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TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

RIGHT: Colby Grade School third grader Kelly Sloan sneezed during the Soaring Singers concert Thursday at the grade school auditorium. The rest of the group sang "The Kid With the Surprising Sneeze," during which Sloan was the sneeze soloist.

Cleanup week starts Monday

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

It's time again for people in Colby and Thomas County to get serious about cleanup efforts at home and around the area.

To help in the process, city and county officials are combining efforts for the special week starting Monday and continuing through Saturday.

"Next week will be an excellent opportunity to clean up your outdoor area in preparation for our May visit with Anita Cochran, KSN News, when she films a segment on *Our Home Town — Colby*," said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong.

Another way the county and city will assist in cleanup week is by offering disposal of waste tires at the landfill with the city agreeing to haul them to the landfill.

"But the regular tire disposal fees must be paid before they leave your property," Armstrong said.

Fees for car and pickup tires is \$2 and regular truck tires is \$5 with the full list of tire disposal fees available at city hall.

Residents wanting to have large objects removed from their yards can do so by calling 460-4410. Appliances, furniture and other large objects will be removed separately from normal trash routes.

Higher gas prices causing crunch for city, county operations

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Gasoline sticker shock is causing problems for most people. Law enforcement, city services and businesses are no different.

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn said gas prices have changed how his deputies enforce the law.

"It's impacting us significantly," he said, "deputies are doing more stationary enforcement."

That's when a deputy will park somewhere with his cruiser's engine turned off and track traffic by radar.

"But we won't be cutting back on regular patrols," Baughn said.

The sheriff's office has 10 patrol cars that are used each week. There is a vehicle for jail transport, civil process, Baughn's vehicle and one used by Undersheriff Jason Moses.

Money for the gasoline budget has come from the drug forfeiture fund. Baughn said he still has 87 percent of his fuel budget for this year left, but said that will change.

"It really hasn't affected us yet, but it will this month."

For the city, high gas prices are also forcing City Manager Carolyn Armstrong to look at ways to cut back on how much the

city spends on fuel.

"We have never changed our restrictions we put into effect last fall," she said. City employees are no longer allowed to take city vehicles home at night.

Upcoming budget discussions are going to reflect the recent rise in gas prices.

Armstrong said the city will have to budget more for gas. For the current fiscal year, \$2.50 a gallon was budgeted, and in the future, it will have to be \$3.

"It will have a substantial impact on the budget," she said. "We're already feeling it."

Armstrong said there are no plans to reduce city services because of high gas

prices, but it has forced a change how certain aspects of the city operate.

For example, the Colby Fire Department is the regional hazardous material group and offers its education trailer for other municipalities to use.

Since the price of gas skyrocketed, Armstrong said the fire department no longer hauls the trailer to other places. Instead, the city attorney drafted a document requiring anyone who wants to use the trailer to provide their own transportation. Others are to provide a copy of their insurance and sign an agreement, which states they will be responsible for any damage to the trailer.

"That's helped cut down on fuel costs," Armstrong said.

But many car accidents the fire department responded to in the past six weeks haven't. The fire department went out on all the calls and sometimes had more than one vehicle on scene.

"It's amazing what gas impacts," Armstrong said. Businesses that offer delivery services are also feeling the crunch.

Jackie Wiens, one of the owners of Someplace Special, said the prices have caused them to plan their deliveries more, and stick to their delivery schedule of two trips a day.

"We try not to backtrack, and stick to the route," Wiens said.

Activity director not on Monday's agenda

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

The activities director/assistant principal opening at Colby High School is not on the agenda for Colby School Board's Monday meeting. The board will meet at 7 p.m. at the Administration Building.

"It is not listed," said Superintendent Kirk Nielsen. "I haven't had anybody request it."

A search committee for the position includes board members Tracy Rogers and Stan Molstad, Nielsen, high school principal Rocky Robbins, middle school principal Robb Ross and high school teacher Nancy Rundel. April 17, the committee

recommended Mitch Beims to the board for the position. Beims is the head wrestling coach at the high school, and teaches social studies.

After three executive sessions, Molstad made a motion to approve Beims, however, the motion failed for lack of a second.

The board will hear a curriculum presentation on the reading and math academies and reports from the Nielsen, the building principals and curriculum director Diana Wieland.

Also on slate are a discussion on membership dues for the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce; Kansas Association of School Boards dues and the Legal Assistance Fund membership.

Sebelius fined \$1,500

TOPEKA (AP) — After ruling that Gov. Kathleen Sebelius' reelection campaign illegally solicited contributions from lobbyists, the state ethics commission fined her \$1,500.

The case involved an April 12 e-mail that Sebelius' campaign committee sent to 92,000 supporters. Thirty-nine appeared to be registered lobbyists and 16 of them actually received the e-mail, according to testimony.

The Governmental Ethics Commission concluded, on a 7-0 vote

Thursday, that the e-mail was a solicitation. State law prohibits legislators, statewide officials, and candidates for their offices from seeking contributions from lobbyists, corporations and political action committees while the Legislature is in session.

"I respect this ruling and will take immediate action to make sure nothing like this mistake occurs again," Sebelius said in a written statement. She is the second Kansas governor to be fined by the commission.

SELDEN (AP) — In a time when all sorts of electronic gadgets make jobs faster and easier with less people power, it's hard to find many businesses that still give personal attention to every piece of merchandise that goes out the door.

There is one such place in tiny Selden, population 200, in northwest Sheridan County, where books are bound and glued and covered and inspected every day, one by one, by a human hand.

The Koerperich family has owned and operated Koerperich Bookbinding Inc. for more than 35 years, and from the looks of it, the company will be going strong for many years to come.

Two of Richard Koerperich's five sons worked with him during the past 20 years until a bout with cancer slowed him down a couple of years ago. A third son, Dallas, returned to his hometown from McPherson to join younger brothers Chris and Don in running the family business this past year.

Richard died in January, but the trio of brothers and four other full-time employees, along with several part-timers, have moved on without skipping a beat.

The Koerperich brothers have taken advantage of some advanced technology, but most of the machines used for bookbinding are the same, or similar, as their dad began using back in 1969. The gold letter embossing

Selden business bound to succeed

"We're at a point where we need to decide if we want to get bigger or smaller."

Chris Koerperich, one of the sons in the family business

for the covers is even done with hot lead Linotype, which started being replaced by phototypesetters in the mid-1970s.

There are sewing machines and trimmers, machines for rounding and backing and gluing and pressing. But all are run by humans. In fact, some of the sewing and gluing is even done by hand, as is cleaning the book covers before they are packed for shipping.

"There isn't any faster way to do oversewn binding," Chris said of the process his company uses. "It's the most durable."

Chris and Don have known little else but the bookbinding business as they began working for their dad during their junior high days and re-joined him shortly after they graduated from high school.

"It's about all there was to do out here, and it was something we knew," Chris said. "And we've made a fair living at it."

Now, it's become a way of life that the brothers have chosen for themselves and their families. Chris and Don both are married with children. About 85 percent of their busi-

ness is from out of state, and the biggest contract is reprinting law books for a company in New Jersey that sells them to universities worldwide.

But they also either hard bind or rebound Bibles and church hymnals, newspapers and personal libraries, genealogies and school yearbooks, town and family periodicals.

"We'll try anything once," Chris said.

The Koerperiches just finished restoring a 1906 Atlas of Rawlins County and a 1904 German Bible — both one-book jobs. In fact, the draw for the business is that it caters to smaller jobs. Most won't consider an order unless there are at least 500 books to be printed.

"Most binderies wouldn't even look at that," said longtime employee Marcia Schlageck, who began working for Richard at the business while Chris was still in high school.

The boys' mother, Sandy Koerperich, also worked at the bindery in the early days. She and Richard divorced about 20 years ago, but she still lives in Selden and supports her

sons in their business venture.

Another plus is that Koerperich Bookbinding pays attention to detail and refuses to skimp on quality. There are only about 35 book binderies in the country certified by the American Library Association, and materials used at Koerperich Bookbinding meet or exceed the ALA's specifications, Chris said.

Chris held up a piece of chipboard which is now used for some book covers. "This is called 98-pound, too," he pointed out, comparing the harder Davey board to the chipboard, which is easier to bend. "But you can tell the difference. I just don't offer chipboard on a bigger book."

Speaking of bigger, Chris said that the business has just about outgrown its locale on Main Street that has expanded twice already. After starting out in a 25-by-50 foot building in the early 1970s, the family later built on a 12-by-50 foot addition on the south side, then bought the original bank building to the north in the late 1980s.

"We're at a point where we need to decide if we want to get bigger or smaller," he said.

The Koerperiches own several lots to the south of the existing building, and Chris said that within the next five years they will decide whether they want to put up a new building.