



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Horsepower



**ABOVE:** Corvette enthusiasts look at one of the dozens of sports car on display Saturday in Oakley. The Buffalo Bill Corvette Show was sponsored by the Oakley Area Chamber of Commerce and area merchants. Plans are to make the show an annual event, officials said. **RIGHT:** People watched Union Pacific's historic steam locomotive No. 844 race through Oakley Saturday morning. The train is on a 35-day, 10-state tour to celebrate the railroad's history and heritage. The train stopped in Sharon Springs Friday afternoon and left Saturday morning.



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

## Landowners asked to pull the weeds

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
Colby Free Press

Ten Thomas County landowners have been told to get musk thistle under control or the county will do it for them.

"I've sent out 10 letters so far," Thomas County Weed Director Ken Ptacek said. "I'll be sending out some more very soon."

Ptacek told Commissioners Ron Evans, Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen Friday he is in the process of surveying which landowners are or are not taking control of the noxious weed.

"Now is the time to spray and monitor your pastures," he said. "I think the people who have taken care of business and now is the time to do it."

Evans said he and the other two commissioners agree with Ptacek and want to see landowners being proactive.

State law gives commissioners the authority to enter land where weeds listed by the state as noxious are located and treat them. Treatment will be assessed back to individual landowners through county taxes.

"We thank everyone who is attacking musk thistle," Evans said.

"Next we'll be fighting bind weed," chimed in Christiansen.

Following talk about weeds, commissioners focused on whether they needed to purchase a large generator to run courthouse lights and equipment during emergencies. Engel said situations he thought a generator would help the county when weather effects electricity to the courthouse.

Thomas County Emergency Preparedness Director Jim Engel told the commissioner they have several options.

Engel said the county already has two large generators, one which runs the law enforcement center and one for his own office. He said he could see whether grant money was

available for a generator for the courthouse if the commissioners wanted him to.

"Basically I'm just pitching the idea to you guys," Engel said.

He said if a generator was purchased for the courthouse, a decision to provide power for the entire building or only portions of it needs made.

Christiansen said since the law enforcement center and emergency preparedness offices had generators they were "the priority."

Steele said the commissioners needed not to make a decision either way.

"I'm trying to look at a crystal ball that's cloudy," Steele said. "I'm thinking about a decision we make today to see what will be 10 years from now."

"Will there be a time, say that the treasurer's office would like to have had a generator in an emergency to run computers so people can pay taxes or buy a tag?" he asked.

Evans was less enthusiastic about looking into buying a generator for the courthouse. He said commercial power crews do an excellent job restoring power during emergencies and questioned the need for a generator when ones were already available.

Steele didn't like Evans, position on the topic.

"When you say no now and you have to opportunity to get the money, then you'll be in a long line to get (a generator)," he said.

"OK, if you can get grant money, go for it," Evans said.

Engel said he'd check out options for grant money, and was sure the county could rent a generator if needed.

Steele asked Engel to check with an electrician to determine what the various options of electrical consumption at the courthouse would be during an emergency. He also wants Engel to check cost to install a transfer switch to make the options work.

## Military support group still on active duty

By Tisha Cox  
Colby Free Press

A year after it began, the Northwest Family Military Support Group is still meeting but is wanting to grow.

Started in February 2005, the group formed to support families whose relatives are soldiers and deployed overseas.

"At the time we had some people activated in Iraq," said club Treasurer Melanie Fortin of Colby. "And if in the near future, the 170th is activated, having a group in place will help."

She explained many units across the country have support groups for families. In Colby, the meetings attracted 15 to 20 people in the beginning, but numbers have recently dwindled to five to 10 people.

"It isn't just for family members, and is open to anyone in the community who would like to help out," Fortin said.

There was no military-support group in northwest Kansas before the group in Colby started.

Meetings are held the second Saturday of each month at the Colby Kansas Army National



M. Fortin

Guard Armory.

"You don't have to be a family member," she said. "People are welcome if they just want to help and be involved in some way."

Fortin became involved last year when her husband, Randy, a member of the Det. 2 170th Maintenance Company, was one of many locals who served at Fort Riley last year.

The group started out with many plans last year, and accomplished some of their smaller goals.

"We haven't done a whole lot of anything big," Fortin said. "We want to get more people involved."

This week, they will finish with one project that will honor a fallen soldier.

One of the group's projects was the purchase of a bench in memory of Sgt. Derrick Lutters of Goodland, who was killed in action in Iraq May 1, 2005.

The bench will be dedicated at 1 p.m. Mountain Time Saturday at the Goodland National Guard Armory.

Another event planned in the near future is a military appreciation reception and dance June 16 at the Colby Comfort Inn. She said they will be working on getting donations for the silent auction and dance, and could use help with the event.

For information, call Fortin at 460-2995.

## Farmer plants faith in his cornfield

John Van Nostrand  
Colby Free Press

People who drive by Lance Leebrick's corn crop this year will probably think it all looks the same. But he knows 40 acres of it is something special.

Lance and wife Brenda are donating 40 acres of the crop to Foods Resource Bank. It is a Christian response to world hunger, a non-government humanitarian organization committed providing food security through sustainable small-scale agricultural production.

"I was reading a World Hope letter and I wasn't familiar with Foods Resource Bank," Lance said. "And it caught our eye."

World Hope is a faith-based relief and development group that also assists with the underprivileged around the world. Foods Resource Bank works with World Hope. The Leebrick's curiosity went so far as to meet with Foods Resource Bank's Kansas representative.

How Foods Resource Bank works is when the 40 acres of corn are harvested, the value will be sent to Foods Resource Bank. Those funds will then be used to teach others around the world and to purchase materials to become self-sustaining with food production.

"It sounded like something we wanted to be involved in," Lance said.

The more research of Foods Resource Bank Lance did, the more he was convicted to participate.

"I was really moved by their DVD 'Never Been My Turn,'" Lance said.



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Lance Leebrick opened a bag of seed corn in preparation of planting his corn crop. Leebrick will donate the value of 40 acres of his dryland corn to Foods Resource Bank, an organization that helps others around the world learn how to produce food.

The video explains Foods Resource Bank's purpose and the impact of world hunger.

The Leebricks are not doing this alone. Through the Colby Wesleyan Church, where they attend, congregation members have donated funds to help with the cost of producing the 40 acres of corn. One congregation member alone donated the seed.

"Anyone who hears about what we do wants to get involved," said Sherie Roder. She is Foods Resource Bank's Kansas representative. "There is something for everyone to do."

Foods Resource Bank is not alone either. Several church denominations, corporations and

foundations help Foods Resource Bank in various ways.

"Our expenses are covered by a grant from the Kellogg Foundation," said Roder. "One-hundred percent of what is grown gets to the people overseas."

Foods Resource Bank, which started in 1999, was a spin off of a similar program in Canada. Foods Resource Bank's headquarters is in Kalamazoo, Mich. Foods Resource Bank has nine employees and has more than 200 projects in 15 states, mainly in the Midwest. The Leebricks' crop is one of 17 Foods Resource Bank projects in Kansas.

Grain production is common for Foods Resource Bank projects. The Leebricks, who farm in Rawlins

County, raise wheat, corn, sorghum, sunflower and soybeans.

According to Foods Resource Bank's 2005 statistics, they raised \$3 million and helped 600,000 people.

"The Leebricks have been low-key with this, but they have said 'We know God is asking us to do this,'" Roder said.

Foods Resource Bank has helped city churches partner with rural churches for projects. The city church provides funds and the rural churches typically have members who farm for a living and provide the land, equipment and labor.

Those interested in assisting can call the Wesleyan Church at 462-8391.