



COLBY FREE PRESS

10 pages

Family finds hope after tragedy

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

For 19 years, Jordan Harris was a gift to his family and now one year after his death in a car accident, he has become a gift to many others.

Harris was like any teenage boy his mother, Eileen, said. Jordan loved his car — a 1996 black Blazer, friends, KU basketball, Denver Broncos football and most high school sports.

Considered shy and quiet around teachers and acquaintances, Jordan was known to be a witty, energetic guy with his close friends — showing compassion when it came to helping other students.

When Jordan was a junior and playing basketball for the Eagles in the 2002-2003 season, a freshman was promoted to varsity.

"It is really tough making that move when I was a freshman," said Matt Augustine, who graduated from Colby High School last year. "If it hadn't been for Jordan, I don't think I would have made it."

Jordan helped Matt by taking him under his wing and making him feel like he was part of the team.

Jordan's close friends, Jeff Reavis and Carson McKee, both of Colby, were always joking around, Eileen said, and Jordan enjoyed quoting "one-liners" from movies. "Even now," she said, "Matt, Jeff, Carson and many of Jordan's other friends are wonderful in helping us

cope. Some days I feel closer to him."

It's been one year since the car accident that took Jordan's life. For Eileen, what has been the most healing to her was something her son volunteered to do three years prior.

Eileen, 49, recalled a conversation with Jordan about being an organ donor when he applied for his driver's license at 16. The two of them discussed that option in the event of his death.

She remembers Jordan saying, "Sure, definitely I will do that."

Because of the way he treated others, it wasn't surprising Jordan's compassion wouldn't carry over in making the decision to be an organ donor.

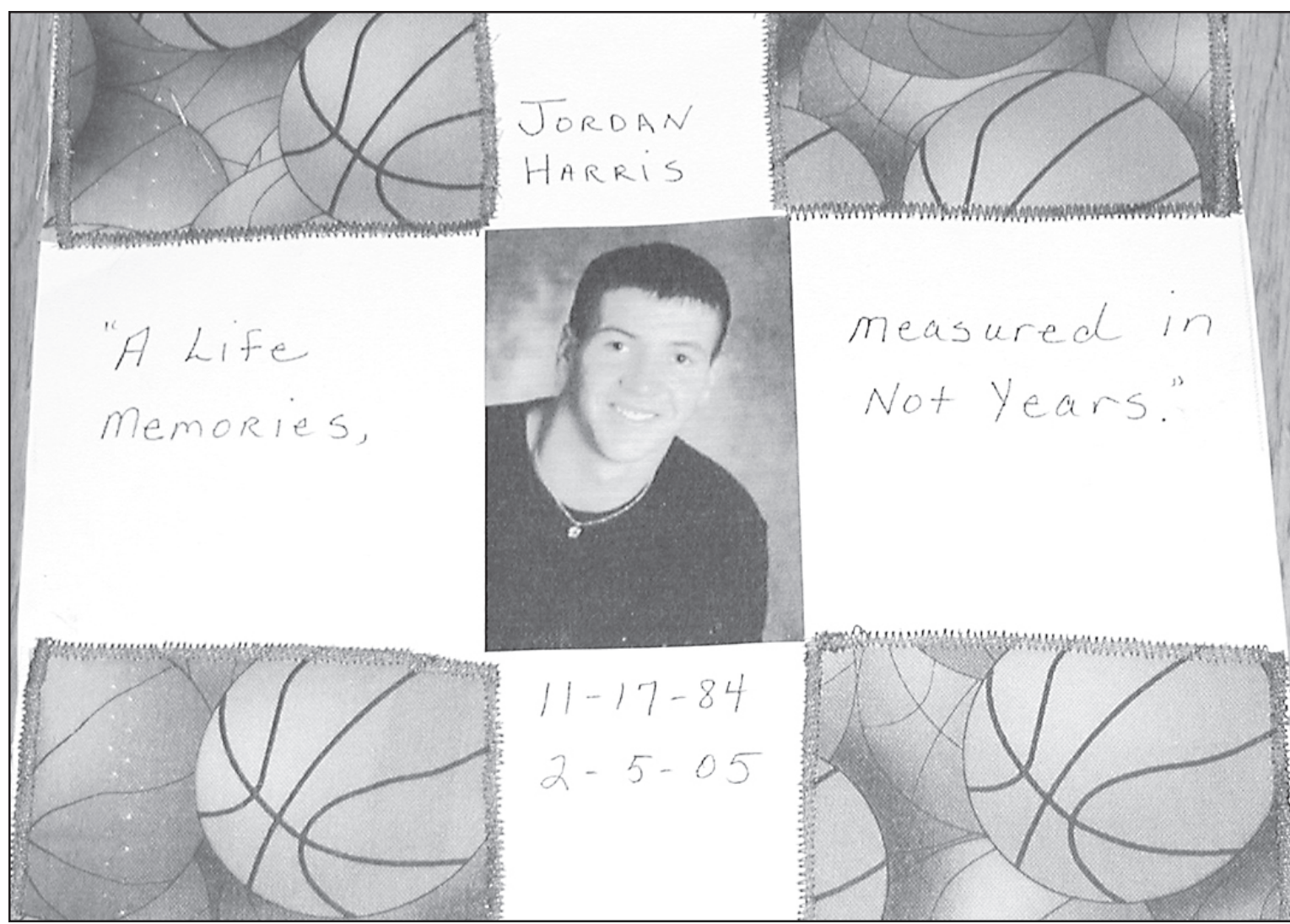
By Jordan agreeing, the Harris family, which includes sister, Angie, and father, Doug, is beginning to see something they can hang on to.

The family isn't sure about who has benefited from Jordan's organ donations.

Family members attended an event in December in Kansas City hosted by Midwest Transplant, which took Jordan's donations.

This life celebration brought families of donors and recipients together.

Eileen said she spoke with one gentleman who had received a kidney and others who, without donated muscles, cartilage, and liga-



ABOVE: A quilt square of Jordan Harris, who died in a car accident one year ago, will be one of many squares forming a traveling quilt for the Midwest Transplant organization. The quilt square of Jordan was designed by his mother, Eileen, and sister, Angie. RIGHT: Eileen spoke with a kidney recipient during a "Celebration of Life" event held in Kansas City last December.

PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

ments could have never walked again.

She donated a quilt square paying tribute to Jordan that will be one of several making up a traveling quilt used by the Midwest Transplant organization.

"This has helped me more than anything," she said, "and even though the people I spoke with didn't have Jordan's donations, it still meant a lot."

The exchange of friendships and

seeing how many people could have hope again was important to Eileen.

"I want to know the people and build a bond with them one day," she said.

"Becoming an organ donor is a good thing and if there is a way I can help get the word out, I want to do that."

For the Harris family, this has been a way for them to heal and know that their son's compassionate spirit is living on.



Books donated to library

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

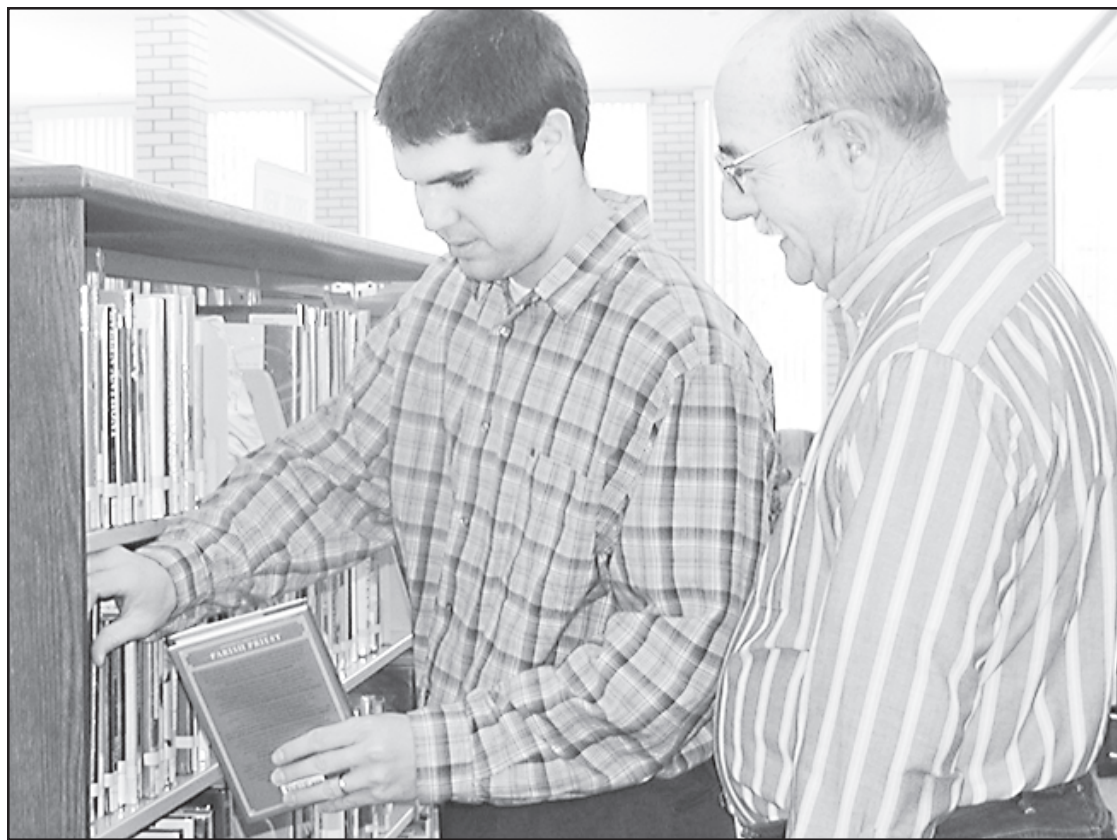
Pioneer Memorial Library received a book donation today. While not an unusual occurrence, it's always something that is appreciated and welcomed.

Dick Parnell, representing the Colby Council of the Knights of Columbus donated a copy of *Papish Priest: Father Michael McGivney and American Catholicism*. The organization also gave copies to the libraries at Sacred Heart School, Colby Community College and Colby High School.

Parnell said Father McGivney, who founded the Knights of Columbus in 1880, is up for sainthood. Needed are three miracles, and the priest already has two to his credit. Only one more is needed, and Parnell said they hope a third can be accomplished with sales of the book.

It's the latest money donated to the library, and library director Jeff Friesen said such donations help in more ways people can imagine.

"A lot of people are not aware



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

This morning, Pioneer Memorial Library director Jeff Friesen, left, showed Dick Parnell, right, with the Colby Council of Knights of Columbus where a book donated by the council will go when it's ready to be checked out. Friesen said they can always use book donations.

of how much book donations facilitate the services of the library," Friesen said.

Books go on the shelves new, like the Knights of Columbus donation, for example, or sometimes they end up in one of the book sales. Proceeds from books sold goes back into the library, he said, to purchase new books.

"We'll take just about anything,"

he said. "Old, new, fiction, non-fiction. No books go unused."

Sometimes, people even donate books in honor of someone, or as memorials.

For anyone who doesn't want to donate money to the library, Friesen said book donations are another way for people to help out and lend their support.

He said they can give people

peace of mind that they're getting the library will maximize the value of the books they're given.

"Often times donated book are added to the library collection as either new or replacement books and those books that are not added go to the book sale," he said.

"All books are put to good use and we are always accepting donations."

Last stop before state Colby Eagles head for regionals

By Tracy Rogers
Colby Free Press

The Colby Eagles wrestling squad, along with 14 other schools, travel to Russell Friday for Regional competition and the right to continue on to Salina's State tournament next week.

Wrestlers must place in the top four of their weight class to qualify for state. Teams competing at Russell are: Andale, Buhler, Clearwater, Colby, Goodland, Haven, Hays-TMP, Hugoton, Larned, Lindsborg-Smoky Valley, Nickerson, Pratt, Russell, Scott City, and Ulysses.

"These are some great young men. They have been working extremely hard all season, and have been looking forward to the post-season. They deserve a lot of credit for performing well throughout this long season," said coach Mitch Beims.

Following are a list of each Colby wrestler's accomplishments this season.

103 lb. - Bryan Brewer (sophomore): 28-6, record; 1st at St. Francis Inv.; 3rd at Liberal Tourney; 7th at Newton Tourney; 2nd at Beloit Inv.; NWKL Champion

112 - Brent Luedke (sophomore): 27-4; 1st at St. Francis Inv.; 1st at Liberal Tourney; 7th at Newton Tourney; 2nd at Beloit Inv.; NWKL Champion

119 - Trenton Powell (junior): 21-7; 3rd at Liberal Tourney; 4th at Newton Tourney; 3rd at Beloit Inv.; 2nd at NWKL Tournament

125 - Hunter Olsen (sophomore): 20-12; 1st at St. Francis Inv.; 4th at Liberal Tourney; 2nd at NWKL Tournament

130 - Jared Flanagin (junior): 23-15; 3rd at St. Francis Inv.; 5th at Liberal Tourney; 5th at Newton Tourney; 5th at Beloit Inv.; 2nd at NWKL Tournament

135 - Daniel Gonzales (sophomore): 20-8; 3rd at Liberal Tourney; 7th at Newton Tourney; 2nd at Beloit Inv.; 2nd at NWKL Tournament

140 - Cole Garcia (senior): 32-0; 1st at St. Francis Inv.; 1st at Liberal Tourney; 1st at Newton Tourney; 1st at Beloit Inv.; NWKL Champion

145 - Taylor Finley (senior): 29-2; 2nd at St. Francis Inv.; 1st at Liberal Tourney; 3rd at Newton Tourney; 2nd at Beloit Inv.; NWKL Champion

152 - Kyle Withington (senior): 23-11; 3rd at St. Francis Inv.; 5th at Liberal Tourney; 7th at Newton Tourney; 6th at Beloit Inv.; 2nd at NWKL Tournament

160 - Eric Jurek (junior): 3-3
171 - Tanner Kriss (freshman): 14-13; 5th at Liberal Tournament; 6th at Beloit Tournament

189 - Michael Juenemann (junior): 7-8
215 - Nick Kriss (sophomore): 14-14; 5th at St. Francis Tournament

275 - Taylor Brown (sophomore): 9-14; 3rd at St. Francis Inv.; 4th at NWKL Tournament

Individual stats leaders for most pins:

Brewer - 18
Garcia - 17
Finley - 16
Luedke - 16
Flanagin - 13

Most takedowns:
Finley - 76
Gonzales - 58
Garcia - 53
Withington - 50
Olsen - 42

Team Stats:
1st Place at St. Francis Inv.
2nd Place at Colby Eagle Invitational

2nd Place at Southwest Classic (Liberal)

3rd Place at Newton Invitational
1st Place at Beloit Invitational

Thomas County ponders election locations

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Thomas County Clerk Shelly Harms continues to evaluate where elections will take place.

For the past several months Harms and Commissioners Ron Evans, Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen have been talking about the need to consolidate polling places.

"I'm having to reduce the number of polling places," Harms said. "The biggest reason for consolidating is the cost of equipment, software and training."

Harms said the location of polling places has changed from where she and the commissioners in December thought the would be.

"The options back then were that residents of Brewster, West Hale and Kingery Townships would continue to vote at Brewster City Hall," Harms said. "And we thought resi-

dents of Rexford, Menlo, and Smith and Wendell Township residents would still vote at Rexford City Hall."

After further reviewing the situation, Harms said she's leaning toward having the residents from the townships of Barrett, West Hale, East Hale and Kingery vote at the Brewster City Hall.

Residents of Rovohl, Morgan, Summers, South Randall and North Randall townships will vote at the

Colby Community Building. Residents of Menlo, Smith, Lacey, Wendell townships, as well as towns of Rexford, Menlo and Gem will vote at the Rexford City Hall.

"Ron (Evans) wants me to advise voters and get feedback about driving from one end of the county to a certain place or another," Harms said. "These polling places are certainly not set in stone, but this is what I'm looking at as the best alternative."