up 46 percent of all prescriptions sold, they account for only 8 percent of total expenditures. Newer, better advertised, and therefore more popular drugs that are still under patent cost at least twice as much as older drugs, and new drugs are being approved in record numbers: 90 came onto the market in 1998. Yet when you take a closer look at these new drugs, a majority are twists on older, less expensive drugs, or drugs that have been used for years in other countries. Nonetheless, this ploy pays off. Newer drugs aimed at treating four conditions allergies, high cholesterol, ulcers, and depression account for almost one-third of all drug sales. These are the drugs that are the most heavily advertised in magazines and on TV.

Pharmaceutical companies defend rising drug prices with the same tired old arguments. Schering-Plough's CEO Richard Kogan recently stated before Congress,

Only one in every 5,000 chemical compounds ever reaches the U.S. market. Bringing a drug to the marketplace takes 12 to 15 years and costs up to \$500 million. The drug companies also claim that their wares are saving lives.

Okay, Mr. Kogan. Providing that these figures are not highly exaggerated, as many suspect, how do you explain that for every dollar spent on research and development, the pharmaceutical industry spends 50 cents on advertising and promotion? Or that upwards of 200,000 Americans die each year from the adverse effects of prescription drugs used as directed? So much for altruism and piousness. This is all about money, pure and simple.

A Reasonable Solution

Of course, the knee-jerk reaction is to get the government involved. Clinton wants Medicare, which now only covers drugs used in hospitals, to split the cost of outpatient drugs with consumers. Another proposal, pending in Congress, would make drug companies give senior citizens whose insurance does not pick up drug costs the same discounts that the government receives.

Although I agree that American consumers need a break, I am loathe to get government involved. What we'll get is higher taxes, price controls, and yet another layer of bureaucracy funded at taxpayer expense.

I propose instead that we follow Martha's lead and go to Mexico. It is perfectly legal to purchase drugs for

Comparison of Drug Prices in U.S. and Europe

Drug	Quantity	Potency	U.S. Price	European Price
Premarin	28	0.6 mg	\$14.98	\$4.25
Synthroid	50	100 mg	\$13.84	\$2.95
Coumadin	25	10 mg	\$30.25	\$2.85
Prozac	14	20 mg	\$36.12	\$18.50
Prilosec	20	28 mg	\$109.00	\$39.25
Norvasc	30	5 mg	\$44.00	\$23.00
Claritin	20	10 mg	\$44.00	\$8.75
Augmentin	12	500 mg	\$49.50	\$8.75
Zocor	28	20 mg	\$96.99	\$45.00
Paxil	28	30 mg	\$63.69	\$43.00
Zestril	60	5 mg	\$53.49	\$15.00
Prempro	28	0.6 mg	\$23.49	\$4.75
Glucoophage	50	850 mg	\$54.49	\$4.50
Cipro	20	500 mg	\$87.99	\$62.75
Zolof	100	50 mg	\$80.00	\$65.00
Pravachol	28	10 mg	\$55.60	\$31.00

Based on a 1999 survey by Life Extension Foundation (lef.org)

your own use and bring them back into this country. This practice is popular among Americans living near the Mexican and Canadian borders, but not so convenient for those living elsewhere. However, everyone should be able to take advantage of the fact that it is legal to mail order prescription drugs from foreign countries and if the price is right, this certainly makes sense. Not surprisingly, our nemesis the FDA has declared this practice illegal and routinely and arbitrarily confiscates such orders.

Congressman Gil Gutknecht from Minnesota has introduced a bill in the House of Representatives (H.R. 3240) that would guarantee Americans right to import prescription drugs for their own use from FDA-approved manufacturing facilities in other countries. Passage of this bill would lighten the load on consumers' pocketbooks and send a strong message to the FDA and their cronies. I encourage you to contact your congressional representative and urge him or her to co-sponsor H.R. 3240. (Be sure to reference the bill number.) Check the federal government section of your phone book for addresses. Also, visit drwhitaker.com for a sample letter and a link to the full text of the bill. I'll update you on our progress in future issues.

Julian Whitaker M.D.

Let freedom ring,
Julian Whitaker, MD

City considers revamping boards

DAVID RUISARD

Coloradoan

The Liquor Licensing Authority is not the only advisory group facing changes.

The city's 28 other boards and commissions could be in for a tune-up in the near future.

Changes in recruiting practices, outlining annual work plans and establishing council oversight are under discussion.

Planning and Zoning Board member Sally Craig said tweaks suggested by the City Council were reasonable and palatable. The biggest change is the suggested implementation of periodic council reviews to determine if the advisory groups are effective — and whether they are even needed.

Councilman Scott Mason recommended any council reviews to be based on the boards' annual self-analysis.

"It becomes dangerous when (council reviews) appear to be a tool to control or eliminate a particular board or commission," Mason said.

In order to avoid the appearance of a witch hunt, the council wants to place the boards on a rotating review schedule. With each board coming before the council once every seven years, the reviews would be limited to our a year.

The council wants to begin re-

“We want blue sky thinking, but we also want our policy agenda to be met.”

Councilman Kurt Kastein

viewing actions taken by its various advisory groups as soon as possible.

Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Wanner suggested the reviews begin next year.

Craig said the review process probably will be time consuming, but that if council thinks the reviews will make the boards and commissions more effective, they are warranted.

At a council work session this week, members struggled with how to aid the boards and commissions in establishing achievable annual work plans.

Mason said he would like the council's policy agenda to serve as a guideline for the board and commissions when they establish their annual work plans.

"The reason for that is that these boards and commissions are suppose to advise the council," Mason said.

Noting that only seven boards and commissions submitted work plans to council last year,

Councilwoman Karen Weitkunat suggested that drafting a work plan be made mandatory for the advisory bodies.

Wanner said the boards and commissions need to find a balance between pursuing their own ideas and looking into issues before council.

"If they're not responding to what we are working on, they can be almost irrelevant," Wanner said.

He added that allowing the boards to look into issues on their own, however, could significantly diminish the council's workload.

Councilman Kurt Kastein suggested the council establish a percentage guideline for the boards and commissions to help them plan to address council issues.

"We want blue sky thinking, but we also want our policy agenda to be met," Kastein said.

Weitkunat was the only council member interested in reducing the size of the city's boards and commissions. She said she would like to see the panels reduced to between seven and nine members.

Boards and commissions currently have seven to 13 members.

"Having served on boards and commissions, any time it gets over nine (members), they

can become unwieldy," Weitkunat said.

Her thoughts were not well received by her fellow council members, who suggested that any size reductions be made at the request of the boards and commissions.

"I'm happy with leaving them the way they are," Mason said.

Councilman Mike Byrne said part of the reason for the board and commissions larger memberships is to increase the number of citizens serving as official advisers to council.

The council agreed that people living within the city's urban growth area should be allowed to serve on the city's boards and commissions.

"People who live on the border are just as much a part of this city as anyone else," Byrne said.

They also said the majority of each board and commission should be city residents.

The council also was in agreement on establishing a formal orientation process for new boards and commissions members.

Craig applauded the decision, citing a high turnover on boards and commissions that she believes is the result of members who don't realize the commitment their appointments demand.

New doctors help alleviate Medicare load

SONJA BISBEE WULFF

Coloradoan

The Choice City is starting to live up to its name for seniors in search of medical care, according to a Coloradoan survey of local medical offices.

All 14 Fort Collins internists — including five who arrived last August — are accepting new Medicare patients, office staff reported last week.

All but four internal medicine physicians accept Medicare reimbursement, meaning they minimize out-of-pocket expenses for seniors covered by the federal health-care program.

That has not always been the case. With Medicare's mediocre to

some seniors scrambling for medical care.

"When the crunch started a few years ago, we started responding," said Dr. David Abbey, co-founder of Internal Medicine Clinic of Fort Collins, 1100 Poudre River Drive.

Abbey defined internal medicine as "primary care for adults."

In addition to new a physician assistant, Dr. William Harrison joined the practice 2½ years ago, followed by Dr. Jorge Allende last August.

"We wanted to serve the need of the community," Abbey said.

Other recent internal-medicine arrivals include:

Dr. Mark Simmons, 1080 E. Elizabeth St., who also specializes in pediatrics.

Poudre Valley Health System helped recruit three of the new physicians, offering to pay salaries for Allende and the Hendricks for a year while they get established in Fort Collins.

A community survey and discussions with local physicians indicated a need for primary care, especially for seniors, said Matt Kilton, director of business development. After Fort Collins received national recognition as a top place to retire, anticipated growth in the senior population

University professor and volunteer Medicare counselor Jan Ogg recently reported continuing difficulties among his clients, counselors say they have seen improvements.

Fort Collins resident Joe Rainwater, retired from the oil industry, said he's been hearing better news from people he knows in the community.

"I think most of them are getting in (to a physician)," 77-year-old Rainwater said Tuesday as he left the Fort Collins Senior Center.

Rainwater and his wife had a physician since arriving in the Choice City five years ago.

Traffic study to focus on I-25 corridor considered prime for development

By **DAVID PERSONS**
The Coloradoan

A public-private partnership is being forged to do a \$250,000 comprehensive traffic study on a section of Interstate 25 that is under heavy pressure for development.

The nine-month study should begin in mid-May and be completed by February. The study area — called the Crossroads Boulevard sub-area — extends about 1½ miles east and 1½ miles west of I-25 from a half-mile north of Colorado Highway 392 to a half-mile south of U.S. Highway 34. It includes three interchanges and three jurisdictions — Loveland, Windsor and Larimer County.

The study goals include identifying the transportation improvements necessary to address existing problems and meet future demands, and developing a plan to fund and construct those improvements.

"It's a particularly critical area to get transportation planning done right," Marc Engemoen, Larimer County's public works director, said Tuesday. "You have two key interchanges — U.S. 34 is a key interchange for Loveland and the interchange at Colorado 392 is one of the key access points for Windsor and a back door to Fort Collins.

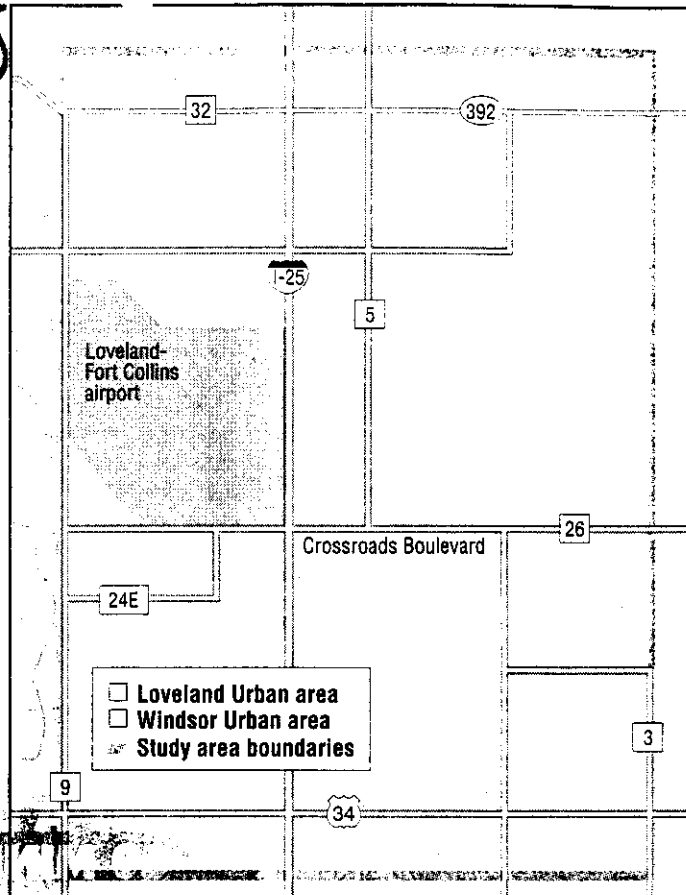
"It's just essential that we get a transportation study done right before there's any more development pressure there."

Larimer County, the city of Loveland, the North Front Range Transportation and Air Quality Planning Council, McWhinney Enterprises and the Colorado Department of Transportation have tentatively agreed to the study.

Loveland, Larimer County and McWhinney Enterprises

Impact study

A \$250,000 study will look at the traffic impact along a corridor on either side of Interstate 25 from the Colorado 292 interchange to the U.S. 34 interchange.



Source: Larimer County

Kirk Alberts/The Coloradoan

prises have pledged \$50,000 each. The planning council has authorized \$40,000. CDOT has said it can provide \$20,000 for the study.

Larimer County's participation is guaranteed as part of the language in last year's voter-approved sales tax initiative to fund construction of the fairgrounds and events center that will be located northeast of the I-25/Crossroads Boulevard interchange.

The other entities still must officially approve their participation. That is expected to happen in the next three to four weeks.

The remaining \$40,000 is expected to come from other

affected municipalities and private interests in the study planning area. The cost of the study is high but necessary, officials say.

"It had to be at least \$250,000 to get what we needed out of it," Engemoen said.

"This should significantly reduce their future investment in transportation planning," Engemoen said. "That's why we tried to get everyone to cooperate in the study."

Larimer County commissioners praised the effort.

"It gets all the neighbors together and gets them involved," said Commissioner Cheryl Olson.

Doctor says technology, simple hygiene key to stopping infections

By PATRICIA LAHAY
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Infections contracted in hospitals kill as many as 88,000 people each year, a number that could be reduced with increased use of technology and simple measures such as more frequent hand washing, a researcher said Sunday at a conference on the problem. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control opened a five-

day conference on preventing and reducing health-care-associated infections in Atlanta.

Dr. Richard P. Wenzel, chairman of the internal medicine department at the Medical College of Virginia, said new devices such as catheters coated with antibiotics have proven effective against infection spread at health facilities.

But those are still far costlier than simple but equally

necessary steps as getting doctors and nurses to wash their hands after every patient contact, he said.

"Hand-washing is cheap, but the impact from it is great," Wenzel said.

Using what he called conservative estimates, Wenzel calculated that bloodstream infections contracted at health care facilities could be the nation's eighth leading cause of death, claiming more

than 25,000 people each year.

On Thursday, the CDC reported that the rate of such infections fell by about 44 percent in the 1990s in medical intensive care units at 300 facilities that report to the government.

The infections typically are caused by catheters, intravenous lines and breathing tubes common to most hospital stays. Such devices allow bacteria easy entry

into the body.

Wenzel said simply placing an alcohol dispenser at each patient bed cut blood infection rates by 40 percent in one hospital because workers disinfected their hands more often.

Dr. William Jarvis, with the CDC's Hospital Infection Program, said medical professionals must control infections better because the number of older Ameri-

cans will soar in the next century. The elderly are particularly at risk for infections and more likely to spend time in a hospital.

Jarvis estimated the population of people older than 65 in the U.S. — 40 million in 1998 — is likely to double by 2035. Jarvis calculated that about 88,000 people die each year directly from infections contracted in health care facilities.

Social Security plans electronic newsletter

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Social Security recipients can keep up with the latest changes in benefits and rules through a new electronic newsletter the government will offer starting March 1.

E-mail subscribers will be able to customize information they receive in the free monthly updates from the Social Security Administration.

A retiree might choose to get news about benefits, including announcements of Social Security's annual cost-of-living raises, for example.

The newsletter also will include topics of interest to employers, such as pilot projects to test easier ways of reporting workers' wages to Social Security.