

**THE HISTORY of COUNCIL 1214
of the
KNIGHTS of COLUMBUS**

Presented March 1 of 1997 to the families of Council 1214
and dedicated to the memory of those priests, brothers and families
who have provided us with so rich a heritage.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During Richard Flot's tenure as Grand Knight (1992-1994) he commissioned Brother Ray Kamm to compile a history of the Council. Much gratitude is extended to Brother Kamm, who, over the span of approximately three years, reviewed all the minutes from Council 1214, and developed a condensed report covering the activities of each Council year. During this time Ray held office as the Council Lector and provided the members with an entertaining program at each meeting by reading one or two of his annual summaries.

His efforts helped to bring alive the history of the Council, enhanced our meetings, rejuvenated some of our senior members, gave meaning to some of our younger members and provided us with guidance in developing modern programs. Brother Ray's compilation of the minutes will be found in the "Minutes" section of this history.

Most of the information for the *History of Council 1214* was derived from Brother Kamm's hard work. Additional information was obtained from St. Joseph Church history, from Columbus Club minutes and from the personal knowledge of the members of the Council and their friends. Notable for his excellent memory and enthusiastic assistance is brother Joseph P. Kintzley, Grand Knight 1952-1953. He provided extensive explanation of some of the older details.

Our Brotherhood is indebted to men like Ray and Joe. Their tireless efforts and commitment to the families and brothers of Council 1214 stand as a dramatic example of the principles of Charity, Unity and Fraternity envisioned by our founder.

The document itself was compiled and edited by the skilled hands of Jeanette Coleman, the "Worthy Goddess" and wife of Mark Coleman, Grand Knight 1995-1997.

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EARLY DAYS

A list of Charter dates from the Colorado State Council of the Knights of Columbus prepared by State Advocate James Brom and dated April 23, 1994, indicates that the original Charter date for Fort Collins Council 1214 was April 21, 1907. Although a council was apparently in existence in Fort Collins following this charter date, no records have been found to detail the activities of the Council during these early years. However it is known that the Council was associated with crooked gambling through a program known as "The Days of 49" which was started to raise money for the Church. The Knights became known throughout the town as the Knights of the Golden Fleece. As a result the Council was dissolved in 1923 by request of Fr. LaJeunesse.

Then on April 6, 1924, Council 1214 was re-activated with the initiation of thirty-five new members and readmission of twenty-one men as listed below.

New Initiates

Fr. G. Joseph LaJeunesse
Samuel Aragon
William V. Bogard
Guy F. Bush
Ethan E. Byron
Francis F. Colgan
Thomas W. Collopy, Jr.
T. J. Collopy
Raymond G. Connors
James J. Culley
Pat E. Costigan
Emmett F. Galusha

Leo Gates
Bernard F. Gilsdorf
Dr. George J. Gisin
John Godfrey
Harlie H. Hale
Leo J. Holland
Tom Jones
Andrew F. Krofchek
Joseph E. Lamb
Thomas Lamb
Andrew J. Long
Charles W. Matteson, Jr.

Henry A. Michaud
Joseph H. Michaud
Joseph V. Murphy
P.J. Murphy
Preston J.C. Murphy
Abdon M. Padilla
Thomas I. Pendergast
John Smihula
Maurice F. Sweeney
Theodore Wetzler
Francis L. Woodruff

ReAdmissions

Joseph P. Collopy
William Collopy
Dan Egan
Dominique F. Gill
Leo R. Kenefick
James Lamb
Eugene F. Lamb

Loyd Martinez
Librado Martinez
N.P. Martinez
Edward McCarry
Dr. P.J. McHugh
John J. Meaney
Leo O. Nichol森

Charles H. Russell
Henri P. Scherrer
Stephen A. Szo, Jr.
J.P. Talty
Charles Willox
H.E. Woodruff

Immediately following the initiation, State Deputy Leo Stack presided at Council 1214's first regular meeting and conducted election of officers. The following became the leaders of Columbianism in Fort Collins.

Grand Knight: **Charles Russell**
Deputy Grand Knight: **Preston Murphy**
Chancellor: **Dr. P.J. McHugh**
Recorder: **Thomas Pendergast**
Financial Secretary: **Guy Bush**
Warden: **Joseph H. Michaud**

Inside Guard: **Leo Kenefick**
Outside Guard: **Ray Connors**
Trustee 3 yrs: **D. F. Gill**
Trustee 2 yrs: **Joe Collopy**
Trustee 1 year: **Henry Scherrer**
Chaplain: **Rev. G. Joseph LaJeunesse**

Of the twelve officers elected, eight were new initiates. The offices of Treasurer, Lecturer and Advocate were not filled at this meeting. The office of Financial Secretary was filled by election at that time. Today our Financial Secretaries are appointed by the Supreme Knight. Delegates to the State Convention were also elected at this meeting. The minutes do not indicate where the degree work was held or where the election took place. Apparently the institution of the Council was quite an event for the city. The streets were draped in bunting in celebration of the occasion. A total of twenty-five dollars was allocated for this decorating project, a considerable sum in 1924.

At the meeting of April 21, 1924, just 2 weeks after the reactivation and election of officers, the Financial Secretary and Recorder tendered their resignations and the following officers were elected.

Recorder: **Emmett Galusha**
Financial Secretary: **Thomas Pendergast**
Treasurer: **Stephen Szo Jr.**
Lecturer: **Leo J. Holland**

In the early days of the council the major industries in the Fort Collins area were:

- Great Western Sugar Co.
- Portland Cement Co.
- Colorado and Southern Railroad
- Union Pacific Railroad
- Colorado State College of Agriculture, the forerunner of Colorado State Agricultural and Mechanical College, the forerunner of Colorado State University, with a booming enrollment of 1,700 students, known as the Aggies

Many of the charter members farmed in the Fort Collins and Loveland areas. Agriculture was the main source of economy with emphasis on sugar beet production, lamb and cattle

feeding, as well as apple and cherry production.

THE COUNCIL HALL

The first indication of where the Council held meetings was found in the minutes of 1925-1926 where a motion was approved to pay \$20 for two-months of hall rental to the "Woodmen of the World", an insurance company which is still operating in Fort Collins today. Subsequently the Council's first "home" was established in the north end of the basement of St. Joseph School with the first meeting being held there on October 12, 1927. Fr. LaJuenesse allowed that the facility be officially known as the "KC Hall". The rent was \$10 per month.

The desire for a new club room prompted Grand Knight Al Kamm to appoint a Club Room Committee in 1949. The members were R.E. Kiely, L.P. Orleans, and Jim O'Conner. A House Committee was also appointed to establish a set of club rules. A set of rules were outlined including fees to be collected from the sales of "Liquid Refreshments", food and card games. The fees were collected for the purpose of establishing a building fund (see Minutes page 58 for Club Rules). These rules were approved on February 29, 1949 and a House Committee was established with members Gene Ahlbrandt, Dr. Alfred Peck, and Bert Bogard.

On March 23, 1952, the Council proposed the establishment of a "Columbus Club" for the purpose of acquiring and operating a building. A committee met with Council member Judge John Tobin to develop the By-laws. On April 15, 1952, the first meeting of the Columbus Club was held with Claude Peay as acting president and Ed VanDriel as acting Secretary. The new Constitution and By-laws were adopted and a board of Directors was elected.

Nominees for the Board of Directors were:

John Tobin, Dr. H.A. Grant, Jim Guyer, Ralph Bowen, Dr. A.D. Peck, L. P. Orleans, Ed Gilsdorf, Cliff Sherwood, Ed VanDriel, and Leonard Verellan.

The elected board members were:

Three year term: **John Tobin and Jim Guyer**

Two year term: **Dr. H.A. Grant and L.P. Orleans**

One year term: **Ed VanDriel and Ralph Bowen**

Officers were elected as follows:

President: **Claude Peay**

Vice President: **L.P. Orleans**

Secretary: **Ed VanDriel**

On June 10, 1959, Walter Biehle deeded over to the Columbus Club a house located at 121 North Meldrum where the council home now stands. Brother Walter had owned the property for some time and released it to the Columbus Club at "cost". This was \$4,000 with \$1,400 to be paid upon delivery of the deed and the balance to be paid on or within 3 years with interest of 6%.

The purchase agreement was signed by: Walter Biehle, Ed VanDriel, Ed Gilsdorf, Ernest Rogers, Maurice Fortin, Paul Phifer (ex-officio member), Rudy Plisek, L.P. Orleans, Clifford Sherwood, Ed Clark and Dr. H.A. Grant. After the house was cleaned and repaired it was rented as a source of income for the Club.

Plans for the construction of a Council home were developed by Ed Clark and displayed on September 27, 1961. It called for a 50 x 100 foot cinder block building on the North Meldrum Street site. At a special meeting of the Columbus Club on March 9, 1952, at the American Legion Hall, the proposed contractor, brother Sterling Brechtel, quoted a cost figure of \$18,600.

Approval was given to proceed with the plan and Ed VanDriel was instructed to issue written notice to the tenant to vacate the property by June 15, 1962. The minutes indicate that the "Sheahan Boys" and other volunteers demolished the house and hauled it to the dump. It turns out that the "Sheahan Boys" consisted of Bernard and Charlie, brother Walt was busy working 12 hour days at the time.

Other Council members pitched in to help with the building project. Besides providing labor, many items were donated such as:

- 20 "loud" speakers which were installed by LaClare Sloan
- a rock fascade for the front of the building built by the Brookmans who donated their services (was refabricated in 1996)
- plumbing design and labor donated by Paul Phifer

The final cost of the building was \$24,925. A loan of \$22,500 was obtained from the Poudre Valley Bank for 16 years at 6% with monthly payments of \$182.50. Upon completion of the building the first Columbus Club meeting was held in the new hall on October 31, 1962.

But the council was not satisfied with the size of their property.

During the Columbus Club meeting of November 8, 1967, Ed Gilsdorf announced that the property south of the Club, the Klein property, was for sale. The former owner had promised the Knights first chance to purchase it. The asking price, including the furniture was \$9,500. An offer of \$8,500 was made and accepted. The house rented for \$80 per month. A loan was obtained from the Poudre Valley Bank for \$8,500 at 7% for 11 years at

\$92.52 per month.

Proceeds from weekly bingo, Sunday morning breakfasts, letterman dinners and banquets, and hall rentals provided a steady, but unpredictable, source of income. With the unselfish and untiring efforts of the Council members, the Columbus Club officers and donations by many brothers, the building debt was slowly retired. A council party was held on October 7, 1972, at which time the mortgage was burned.

In 1973, the tenant of the Klein property failed to meet his rental payments. This prompted the council to cease rental operations. It was decided to remove the house and to build a parking lot. The house was offered at no cost to anyone who would move it off the property. Failing to receive any takers, the house was demolished and the land leveled for the present parking lot.

With increased Club activity and the need for more space, a plan was prepared by Larry Michaud and Bernard Sheahan proposing a 32x50 foot addition to the west end of the existing building including a basement. Council approval was granted on May 10, 1976, at an estimated cost of \$39,663. The final cost was \$44,590. Approval was also given to pave the parking lot at a cost of \$2,950. In 1979, a proposal was made to have a mortgage burning party for the new addition.

Under the leadership of Grand Knight James Kasal, and with the volunteer assistance of many Council members, a redecorating project was undertaken in the main hall in 1987. Cinder blocks were insulated and covered with tongue and groove boards. The lower portion of the walls were covered with carpeting.

On April 1, 1992, a plan was presented to remodel the kitchen to bring it up to commercial standards. The estimated cost was \$53,000. The motion was approved and the work completed.

Today the Council hall is used for Knights of Columbus meetings and social functions. However the Hall is also used by the Angels (Knights Ladies Auxiliary), several scout groups, the Toastmasters, the Rock Hounds, the Indian Pow Wow, a mother's support group and a host of other community service organizations. It is regularly rented for anniversary and wedding receptions, and other social functions like the annual St. Joseph Senior Christmas Dinner.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

A number of humorous or noteworthy events and activities are gathered into the various following categories.

Medical Examiner

Dr. P.J. McHugh, the first Chancellor of the council, was appointed the council's first "medical examiner". He received a fee of \$2.50 for each insurance applicant examined.

Financial Secretary

In the early days the Financial Secretary collected dues and insurance premiums and forwarded the insurance premiums to the Supreme Council for which he received 5% of all the money collected in lieu of a salary.

Degree Teams

The institution of a first degree team was first proposed in 1924 but the cost of the robes and paraphernalia was prohibitive. Two years later, in 1926, robes and paraphernalia were bought for the First Degree team and exemplification of the First, Second, and Third degrees were held in St. Joseph School basement on November 19, 1926.

In 1945 the newly formed Second Degree team performed well and a suggestion was made to establish a Third Degree team. It would be some 28 years before the establishment of this team. The Third Degree team's performance at a dress rehearsal before the State Deputy and Past State Deputy on April 4, 1973, met with their approval. The first service was performed in Loveland on April 15, 1973.

Exemplifications

As noted above, in 1926 all three degrees were exemplified in the same day. Ray Kamm recalls receiving all three degrees in 1927 in a Lodge Hall above the Public Service Company of Colorado which at that time was located in the 100 block of West Mountain Avenue. This exemplification was conducted under the direction of William McGlone of Denver, a former Colorado University football player.

Receiving all three degrees in one day was not uncommon in those days. However, on January 9, 1929 our Council was advised by the Supreme Council that the first degree must be administered separately from the other degrees. Since that time it has become quite uncommon to receive all three degrees on the same day.

Fourth Degree Assembly

An exemplification of the Fourth Degree was held in Denver on February 22, 1932. Council minutes indicate that members were informed that a candidate for the Fourth Degree must be a Third Degree member for no less than two years and must receive Holy Communion within 2 weeks of the exemplification. This is quite different from the requirements today.

Leo Thyfault and Bob Powers were instrumental in obtaining a Fourth Degree Charter through Dr. John Failey the District Master of Pueblo.

On October 22, 1966, Council 1214 along with Council 3434 of Loveland were granted a charter known as *The Reverend G. Joseph LaJeunesse, General Assembly, Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus.*

Charter members were:

Msgr. Richard Duffy		Vincent R. Reid	
Rev. Charles C. Brown		Ernest O. Rogers	
Joseph P. Collopy		Richard L. Saracino	PFN
Richard T. Drees		Gregory G. Skroca	3434
Larry R. Drees	3434	Charles W. Soukup	
William A. Holtzworth	3434	Leo Thyfault	PFN
M. Lloyd Hopwood		Jacob Wolf	3434
James L. Pflipsen		Richard J. Kelly	
Paul E. Phifer	PFN	Francis R. Colgan	
Robert B. Powers	PFN	Edward J. Clark	
William A. Raddatz		Donald R. Ahrenholtz	

PFN = Past Faithful Navigators

Robert Powers was the Charter Faithful Navigator.

Discrimination

It was noted in the minutes in 1928-29 that Catholics were being discriminated against in Fort Collins and across the nation. The council was advised that a "bogus" Knights of Columbus oath had appeared in several areas of the country for the purposes of discrediting the Knights. The Supreme Council had seven cases under prosecution. Notes indicate that brother Padilla had his Knights of Columbus meeting notices torn in two and tossed in his mail box on several occasions.

By-Laws

Changes to the By-Laws were made several times in our history. In 1933 the annual dues were reduced from \$12 to \$9, election of officers was moved to June rather than September, and the meeting night was changed from Thursdays to Wednesday. A new regulation in 1933 permitted an applicant for membership, 21 years or older, to become a member *without* taking insurance; however, he still had the *option* of taking it.

Spirituality

To enhance the spiritual growth of the council, it was decided in 1951 to voluntarily meet 15 minutes before regular meetings to recite the Rosary. Nocturnal Adoration was instituted in

February of 1958 with ninety people participating in the first Adoration. This continued monthly for several years before being discontinued. But history repeats itself. Council 1214 reinstated recitation of the rosary before meetings in 1994 and is now participating in Adoration at St. Joseph Church the first Friday of each month.

Many council members were involved in the mixed choir of the parish in 1938. Preston Murphy was the choir director, lending his beautiful baritone voice. Harry Falk was tenor, Clarence and Art Knuffke were baritones, and Charles Willow bass. The accompanist was Mrs. Fred Barnes, sister of Charter member John Godfrey and mother of Mrs. Larry McMillan.

In 1954, 20 members participated in a pilgrimage to the Mother Cabrini shrine in Denver.

The Council hosted Corporate Communion each year and often had breakfasts for the families afterwards. Historical attendance far exceeded today's numbers. In 1955 the attendance was 349 at the men and boys communion and in 1957 the women and girls communion had 380 in attendance.

In 1956 a program was instituted to encourage men to attend Mass on the morning of first Fridays followed by breakfast.

Council 1214 participated in a living Rosary sponsored by St. Augustine Council in Brighton in May of 1961.

In 1966, Council 1214 sent \$12.50 to the Denver Catholic Register to assist in paying for an ad publicizing the installation of Archbishop Casey.

Bingo

Several bingos were held beginning in 1944-45 to help reduce St. Joseph Parish debt. Turkey bingo seemed to be a favorite and profitable fundraiser in the early days. A Bingo license was applied for in 1958 and regular bingo began at the American Legion Hall on August 27, 1959, on the fourth Thursday of every month. Brother Biehle advanced \$85 for purchasing Bingo supplies to be repaid from Bingo proceeds. Soon thereafter Bingo was moved to St. Joseph School gym.

Bingo was moved to the new Knights Hall at 121 N. Meldrum after its completion in 1962. The first session was called by Brother Ed Clark one week before Thanksgiving, 1962. Bingo then was held every Thursday night. In 1994 a private Bingo hall opened in Fort Collins. They proved to be formidable competition for the Council's Thursday night Bingos but the Council put up a good fight. Council members stalked the new Bingo hall to see if they were breaking laws and developed a portable billboard (big signs on the back of David Pinedo's pickup truck) that they parked in front of the new hall advertising that the Knights of Columbus had Bingo too. The efforts were to no avail. The Council was losing money when it was decided to move Knights of Columbus Bingo to the private hall.

Bingo is now conducted twice on Mondays at the private hall. The new Bingo hall still displays several pictures of Council members in the pickup truck.

Ladies Auxiliary

The Ladies Auxiliary known as the "Knight's Angels" received their charter on June 4, 1984. It is interesting to note that the Council had requested that an auxiliary be developed in 1951, but the offer was turned down.

Fraternal Events With other Councils

Brothers Hale, Collopy and McHugh participated in the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Denver Council and the dedication of their new hall in December, 1928. A banquet was held at the Brown Palace hotel and guests included Bishop Tihen, Supreme Knight Martin Carmody and Supreme Director Reddin.

In 1935 Council 1214 presented two resolutions to the State Convention. One appropriated funds for the continuance of the work started by Brother Wendling in proselytizing non-catholics and the other changed the eligibility requirements for a delegate to the state convention to include any 3rd degree member not just Grand Knights and Past Grand Knights. Both resolutions were adopted.

Joint summer picnics with Greeley council were held in 1932 and 1933. In 1948 council picnics included councils from Greeley, Sterling and Wyoming, but Sterling and Wyoming didn't show up! 1948 also brought the advent of the First District meetings in District One. These were instituted by District Deputy Claude Peay who proposed inter-council meetings between the four Councils of the District: Greeley, Longmont, Fort Collins, and Boulder. They proved very successful.

In 1949 Sterling, Roggen and Fort Morgan councils were added to District One.

The 50th anniversary of the State Council of the Knights of Columbus was celebrated at the State Convention in Colorado Springs in May of 1950. Carroll Dunn was elected State Deputy and Claude Peay of Council 1214 was elected the insurance delegate to the Supreme Convention.

Council 1214 participated in the dedication of the Greeley Council Hall on February 2, 1955.

Father Nadal, pastor of Holy Family Parish who served as Council Chaplain for several years, was interested in having a Council established in his parish. When he was satisfied that it would not interfere with Council 1214 he proceeded to sign applicants and on November 14, 1982, Council 8220 was established with initiates receiving their first degree in Loveland. Unfortunately, Council 8220, surrendered their charter in 1993.

A traveling trophy for the "Top" State Council was instituted in 1972. In 1972, 1973, and 1974 Council 1214 won the trophy.

In 1992 the Annual State Bowling Tournament was held in Fort Collins and included "Bowling for Babies" buttons as a fund raiser for the local Birthright.

Meeting Attendance

In 1933 it was suggested that meeting attendance may be improved by following the lead of the Denver Council which had slot machines. No action was ever taken on this proposal.

Listed below is the average meeting attendance for each year through the sixties. Notice the peak of 41 in 1962.

1944 - 25	1950 - 35	1956 - 35	1962 - 41
1945 - 26	1951 - 30	1957 - 33	1963 - 36
1946 - 29	1952 - 28	1958 - 31	1964 - 28
1947 - 29	1953 - 28	1959 - 31	1965 - 25
1948 - 26	1954 - 30	1960 - 36	1967 - 17
1949 - 31	1955 - 28	1961 - 38	

Holy Family Parish

Council 1214 raised \$104.28 in support of the original construction of Holy Family Church. Sometime in 1929 Father Trudel of Holy Family Parish announced that \$3,100 of the \$4,800 needed had been raised. The cornerstone was laid on May 11, 1929.

The council provided support through the years for Holy Family Church and school, purchasing playground equipment, sports equipment, providing painting and other support. Until Holy Family School was closed, the Council also invited children from Holy Family and St. Joseph Schools to an annual Christmas party.

St. Joseph Parish

In 1925 a committee of three brothers was appointed to meet with the chaplain Fr. LaJeunesse to determine his needs for church ushers and to help establish a rate for pew rental.

A major remodeling of St. Joseph Church began in September of 1959. The members of the Council assisted in moving the pews from the church to the basement of the school where services were held during the renovation period. The cornerstone for the remodeled church was laid by Bishop Newell of Cheyenne on March 13, 1960. Many council members were in attendance.

An open house of the remodeled church was held on April 16, 1960. Council members served as guides and ushers. The church was dedicated by Archbishop Vehr on April 27, 1960.

The Council helped with several significant Church repair projects during the years including the remodeling in 1959 as well as the Church ceiling in 1927-28, painting the rectory and Church in 1934-35, donation to the Parish building fund in 1951, and installing the Church sign in 1951.

St. Joseph School

In the spring of 1925, Father LaJeunesse announced that ground had been broken for St. Joseph School. The school's architecture would be of Spanish style: tan brick, and stone trimming and would include stone taken from the farm of Eugene Lamb a charter member of the council. The school opened its doors on September 6, 1926, with an enrollment of 117. Sister Mildred Dolluls, a Loretta nun, was the Mother Superior.

At a meeting in 1932, Father LaJeunesse complimented the new officers of the Council and remarked on the excellent spirit of St. Joseph Parish during his 33 years as pastor. He urged the parish, school, and council to cooperate with each other, especially during the depression. Father said he had achieved the ambition of his life with the completion of St. Joseph School and hoped the doors would never be closed against any Catholic child because of finances.

In 1933 the Council approved a motion to spend \$18 for the purchase of a Xylophone for the nuns at St. Joseph School. In 1945 the council completed a renovation of the large school hall so that basketball could be conducted there. The cost was \$45.

The Council provided substantial contributions to help in school construction and later helped with upkeep on school grounds, repaired playground equipment, erected fencing and backstops, dug a well and put in a sprinkler system. Hard to imagine, but in 1958 our members successfully lobbied the City Council requesting a traffic light be installed at the corner of Mountain and Howes.

Campus Ministry

Brother Al Kamm enlightened the Council about the Newman Club an organization of Catholic Students attending Colorado A&M. The Council hosted a reception at St. Joseph Parish in 1931 to make the college students feel welcome and to encourage them in their church attendance.

Scouting

Council 1214 has a long history of supporting and promoting scouting. The council first explored the possibility of establishing a Boy Scout troop in 1926. The Council initially hosted a boys camp at Chambers Lake in 1932 under the direction of Fr. Morning. In 1933 Father Clark of Denver was in charge and boys ages 13 to 17 enjoyed the camp under his direction. By the late 30's this matured into a Boy Scout troop. The first Scout Master was brother Keith Hemphill until he was drafted for WWII. Since that time the council has been active and supportive in scouting, finding scoutmasters, providing financial assistance and meeting facilities, and including the scouts in the council functions.

Other Community Support

By conservative estimates Council 1214 has donated over \$500,000 and over 200,000 hours of service to the local community since its inception in 1924. Benefactors include Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, disaster relief funds, religious orders, Boys Town, Seminarian and Religious funds, Catholic Charities, Right to Life, Birthright, homes for the disabled or mentally handicapped and many other worthy causes.

The Council has also participated in blood drives through the years and now hosts it's own blood drive for Poudre Valley Hospital three times per year at the Council Hall.