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The Lord's brass section



An itinerant horn player named Jacobsen played his trumpet on the corner of fourth and Range on Tuesday. The musician also had a ram's horn, and said he was playing "for the Lord." His vehicle had New York license plates.

Colby farmer wins top slot from magazine

By Andy Heintz
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Sitting at his desk answering questions while a biography of President Jimmy Carter blared in the background on the History Channel, Lon Frahm looks like a picture of confidence and contentment.

He had good reason to be, since he was named Top Producer of the Year by *Top Producer*, a magazine devoted to the business of farming that bills itself as "the *Fortune* magazine" of agriculture, in a contest sponsored by Agco Challenger tractors. The publication said contestants were judged on: entrepreneurial originality, financial and business progress and industry or community leadership. Frahm said this was the first year he has entered the contest for young farmers.

While growing up, Frahm said, he always said he didn't want to be a farmer. His family moved off the farm to Topeka so his father could go back to school when he was only 4. They lived there until he was 13. While much of his early years were spent in a classroom in the capital city, he said he spent time in the summer, on weekends and after school on the farm working with his grandfather. Frahm said his granddad, Albert Frahm, overpaid him enough to keep him interested, but his dreams of buying a motorcycle trumped the tasks his Grandpa was teaching him.

Then much to Frahm's chagrin, when his guidance counselor in high school gave his class a work skills and preference test, his results recommended he become a farmer. Invisible forces seemed to be giving him signs about what lay ahead in his future, he said, adding that he still has the score sheet somewhere.

Frahm attended Kansas State University in the late 1970s, majoring in business and agriculture. After college, he said, he decided to return to the farm and work for a couple years with the intention of eventually going to law school. His whole life changed when his dad died of a heart attack in 1986.

"My goals changed completely after that day," he said. "They were now, 'Hold the farm together, provide financial security for my mother and siblings, and settle



Colby's Lon Frahm was named "Top Producer of the Year."

the estate without losing assets in probate."

Frahm said he took over during a stressful period for American farmers. In the 1980s, farmers were hit by a drop in demand and a decline in land values and income. Thousands of farmers were forced to auction off their land. But Frahm managed to keep the family farm going.

Turning obstacles into opportunities and problems into profits has been one of the keys to his success over the years, he said.

"The wheat freeze in 1982 and the corn freeze in 1992 were opportunities to become an expert in risk management, insurance and government programs," said Frahm. "The person who was quickest to adapt — the first one

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Man who hit hydrant ticketed

By Andy Heintz
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Colby police say they have tracked down the driver who ran over a fire hydrant Friday morning, forcing businesses along Range and the Colby Community College to close for a time.

Patrick K. Ryan, a 71-year-old from Gem, admitted to running into the hydrant on Friday, said Sgt. Kent Dible. The impact knocked the top off of the fire plug, breaking the valve and allowing water to gush to the surface.

Officers tracked down the 2006 pickup truck Ryan was driving at the time of the accident after getting a tip from a witness, Dible said. The accident knocked down the hydrant, allowing water to flow down the ditch to Villa High Park.

To stop the flow and fix the leak, the city crew had to shut off the water line serving part of Range, including the college. This prompted President Lynn Kreider to close the school at noon.

Dible said a witness got Ryan's license plate number. Officers talked with the witness on Friday

afternoon, he said, and contacted Ryan on Monday.

Ryan told them his truck slid on some ice and hit the hydrant. He said he didn't know the extent of the damage, said Dible, so he just drove off.

He was cited for failure to report an accident, police said.

City officials were talking about assessing the costs, including the lost water, against the driver, but said they would let the police handle that. Most of the water wound up in the pond at Villa High, which everyone agreed could use the boost.

Ag profit to be goal of session

Farmers face changes in leasing and land values, increasing input costs and volatile grain prices — wheat dropped 5 percent on Tuesday, for instance — so Thomas County Extension is joining other counties in offering an ag profitability conference from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, at the Max Jones Fieldhouse in Goodland.

The free program is open to the public. Topics will include the grain market situation and outlook, the 2008 Farm Bill, ag mediation, managing risk using online resources, and affordability of technology.

Register by Thursday to guarantee having enough materials. A complete brochure and registration form can be picked up at the Extension office in the county office complex, or call 460-4582.

President reveals \$75 billion plan to help save U.S. families' homes

MESA, Ariz. (AP) — President Barack Obama says his \$75 billion plan to tackle "a crisis unlike any we've ever known" in home foreclosures is necessary to help save the economy.

Obama unveiled the plan in Arizona, hard-hit by the housing crunch. More expensive than expected, it aims to keep 9 million people from losing their homes.

One part will ease refinancing for people who owe

more on their mortgages than their homes are currently worth. Another provides incentives for mortgage lenders to help those on the verge of foreclosure.

Speaking at a high school outside Phoenix, Obama said the plan won't save every home but it will prevent "the worst consequences of this crisis from wreaking even greater havoc on the economy."

Election will thin Golden Plains candidates to nine

By Judy Rogers
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The Golden Plains School District will have a primary election on Tuesday, March 3, to narrow the field of candidates for the school board from 10 to nine.

Three board positions will be filled at the April 7 general election. All positions are at-large.

Voters will have several chances to cast their ballots. The county clerk's of-

fice planned to offer satellite voting today at the Red Barn senior center in Rexford and the Selden Community Center.

Voters can cast an advance ballot in person at the Thomas County Courthouse from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. until Friday, Feb. 27, and from 8 a.m. to noon Monday, March 2. Mail-in advance ballots can be obtained from the clerk's office by calling (785) 460-4500. Voting can be done in person from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on election day, Tuesday, March 3, at the clerk's office in Colby.

Primary candidates include Teri Brantley and Don Koerperich of Selden; David Gould, Ben Hoeting, Todd Schwarz, Matt Vogler, Brandi Wark and Desiree Wark of Rexford, and Kim Moss and Terry Moss of Menlo. Questionnaires were sent to the candidates asking their qualifications and interest in serving on the school board. Their responses, abridged in some cases, follow:

Teri Brantley, Selden, has lived in the district for more than 11 years and has

served on the school board the past eight. She is in her third year as board president. She has been involved in the building addition in Selden, elementary playground improvements and the construction of an access ramp in Rexford.

She has been involved in hiring teachers and administrators, contract negotiations, and curriculum improvements. She has attended Kansas Association of School Boards workshops for board members.

Brantley said she feels that, as a board member, some of her strengths include

her knowledge of school budget and current issues, an understanding of the importance of Adequate Yearly Progress required by federal law and state assessments. She says she has the fortitude, no matter what the Legislature and state may send our way, to do what's best for the kids.

Brantley said she believes we have a very experienced staff and administration that are dedicated and care about the stu-

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Briefly

Historian to detail range wars

Evelyn Hoyt Ward of Goodland will talk about range wars between ranchers and homesteaders from noon to 1 p.m. Thursday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History. The talk is a part of the Food for Thought program, which features a soup lunch and history program on the third Thursday of this month and next. A different presentation will be offered March 19. Call the museum at (785) 460-4590 for details.

Relay plans poker fund raiser

Thomas County Relay for Life will hold its third annual poker tournament at 2 p.m. Saturday to raise money for the American Cancer Society. The suggested donation is \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Play-

ers may register at Dillons until Friday. For information, call Karla Sharp, 460-4881.

Orchestra to play in Oberlin

Western Plains Arts Association is sponsoring "Celebrate the Love of Sound," a winter concert by Pride of the Prairie Orchestra, at 3 p.m. Sunday at The Gateway civic center in Oberlin. Admission is by season ticket, Friends of the Orchestra membership or at the door. The concert, conducted by Burlington High School Band Director Andrew Salvador, will feature pianist Sharon Kriss of Colby performing Grieg's "Piano Concerto in A minor," selections from "The Wizard of Oz," "Comedy Tonight," "Summon the Heroes" and other numbers. For information, call Pat Ziegelmeier at (785) 462-7808

or 460-5518.

Annual Spelling Bee next week

Colby fourth and fifth graders will have their annual Spelling Bee at 1:15 p.m. Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 23 and Feb. 24, in the grade-school auditorium. Seven contestants have been chosen from each classroom, with one alternate. Medals will be given to the top three spellers in each grade. The public is invited.

Rotary to sell soup at games

The Colby Rotary Club will have a soup supper from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday during the Colby High-Norton Blue Jays basketball games at the Community Building. Club members will be serving chili and potato soup. Tickets are available from any Rotarian for \$4 for adults and \$2 for kids. For informa-

tion, call Relda Galli at 460-2000 or e-mail galli@fmb.com.

Chamber coffee at college

Colby Community College Student Services will have a Chamber Coffee at 10 a.m. Friday in the Student Union. Come in for food, fun and fellowship. For questions, contact Chamber Executive Director Holly Stephens, at 460-3401.

FFA planning pancake feed

You're invited to the Colby High FFA Appreciation Breakfast from 6:30 to 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, at the Ag Shop, 240 N. Copeland. The group is cooking up a free meal of pancakes, bacon or sausage, drinks and door prizes to celebrate National FFA Week. For questions, contact Shawna Howell-Hoffman at (785) 460-5320 or showell@colbyeagles.org.

