



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Superfund site supplies half of water

By Andy Heintz

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Ever wonder where your water comes from? Well, it may not be where you would expect.

About half of Colby's drinking water comes from a treatment plant at the Ace Services Superfund site, north of the courthouse at 345 Convesse Ave. The Superfund is a federal program to clean up the nation's major uncontrolled hazardous waste sites; the Colby plant filters contaminants out of the groundwater under downtown Colby.

Ace Services operated a chrome plating facility on a 2 1/2-acre site near the current building. Chrome plating was applied to farm-implement parts. Chromium-contaminated water from the plans seeped into the ground, contaminating the ground water, said Fritz Hirter, community involvement coordinator for Region 7 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Kansas City.

Before the clean-up, the site posed a potential threat to public health through contact with chromium-contaminated soil and sludge on the site and contaminated groundwater in the Ogallala Aquifer, he said.

The chromium-contaminated soil and sludge from the lagoon were removed from the site in 1981, Hirter said. Liquid and solid waste stored inside the facility was removed in 1992 and the buildings were demolished in 2002, he said. A city water line was extended to serve residents with domestic wells affected by the metal, Hirter added.

The site was placed on the National Priorities List on Sept. 29, 1995, said Rob Weber, remedial project manager for the regional office. The first proposed plan and administrative record about the site was made available to the public when it was published in the *Colby Free Press* on

Dec. 4, 1998, he said.

The first contaminants were found in ground water 100 feet below the surface, said Weber. The agency installed 13 extraction wells to capture the contaminants. After contaminated water is collected, Hirter said, it's transferred to a building housing an ion-exchange treatment process that cleans the contaminants from the water.

The treatment system was declared operational in 2003, Hirter said.

It was fine tuned and modified in 2005, Weber said. After the fine tuning, it was presented to the public.

Weber said the treated water was first

supplied to the city's public water system on April 7 of that year.

"The treatment system supplies about 50 percent of the city's drinking water supply," Weber said. "100 percent of the ground water is providing half the city's water supply."

After a five-year review, the agency concluded that ground water contaminants have been reduced by more than 90 percent and no residents are being exposed to contamination. The agency found that domestic wells located near the site are not affected by the remaining

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ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

### Kids fill Santa's ear full

Jenna Reinert (left) and Macie Redick (above) sat on Santa's lap after giving the old gent their lists during Lunch with Santa on Saturday at the Colby Grade School. Jody Metcalf (left in right photo) and Amanda Wahlmeier, members of the Colby chapter of the American Association of University Women, handed out graham crackers to children. The kids got to cover the crackers with frosting, then decorate them with edible beads and stuff. And, of course, eat them. The women served hot dogs for lunch.



## Variety shows at big craft fair

By Andy Heintz

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The spirit of American ingenuity was alive and well at the second annual craft fair on Saturday at the Veteran of Foreign Wars building. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., the hall was jammed with small business owners and shoppers checking out this year's products.

The fair this year was certainly not lacking in variety. Items on sale included necklaces, bracelets, tie-dyed shirts and bandanas, angel ornaments, bracelets, Kleenex box holders, magnets, cookies, different types of dip, handcrafted Christmas signs, and bean-soup mixes and noodles made from materials that came right out of a garden.

Patty Drake, organizer of the fair and owner of Nanna's Comfort Foods, said the number of vendors and the number of customers both

were up from last year. She said one of the reasons for this was that last year's fair was held on a cold, icy day.

While some of vendors were independent distributors selling products for larger companies, others run their own business and made all their own crafts.

One of these was Sally Owens, who said she designed all tie-dyed clothing on display at her booth. The clothing included T-shirts, bandanas and tea towels. Another vendor who made her own crafts was Marilyn Criger. She had magnets, fuzzy caterpillars, angel ornaments, snowmen and several other ornaments. She said she started her business 17 years ago.

Frieda Jones displayed her own Kleenex-box holders. Many had sports themes. At her table, Jones offered University of Nebraska, Kansas State and Denver Broncos holders.

## Power-line delays irk a key legislator

TOPEKA (AP) — A legislator is upset that state regulators may not make a decision on new high-voltage power lines to move power in and out of western Kansas until late next year.

Two rival projects would link Wichita to southwest Kansas through the region's highest-voltage lines. Both are expected to cost \$2.2 million a mile, and their backers have competing applications before the Kansas Corporation Commission.

One project is from ITC Great Plains, a Topeka-based subsidiary of a Detroit-area transmission company. The other involves Westar Energy Inc., the state's largest electric utility, an Ohio-based energy company, and an Iowa firm with ties to billionaire investor Warren Buffet.

Both proposals contemplate lines of up to 765 kilovolts, larger than anything in region — or most

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## Promotion committee looks for bright lights

The Colby Promotion Committee's annual Christmas Lighting Contest includes awards for home and business decorations, said Holly Stephens, executive director of the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce. Residential awards will be

\$100 for first place and \$75 for second, she said. Commercial awards will be \$75 and \$50.

To nominate a lighting display, stop by the Chamber office at 350 S. Range or call 460-3401 by Friday. Judging will take place this weekend.

## Briefly

### Top lights will win cash prizes

The annual Christmas Lighting Contest, sponsored by the Colby Promotions Committee, will give a \$100 first prize and a \$75 second prize for the residential winners and \$75 for first and \$50 for second for the commercial winners. Nominations are due by Friday at the Chamber of Commerce office at 350 S. Range Ave. or by calling (785) 460-3401. Judging will take place this weekend.

### Group selling cookies, candy

Kappa Upsilon sorority of Colby will hold a cookie and candy sale from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at the Colby Community Building. The group will have a selection of both cookies and candy to choose from. Proceeds go to community projects.

### Legion invites kids to party

The Colby Sons of the American Legion plan a Christmas party for children up to age 9 from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Sunday at the Legion Hall, 1850 West Fourth. Kids will get a treat and a small gift and a visit with Santa. The party is open to everyone.

### Hospital gift shop open longer

The gift shop at Citizens Medical Center will be open extended hours — from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. — this Thursday and Thursday, Dec. 18. Regular hours are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### Last Advent program coming

The Thomas County Ministerial Association is sponsoring a weekly program, "Soup and Scripture," at noon each Wednesday in December for

Advent, the season when Christians prepare to celebrate Christ's birth. Next Wednesday, it will be at Trinity Lutheran Church with the theme of "Wait and See."

### Pets available for adoption

Colby Animal Clinic has two kittens, a small Italian greyhound puppy, and one lab mix ready for adoption. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

### Santa to visit with kids at event

The Colby Chamber of Commerce Business After Five will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. next Wednesday, at Cersovsky Insurance, 370 North Franklin Ave. The event is open to the public. The Chamber invites everyone to come and bring their children to visit with

Santa and Mrs. Claus.

### City crew trimming trees

The Colby city crew is trimming trees over streets and sidewalks as the weather allows. Trees will be trimmed to 13 feet, 6 inches above streets and trimmed to 8 feet above sidewalks, said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong. For questions, call the city office at 460-4410.

### Emergency med class planned

Thomas County Emergency Medical Services will be offering an emergency medical technician B class starting in January. Classes will run for five to six months and financial assistance is available. For information, call training coordinator Dawnelle Umberger at (785) 460-4585 or 443-0176.

