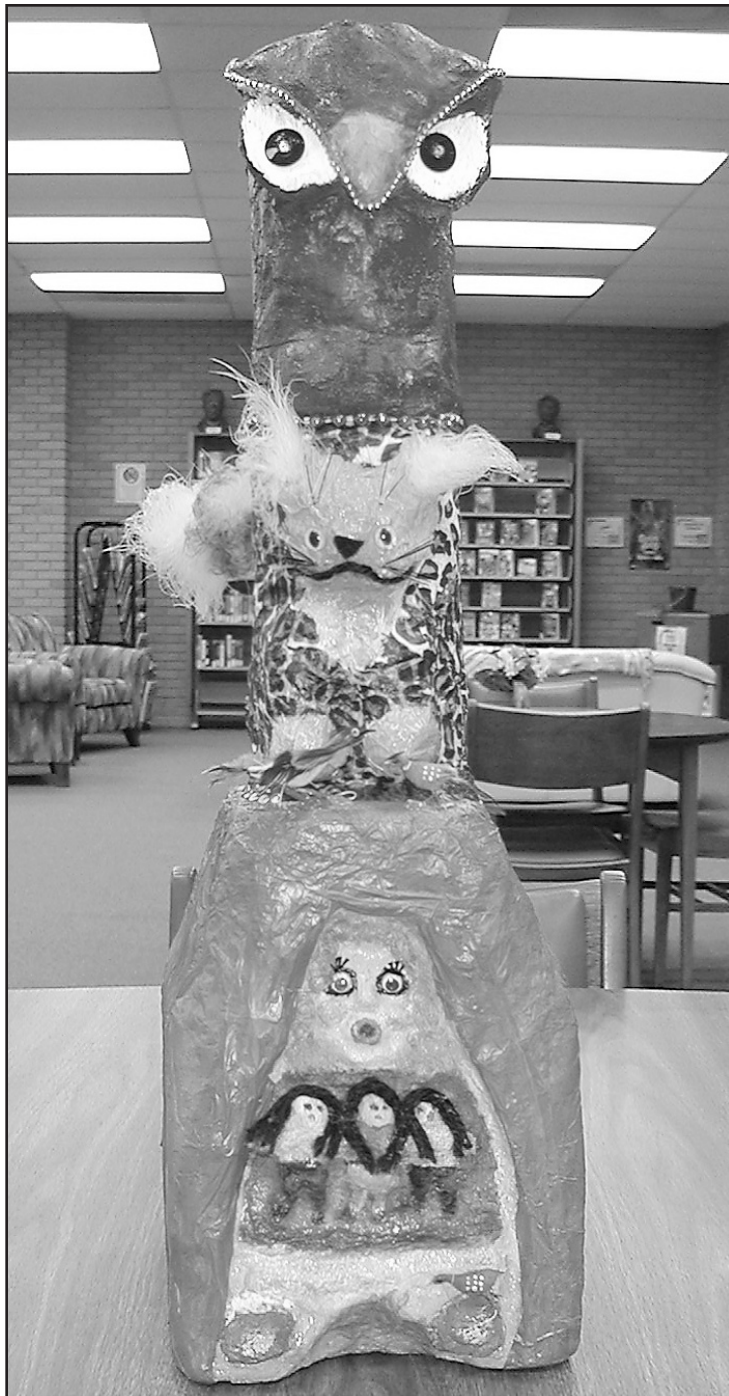




TOTEMS



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Though totems originally were made of cedar wood, today's artists succeed at telling a cultural message or story in various media. This interesting totem (above) created by Maxine Nelson is on display at the Colby Community College Library.



Students young and old make big art

By Vera Sloan

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Sculpting is alive and well today in the art classroom at Colby Community College. This ancient form of art records and commemorates not only the imagination of the artist, but that which is meaningful and interesting to its creator.

One sculpting student, Maxine Nelson, has just completed a totem pole as one of her projects. The purpose of a totem is to reveal a cultural message or illustrated story, she said.

Nelson's art piece tells of the importance of motherhood, revealed in the form

of a woman at the base of the totem as the story teller holding kachina dolls, which represent her children. Atop the woman is a cat; she said cats have been an important part of Nelson's life as long as she can remember. An owl sits perched above the cat, denoting the artist's ongoing search for knowledge.

Nelson's colorful and captivating totem pole is on display in the college library, which closes its doors for the semester break on Dec. 19. It's a type of artwork not often displayed in this area.

Another student in the class, Austin Neira of Hugoton, worked to complete a

rain stick-totem-pole combination. When turned upside down, he said, the rain stick gives the distinct sound of falling rain. This is created from dried grains hitting against protrusions inside the totem pole.

It is believed the rain stick comes from ancient Peruvian culture, he said. Neira's totem pole, like Nelson's, is mixed media of plaster and gauze. The frightening appearance of the totem belongs in the jungle, said Neira. It denotes power and is used as a "keep out" message to anyone who would go beyond its territorial limit.

A snake encircles the lower extremities, and when completed will peer out from between dried grasses or raffia, sending the message that danger is lurking. He

says his mother has no problem displaying his art work at home, though.

Neira, a sophomore, is a scholarship runner in cross country at the college. Other interests include the Sunflower Singers, and he is a resident assistant, and vice president of the International Students and Friends Organization.

He said he plans to transfer to Fort Hays State University to major in graphic arts and find work with a film company.

Instructor Rebel Jay says this year's class is a unique mixture of students with various backgrounds. Jay said her goal is to have a future class produce a "sensory sculpture" that people will be able to "see" by touch.

Genesis stuffs baskets

Volunteers make ready for big day

By Andy Heintz
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When Christmas rolls around, people always remind us that giving is more important than receiving. Here in Colby, the Genesis-Thomas County Food Bank, 350 S. Range Ave., has taken this message to heart.

The food bank will be handing out Christmas baskets to county residents from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday at the nearby 4-H Building. In order to receive a basket, you have to have signed up for one, said Sheila Krehbiel, a food bank member. The baskets will include food, toys donated by the Colby Kiwanis Club and refurbished bicycles donated by the Fire Department.

The food includes peanut butter, jelly, canned green beans, corn, peas, pork and beans, tomatoes, soups and tuna, spaghetti sauce, brownie or cake mixes, tuna and hamburger "helpers," macaroni and cheese, stuffing mix, oatmeal, spaghetti, gelatin, pudding, ramen noodles, bread, apples and oranges, potatoes, ham and hamburger. The quantity people get is determined by family size, Krehbiel said.

Student volunteers from Colby Community College will be helping the food bank on Saturday by carrying the baskets and bikes out to people's cars.

On Wednesday, the Christmas baskets were hauled from the bank to the 4-H building by bank members and about 50 students, Krehbiel said. She said Marilyn Friesen was project chair.

Recycle backer returns

By Andy Heintz
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It was only right that Laura Davis was on hand for the opening of Colby's new e-waste center last week. Davis, a longtime advocate for the environment, was one of the first people to push for a recycling program in Thomas County.

Davis said she has always cared deeply about the environment. She recalled attending the very first Earth Day at St. Mary's College in Maryland in 1970.

"I have always been very conscientious about the environment," Davis said. "I have been recycling since 1969."

The issue of recycling first came up when the county was having

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Briefly

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. — tonight and next Thursday. Regular hours are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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 no longer limited to Legion members' families, but is open to everyone.

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 residential winners and \$75 for first and \$50 for second for businesses. Nominations are due by Friday at the Chamber of Commerce office on Range Ave. or by calling 460-3401. Judging will be this weekend.

Reception to open art show

The art works of Colby residents Marj and Jim Brown are on display at the Prairie Museum of Art and History through January. The public is invited

to an opening reception from 2-4 p.m. Sunday. The couple will give a video presentation highlighting their trip to Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia, and Kejimikujik National Park in Canada. Many of her paintings are of winter and Christmas, and much of Jim's work reflects a fall theme, and the show is called "Joy of the Seasons."

Advent programs nearly done

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. On Dec. 17, 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.