



## Students learn dangers of bullying

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**Ask questions. Have the conversations that makes them (children) mad. There is no quick, easy solution...**

Kevin Honeycutt  
Educational Services and Staff Development

Nearly 50 people came to the Colby High School Auditorium Tuesday to hear Kevin Honeycutt, of the Educational Services and Staff Development Association of Central Kansas, speak about online safety and online bully prevention.

Honeycutt's presentation was in response to the Kansas Bullying Prevention Legislation that requires Kansas schools to adopt bully prohibition policies.

Colby Public Schools adopted their policy Aug. 20, 2007, that prohibits bullying on school property, in a school vehicle, or at school sponsored activities.

Honeycutt was brought in by Colby school officials as part of their, "continuing implementation of strategic plans to address bullying, which includes provisions for training and education for staff and students," according to the school's web site.

Honeycutt spoke to a crowd made up of students, educators and parents about a generation of youth that has seen, "more change in terms of technology than any in history," and steps that parents can take to keep up.

"If you were going to send your kid to New York you would say, 'Keep your money in your sock, 20 dollars in your wallet, and don't look anyone in the eye,'" Honeycutt said. "But what do we say when they get online and

are connected with the world? We have never had to have these rules until now."

Honeycutt said parents can call their internet service providers to get a list of all the URLs visited by their kids, they can set up their filters on their computers to prevent their kids from viewing certain content, or they can pull the plug on the internet at home entirely, but what Honeycutt said produces the best results is when parents get into their kids' "online business".

"Make sure kids think before they post something online," Honeycutt said. "Once they post something- a picture, a video- it is online for good, even if they take it down."

Honeycutt used the example of a presidential election being lost because of a future candidate's risqué myspace photo from high school turns up the night before voters go to the polls.

"What kids don't realize is that people can access this stuff," Honeycutt said. "That means college admissions offices, job employers. The saying I use is,

"Would you be embarrassed if everyone was going to see it? Too often kids think that only their friends will see but, when they post it, it is available to the whole world to see."

Honeycutt also addressed the issue of online bullying, telling the crowd "meanness moves online."

"Most kids when they get online have a lack of 'netiquette'.

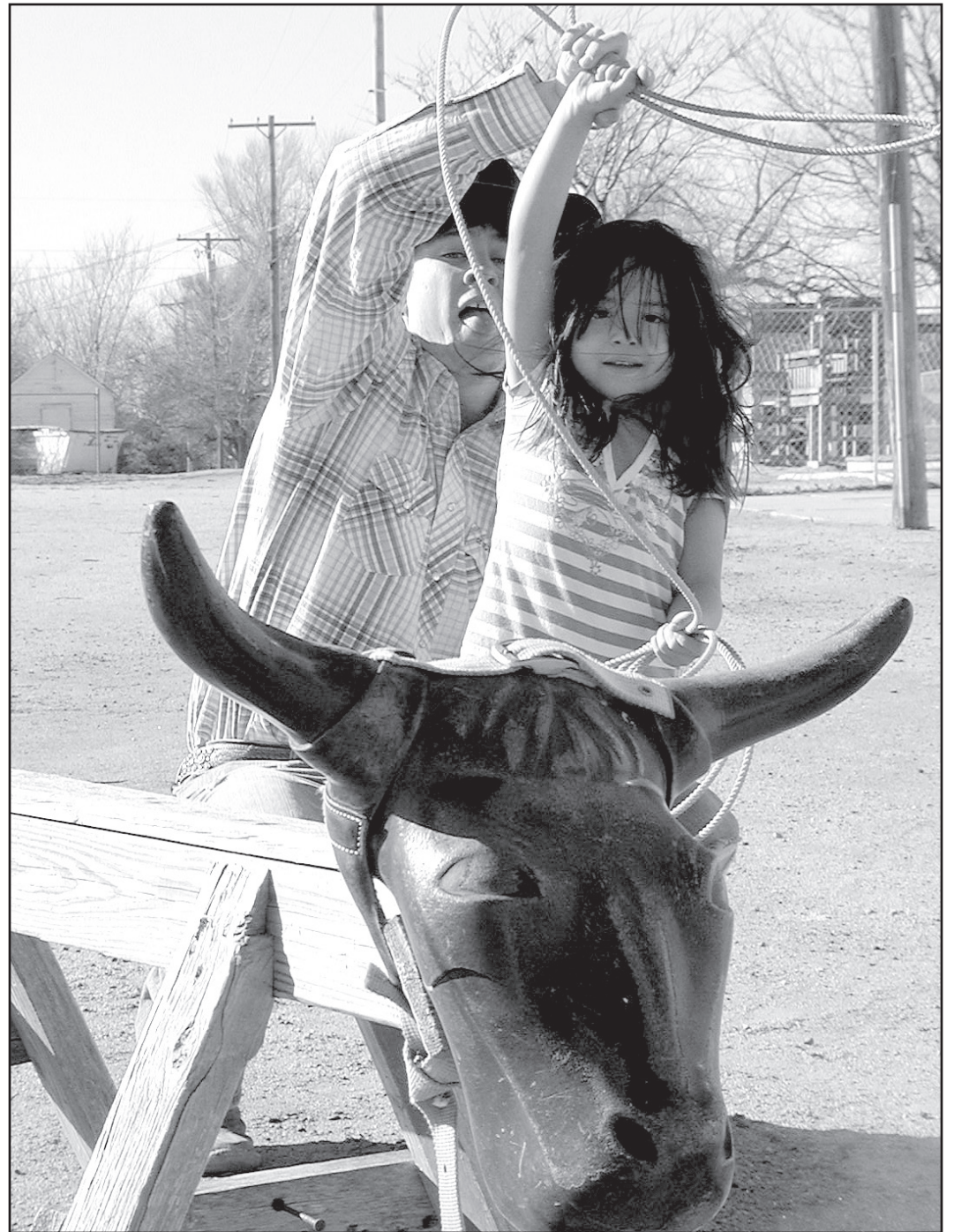
It used to be that when a kid got picked on at school, they could go home and find some sanctuary. These days, kids can't get away from it. The idea of what a bully is has changed."

Honeycutt encouraged parents and educators to learn about what kids are doing online, telling them to get into their "online business".

"Ask questions," Honeycutt said. "Have the conversations that make them mad. Make your kid hate you for one evening to help them for a lifetime.

There is no quick, easy solution other than getting in their business... there is no lazy persons way to good parenting."

## Ride 'em cowboy!



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Colby Community College rodeo team member Patrick Dutton shows Destiny Oliver, 4, how to throw a lasso Monday at Sacred Heart. Sacred Heart's prekindergarten class used the western-theme activity as part of its celebration of Kansas Day, which was Tuesday.

## Power outages will happen again, officials say

By Kevin Johnson  
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As wind gusts reached 48 mph Monday night, a series of five power outages hit the city of Colby from 1:10 am to 4:06 am, causing many an alarm clock to reset and flash 12:00 when the light of day finally arrived. There is no official count as to how many were late for work as a result.

"It was just trees on the lines,"

Director of Public Works for the city of Colby, Chris Bieker, said. "No linemen were called, they just reset the breakers at the power plant."

"When the wind blows like that you get the lines flapping together and smacking on tree branches," Bieker explained. "The guys at the power plant will trip the breaker back on to see if it stays on; if it doesn't then they call a lineman out to take a look at it. But we didn't have to call anyone out

(Monday) night."

In the event that a power sector would be down for a significant amount of time, City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said the city of Colby would run its own generators, which it has had to do "from time to time".

"If we lost power from Midwest Energy we would start our own generators," Armstrong said. "The back up plan is the fact that we own generator facilities. We have had to generate from time to time,

sometimes in the summer because Midwest has a unit down for maintenance and we have an interruptible contract. The power plant is manned 24/7 and it takes about 30 min to bring engines up."

Armstrong added that steps were taken this summer to prevent power outages due to wind by trimming tree branches away from power line.

"It cost about \$20,000 to prevent branches from coming down and breaking the lines. Chances

are if we didn't do that we would have had more power outages last night."

Added Armstrong, "I was awake from about 12 to 3 watching TV and listening to the wind and I know the power kept going down, but they were pretty good about getting it back up and running."

Bieker said that last winter power lines were knocked off for, "about a day or so", South of Colby due to ice that had accumulated

on the power lines, but that was the longest that he could recall the power lines had been down in the city of Colby and the surrounding areas.

Bieker added that the chances of power outages happening again, such as happened Monday night were quite high, given the state of Kansas' penchant for blustery winds.

"It will happen again if you get winds like that," Bieker warned. "It is just part of it."

## Colby student unable to attend essay awards ceremony

By Joey Falkoff  
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**We were on our way out the door when I got a phone call to come back...**

Chris Gardner, Shelby's father

Colby Middle seventh-grader Shelby Gardner, who was scheduled to go to Topeka Thursday as a finalist in the "If I were a mayor for a day" essay contest, had to cancel her trip because of a family emergency.

Shelby and her father, Chris, had just left for Topeka last Wednesday evening before they received a call to return home.

"My wife had medical issues and had to have surgery Wednesday," said Chris Gardner. "We were on

our way out the door when I got a phone call to come back. Shelby was pretty upset, but it's one of those things."

Shelby did receive some good news, though. She will be able to read her essay Feb. 5 at City Hall in Colby. The time of the reading

is yet to be determined, but Chris said it will be open to the public.

Thursday's reading in Topeka was part of the League of Kansas Municipalities City Hall Day at the Capitol. The event drew over 200 municipal leaders from across the state.

Gardner was one of six seventh graders from across the state who were selected as regional winners from nearly 1,000 essays submitted from nearly 100 communities.

Nicole Brauer from Spearville Middle School was recognized as the statewide winner.

The four other students selected as regional winners were Emma Barnett from Hutchinson Middle School, David Crawford from Ruppenthal Middle School (Russell), Mariza Hernandez from the Resurrection School at the Cathedral (Kansas City) and Brad Stevens from Augusta Middle School.



Colby Middle School seventh-grader Shelby Gardner had to cancel her trip Thursday to receive her essay contest award.

## Briefly

### County meets Thursday

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m., Thursday, in the commissioner's room at the courthouse. From 9 to 9:15 a.m., Darin Bell and Ron Roeder, custodians, will be discussing maintenance updates and concerns; from 9:30 to 10 a.m., Barry Kaaz will continue the Geographic Information System mapping discussion; from 10 to 10:30 a.m., Larry Jumper, landfill supervisor, will talk about alternate daily cover material purchase, enclosed unit and pickup and from 10:30 to 11 a.m., Genesis, the local food bank organization, will discuss a request for Western Plains RC & D office space. Other discussion items include highlights from Topeka, notice of a trial, Kansas Economic update, Colby Free Press response to error in sheriff's auction legal publication, and other miscellaneous mail. For questions, call 460-4500.

### Food orders continue

Orders for the February Prairie Land Food (formerly the Share program) will be taken until Monday, Feb. 11. The program requires participants to volunteer two hours of service. This month's Prairie Pak includes: fully-cooked boneless, skinless chicken breast; organic beef brisket in barbecue sauce; thin sliced cooked ham; split chicken breasts; flounder fillets; and lean turkey cutlet; plus six to eight different items of fresh fruits and vegetables. To order, call Marguerette Edmundson, 460-8640; Gene Griffin, 460-3579; Mary Schroeder, 462-7525 or Linda Hagan, (800) 298-1989.

### Walk Kansas starts soon

Walk Kansas, a fitness program sponsored by the Thomas County Extension office, begins, Sunday, March 9, said Jan Poore, extension office profes-

sional. Registration packets are available at the office, 350 S. Range Ave. in Colby. "We would like the registration packets turned in no later than Friday, March 7, but registration will be accepted no later than 5 p.m. on March 10," she said. "T-shirts displaying the Walk Kansas logo are available this year in either heather gray or lavender," she said. The program and T-shirts have a small fee. For questions or costs, call Poore, 460-4582.

### Daffodil drive begins

American Cancer Daffodil Days is coming and orders may be placed from now until Thursday, Feb. 21. The daffodils will be delivered to Someplace Special in Colby around the first week in March, said Cathy Harrison, coordinating the event. Prices range from a bunch for \$10 to bouquet with vase, \$15. In addition, there is a "Bear and A Bunch," for \$25 and one-half and full cases of daffodils from \$250-\$400.

For questions or to order, call Harrison at 460-2501; 462-2331; e-mail: harrison@st-tel.net

### Youth funds on hand

All third through twelfth grade classes and interested community members representing a nonprofit organization in Thomas County are invited to participate in the "Kids Can Do!" project. This project, said Melinda Olson, Thomas County Community Foundation, is an opportunity to fund a project with major youth involvement that will improve Thomas County. The foundation will be awarding grants of up to \$200 each from the "Kids Can Do!" project funds. If interested, applications are available at the foundation office, 350 S. Range Ave. Suite 14, Colby. The deadline to submit an application is Monday, March 3. For questions or an application, call Olson at (785) 460-9152.