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Vera Sloan/Colby Free Press

Catching the sun at the right angle is important when a painter loses depth perception from the loss of an eye. Phillip Andersen doesn't give up though, and after a bout with cancer that took his eye, he anticipates putting his brush to canvas and enjoying the success he once had.

Renaissance man paints through the tough times

By Vera Sloan

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Artist, computer expert, poet, librarian, college graduate, and painter Phillip Andersen is a person many have seen around town setting up his easel on a sunny day. His story is unique, in that he can do all these things with only one eye.

Andersen, who grew up in Lander, Wyo., went to college in Portland, Ore. to study computer science. He always had a love of painting, and when he was in college, he would "doodle" his notes of the lecture he was listening to. Andersen said he understood what they meant, but his friends couldn't begin to make sense of them.

Andersen said he returned to Riverton, Wyo. but decided he liked it in Portland. While in Portland, he said, he ran out of money for school.

He had a brother in Cheyenne Wells, and since he had previously worked in high school and college libraries, he moved there to work in the city library, where he pursued his love of painting, and sold most of them.

While he was living and working there, he had a small spot appear above his eye that seemed to be of no concern. He said it would appear and then go away again. When it refused to go away,



Apples and Indian corn graced the canvas of this still life, painted by Phillip Andersen, which sits as a reminder of the talents of the artist. Andersen is beginning to recapture his depth perception after the loss of an eye to cancer.

Andersen sought a doctor's opinion and learned it was cancer.

"They kept putting off the surgery, and it kept getting worse," he said. "I guess it was because I didn't have insurance, but when I finally saw

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Commissioners up deputies' wages

By Vera Sloan

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The Thomas County Commissioners voted Monday to increase the salaries for Sheriff's Office road deputies. Sheriff Rod Taylor re-visited the county commissioners meeting Monday to again plead the case for raising his road deputies salaries to \$13 an hour. At an earlier meeting in April, the commission had told him they couldn't find enough money left in the salary budget to accommodate his request.

Taylor appeared with figures to

support his case.

"It's all there, and we'd have money left over, except for overtime," he said.

The commissioners examined the jail budget, which includes the Sheriff's budget.

"I have to go by what the auditor will use, and not by these graphs," said Commissioner Paul Steele after looking over the jail budget. "But it does look like there would be money left over. But I'm telling you, over \$4,000 a month overtime is killing us, and I don't think we can do any more with salaries."

Steele said it looked like there

would be about \$7,500 left over, but it didn't leave anything for overtime.

Chairman Ken Christensen reminded the commissioners that a lot of overtime had come about because of the problems encountered in the southeast part of the county. The commissioners approved the salary increases.

Taylor said he has a full time jail staff, and would be able to cut back on overtime. He said the budget problems were brought about by misuse of the drug forfeiture fund.

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Area officers honor fallen with week-long campaign

This week is National Police Week, and the Kansas Highway Patrol, the Colby Police Department, the Thomas County Sheriff's Office and Concerns of Police Survivors are joining together to observe both National Police Week and National Peace Officers' Memorial Day on Friday.

Concerns of Police Survivors is a national non-profit organization for the families of officers lost in the line of duty. Law enforcement officers are tying blue ribbons to their vehicles and encouraging civilian workers to outfit their vehicles with the ribbons during the special observance to honor these fallen officers, as well as their families.

A limited supply of the official Concerns of Police Survivors ribbons are available at the Thomas County Law Enforcement Center. Any 18-inch strip of royal blue ribbon will show your support.

"As a community, the law enforcement world grieves for its lost officers." Patrol Superintendent Colonel Terry Maple said, "These ribbons serve as a way to honor and celebrate the lives of each of these officers and the work he or she has done."

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as Peace Officer's Memorial Day and the week surrounding as Police Week. Flags should be at half staff from sunrise to sunset on Friday.

Kansas was fortunate in 2008, losing no officers in the line of duty. In 2007, Kansas had one fallen officer.

Throughout the memorial week and during the rest of the year, the

Kansas Highway Patrol remembers the service of 10 troopers who gave their life while protecting Kansans.

In Thomas County, Master Trooper Dean A. Goodheart was

fatally injured in an automobile crash on Sept. 6, 1995, on I-70 near Colby, at approximately 6:30 a.m. As a member of the Motor

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Grooving at the college



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Colby Community College Vet Tech student Rianna Melton performed an improvised solo during the Jazz and Concert Bands' Spring Concert Tuesday. The Jazz band played classic charts "Kansas City" and "Aftershock" while the concert band performed music by Johann Sebastian Bach and Percy Grainger.

High School musicians earn high marks at festival

The Colby High School music department took 32 students to the Kansas State High School Activities Association State Solo/Ensemble Festival in Andover in late April.

"In order to be selected to attend, the students had to prepare a solo, or participate in an ensemble and be chosen through a regional festival," said Colby High School Music Director Joey Nichols.

The festival was initially supposed to

be held on March 28 in Oberlin, but it was canceled due to bad weather.

"Consequently, the original 62 students who were vying for a spot had to go through alternate means to be chosen," said Nichols.

In the end Colby took a total of 18 entries involving these 32 students. Nichols said every entry was rated on a scale of one through five (I-V).

"A rating of I is an outstanding performance, with few technical errors and

exemplifying a truly musical expression," said Nichols. "This rating is reserved for the truly outstanding performances. A rating of V is considered an ineffective performance indicating major deficiencies in tone quality, intonation, balance, blend, musical expression and effective use of existing instrumentation or choral voicing."

The instrumental soloists who performed at the festival and their scores were senior Jeremy Harter (French horn)

- II; senior Jared Bixenman (percussion) - II, senior Corey Sager (trombone) - I, junior Barbara Bickner (flute) - I, junior Lucas Baumfaulk (tenor saxophone) - II, sophomore Sara Martin (trombone) - I, freshman Jaydon Bixenman (clarinet) - II and freshman Morgan Bell (flute) - III. The students were accompanied by Dana Inloes.

The instrumental ensembles who attended were the flute trio of juniors Bickner and Heather Griggs and sophomore

Anna Taylor. The flute trio earned a I. The percussion ensemble group of senior Aaron Mead and Jared Bixenman; juniors Brock Wagoner and Steven Kerksiek; sophomores Taylor, Lauren Shoaff and Abi Rohr and freshmen Dryden Baumfaulk, Michael Tubbs, Skylar Barrett and Rachel Juenemann. The Percussion Ensemble earned a I. The percussion ensemble has been assisted by Mary Shoaff.

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Briefly

Planning meeting Thursday

The Local Emergency Planning Committee will be holding a meeting Thursday at noon at 360 N. Franklin. The committee will be discussing training and the yearly table top exercise. For information, call 460-4516.

Business After Five Thursday

The May Business After Five will be held at Homeland Realty and Auction along with the Leadership Thomas County Board of Directors. We hope you will join us Thursday for an evening of food, fun, and fellowship. For more information call the Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401.

May Chamber Coffee on Friday

The May Chamber Coffee is being held at the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau in conjunction with Tourism week and to celebrate the Visitor Cen-

ters Fifth Year Anniversary. Please join us at 10 a.m. Friday morning for refreshments at the Colby Visitor Center (Grain Bin) located at 2016 South Range. For more information call the Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401.

Retirement reception Friday

Colby Community College has announced a public reception honoring long-time employees Betty Kruse, Carolyn May, Dr. Phillip Shuman and Becky Vollertsen beginning at 3 p.m. on Friday, in the Student Union. For more information, contact Debbie Schwanke at 460-5411.

Community Van off on Friday

The Thomas County Community Van will not be running on Friday and on May 18. The van's driver will be off those days. For questions, call the county clerk's office at 460-4500.

Food sign up is Friday

Prairie Land food sign up will be open until Friday, at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth. For information, call Gene Griffin, 460-3579.

Relay team to hold bake sale

Citizens Medical Center Relay for Life Team is having a Bake Sale in front of Wal-Mart at 11 a.m. Saturday. Stars and luminaries will also be available. For information, contact Tracy Munk at 460-4814.

Coaches to talk with players

A parent-player meeting for next year's Colby High football team will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, in the high school auditorium. Students interested in football who will be in grades nine through 12, and their parents, should attend. For information, contact coach Chris Gardner at 460-1390.

Relay needs teams, walkers

Teams are needed for the 2009 Thomas County Relay for Life, sponsored by the Colby chapter of the American Cancer Society, on Friday, May 29, in Fike Park. To get in touch with someone who can arrange a spot on a team, or register a new team, call Tiffany Moeder at 460-2383.

City to pick up grass clippings

City crews are picking up grass clippings. Clippings must be at curbside by 8 a.m. on your regular trash day in a separate tipper can from household trash. Put clippings in the tipper loose. For questions, call the Public Works office at 460-4420.



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