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Kids block out day for break at library

Jobe Thompson, 9, (below) son of Tom and Tohanna Benson of Colby, went upside down to check his work while building a castle on a rug in the children's area at the Pioneer Memorial Library over spring break. Chloe Bly, 9, of Oakley (above) handed Jonah Thomas, 10, Jobe's brother, blocks for their castle while Michael Pearce, 5, son of Sara and Marc Pearce of Colby, worked carefully on his creation (right).



CYNTHIA HAYNES/Colby Free Press

Boy, 7, dies; family is hurt

A 7-year-old Colby kid wrestler died early today after his family's van rolled on Interstate 70 near Grainfield, sending his parents and a friend to the Gove County Hospital.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported that Tate D. Siruta was a passenger in his family's 2007 PT Cruiser when it went out of control on the freeway near milepost 88.6, about five miles west of the Grainfield exit, just before midnight.

Friends said the boys both were first graders at Colby Grade School. They were on the way home from the state 6-and-under kids wrestling championships in Ottawa, where Tate has placed sixth at 64 pounds.

Troopers reported that Tate's mother, Melissa A. "Missy" Siruta, 35, was driving west when the car went onto the inside shoulder.

The driver apparently overcorrected, the report says, and the car crossed both lanes, leaving the road on the north side and rolling into the ditch. It came to rest on its wheels, facing southeast.

Listed as injured were Tate's father, Duskin Lance Siruta, 42, and a friend, Konnor E. Griffin, 8. All were taken to the hospital in Quinter, but Konnor later was flown out to a Denver hospital.

The patrol reported that everyone in the vehicle was wearing a seatbelt except for Tate. The report says officers couldn't determine if he had his belt on, but friends said the family thought he did. The car was towed to Grainfield.

Tate was born Oct. 27, 2001. Services are pending with the Harrison Chapel, Colby, (785) 462-2331.

Club paints 'box' at baseball field

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press

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Members of the Colby Rotary Club have finished a much-needed new press box at the city ball field, and seven club members spent St. Patrick's Day putting the finishing touches on paint on the inside.

The original press box was getting old and had been placed so close to the backstop, it made maintenance all but impossible,

said Jerry Arensdorf, project coordinator.

To replace the structure, the club started from the foundation and went up, Arensdorf said. The new press box is 12 feet by 16 feet, built of wood frame with metal siding. It is two stories, with the first floor available for storage of mowers and other field maintenance and team equipment.

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Sign up Wednesday for fall kindergarten

Kindergarten pre-enrollment for the coming school year will be from 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Wednesday at the Colby Grade School conference room.

Bring your child's birth certificate, immunization records and Social Security card. Call the school office at (785) 460-5100 for questions.

During enrollment or later, parents can sign up for free kindergarten screening for incoming students next week. The tests will be done on Tuesday, March 31, and Wednesday, April 1, at the Colby

United Methodist Church.

The Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center and Colby Grade School staffs are offering the screening, which will be done by professionals who know how children grow and learn.

Areas to be screened include vision, hearing, speech, language, motor and cognitive development. These will help determine your child's readiness for school. To make an appointment, sign up at pre-enrollment Wednesday or call school nurse Amy Hutfles at 460-5111 or 460-5100.

Woman, her family won't bow to run of 'bad luck'

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press
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Some times, life is like the famous saying: "If it weren't for bad luck, I'd have no luck at all." Jeannene Herman of St. Francis could be one of those people, but she's not giving up.

Herman, who suffers from bone-damaging arthritis, underwent elbow replacement in her right arm in 2006, the first surgery of that kind for a woman in Kansas. In November, she said, a patch of ice got the best of her and she fell and broke three bones in that same arm.

The break separated the bone from the metal of the new joint, bending the metal. She spent three months in a cast, but now she needs to have surgery at the end of this month.

"Now, each time I move my arm, the metal tries to work its way to the surface of the skin, and the metal is now broken in two...", she said. "It has damaged the

nerves to the fingers to the point of no feeling in some of my fingers."

She said she searched and searched before finding a surgeon who does elbow replacement.

"I've been told he's the best," she said, "so I'm counting on it ... because I'm going to have a new grandchild soon, and I want to hold it."

She said the surgeon plans to implant a rod from the wrist to the elbow, a new ball for the socket, and a rod from the elbow to

the shoulder. The alternative, she said, is amputation.

"I've lost one grandchild, and I want to hold this one in both arms," she said.

To add to the Herman family's "luck," her husband Robert died last year, and her 16-year-old son Robert Herman III, had a brain tumor removed five years ago.

The son underwent surgery last February to have a new shunt put in his head to

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Jeannene Herman

Briefly

Clubs plan benefit for girl

The Lions Clubs of Rexford and Gem, along with the Golden Plains Booster Club and other community groups, plan a benefit dinner from 4 to 8 p.m. Saturday, April 4, at the Gem Community Building to help Orianna Beltran's family. Oriana, a senior at Golden Plains High School, has contracted a crippling illness. Her parents are Leonel and Chachi Beltran of Rexford. Her father works at the McCarty Dairy and her mother for schools in the area. The family has incurred large medical expenses looking for the cause and treatment of her illness.

Campus class to involve police

An "investigative scenario" for students in Linda Davis-Stephens' Homeland Security class at Colby Community College from noon to 3 p.m. Tuesday may involve units from the Colby Police Department.

Anyone on campus that day should not be alarmed, said Susan McMahan, Thomas County emergency management director. The activity is a "closely monitored training scenario." For questions, call Davis-Stephens at 462-3984.

College president to report

The public is invited to the Colby Community College "State of the College Address" at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Northwest Kansas Cultural Arts Center. President Lynn Kreider will discuss new programs, existing programs to be expanded, current events and future plans and projects. If time allows, he will answer questions. Everyone is encouraged to attend. For information, call Debbie Schwanke at 460-5411.

Kindergarten day Wednesday

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year will be from 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Wednesday at the Colby Grade School conference room. Bring your child's birth certificate, immunization records and Social Security card. Call the school office at (785) 460-5100 for questions.

Lenten talk focuses on soldiers

The Lenten Brown Bag and Bible program at noon Wednesday will be led by the Rev. Carroll Morony talking about "The Soldiers." The program will be in the fellowship hall of the First Presbyterian Church. Bring your own lunch; drinks are provided.

Films travel to Bible lands

A film series on archaeological digs in Israel which retraces some of the early sites where Bible characters such as Abraham lived and walked continues at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the College Drive Assembly of God, with films at the same time for until April 29.

Tech for seniors program set

A lunch program on assistive technology will be given at 11:30 a.m. Thursday at the Colby Senior Center. Members of the Morning Glory Family and Community Education Club will demonstrate gadgets that can make life easier for seniors.

High School 'WhoDunit' set

Come help solve them mystery of "The Great High School WhoDunit" at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Colby High auditorium. The forensics team will have a donation soup supper from 5:30-6:45 p.m. in the commons area and a dessert buffet during intermission. Tickets are \$4 for adults and \$2 for students.



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