



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Dousing the engine



STEVE HAYNES/Colby Free Press

Colby firefighters responded to a reported car fire near the Hi-Plains Co-op elevator on North Nashville Ave. about 3 p.m. Monday. Chief Bob McLemore said Virgil Brungardt had been working on his 1986 Mustang when it caught fire, apparently near the catalytic converter. Brungardt rents space from Jim's Pest Control. The chief said he was nearby when the call

came, and he went in with a couple of water extinguishers to knock the fire down. Firefighters used an inch-and-a-half line to finish the job on the Mustang, which was pretty much finished, too. Sgt. Kent Dible of the Colby Police directed traffic around the scene.

## County to replace court carpet soon

By Vera Sloan  
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The Thomas County commissioners took advantage of a light agenda on Monday, so they could finish up business early and head for the harvest fields while the weather was good.

Sealed bids were opened for new carpeting for the Court Services office on third floor. The winning bid was Northwest Decorating at \$14,321. Judge Glenn Schiffner will pick out the color and do the scheduling to correspond with days the court will not be busy.

The other bid, from Office Works, was lower at \$13,529, but would have had the county responsible for moving the furniture out of the way and back when the carpet is installed. The commissioners said they chose the higher bid because they do not want to tie

up county workers with furniture moving if the weather turns bad.

Clair Schrock, road and bridge supervisor and weed department chief, asked the commissioners for permission to buy some concrete finishing tools. The road crew has been utilized to do small jobs when contractors are busy, he said, and to help keep the cost of the smaller jobs down.

This week, the workers were doing concrete at the County Office Complex, Schrock said, but they had to borrow tools from the city. Sometimes the city needs the tools at the same time. At a cost of \$400 or less, the commissioners thought it was a good idea for the county to own its own tools.

Schrock also brought bids for metal roofing for the county shop. Rasure Lumber was awarded the bid for 26-gauge steel for \$2,490.

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## State confirms mountain lion

WaKEENEY (AP) — Kansas wildlife officials confirm a deer hunter's close encounter with a mountain lion in the northwestern part of the state.

The Department of Wildlife and Parks says its staff have verified that a big cat photographed by the hunter northwest of WaKeeney was a mountain lion. The agency says it's the first documentation of a live, wild mountain lion in the

state. In a statement Tuesday, the department said the hunter was in a tree stand when the mountain lion appeared near a pile of corn. The hunter took multiple photos as the lion approached within 10 feet of the stand and looked up before moving out of sight.

The agency didn't say when the encounter occurred. The cougar's origin is unknown.

## Health care company makes first big hire

By Andy Heintz  
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Embark Healthcare, a Florida-based firm that plans to establish an electronic records operation here for advance directives on end-of-life medical decisions, hired its first Colby employee a few days ago.

Junelle Hills, owner and manager of the Quilt Cabin, was hired to be the company's supervisor in Colby, said Michael Brouthers, chief executive officer of Embark.

Hills said the company had approached her about the job over a year and a half ago, but she didn't want to accept any offers until everything was in place. Brouthers said Hills will be responsible for

conducting interviews and hiring and training employees here. He said she would be spending "a substantial amount" of time in Daytona Beach, Fla., where she will be trained on how to run the service center.

Hills will probably start her training in November, said Brouthers. He said once Hills is ready, she will apply the skills she learned in Florida by hiring and training employees at the center here.

Brouthers said he first met Hills while his company was working with Gerald Fulwider, former director of the Thomas County Economic Development Alliance, to bring the company to Colby.

He said Hills, along with several others, was instrumental in bringing the company to Colby through

her work at the alliance, where she is a volunteer board member.

He said she was one of several people who helped Embark get a Community Development Block Grant from the state to get the company into Colby. Hills is chairman of the alliance board until the end of the year.

She said Embark first approached the alliance in April 2008 when Brouthers talked to the group about the benefits of bringing his company to Colby. The first public meeting about Embark took place in late August of that year at the Community Building.

Embark received a \$485,000 loan from the state through the block grant program, financed by the federal Department of Commerce. The company will have to pay back the \$485,000 to the state

in 6 1/2 years. The city will act as the middle man. City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said Embark will pay the city monthly and the city will transfer the money to the

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## Candidate embroiled in lawsuit

SALINA (AP) — The former director of the Salina Housing Authority has sued congressional candidate Alan Jilka, alleging she was fired for refusing Jilka's sexual advances.

In a federal lawsuit filed Oct. 13, Ann Rollins Johnson accuses Jilka of creating a hostile work environment and then orchestrating an effort to have her fired after she refused several sexual advances.

Jilka, a former mayor and city commissioner in Salina, is seeking the Democratic nomination for the 1st District congressional seat being vacated by GOP Rep. Jerry Moran. The lawsuit also names the city of Salina, the Salina Housing Authority and the housing authority's five board members.

Jilka told *The Salina Journal* on Monday that the accusations are "frivolous and preposterous."

Johnson was director of the housing authority from December 2000 until January 2008. She filed complaints last year with the Kansas Human Rights Commission and the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

In her lawsuit, Johnson contends that Jilka leered at her and other women at the Salina Housing Authority, asked her for confidential information about tenants of the authority and subjected Johnson to "severe, pervasive and ongoing sexual harassment by and through a hostile work environment based on her sex or gender because she would not become involved romantically with Alan."

Johnson said she received a letter on Jan. 17, 2008,

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## Laying a new walkway



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Pete Schlageck and Bill Merriman, county road crew members, completed concrete work at the Thomas County Office Complex on Monday. The new concrete was put in place to keep water from running under the building and pooling under the conference room. With no basement under that area, rains during the summer caused the carpet in the conference room to be wet.

## Briefly

### Extension voting this week

Ballots for the Thomas County Extension Council election are available at the extension office, 350 S. Range Ave., Suite 16. All ballots must be submitted to the office by 5 p.m. Friday, said Extension Agent Clint Milliman. For information, call the office at 460-4582.

### Spooky sale at Pioneer Library

The Pioneer Memorial Library will hold its Spook-tacular Book Sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Bring the kids. For questions, call librarian Melany Wilks at 460-4470.

### Heartland Fall Festival Friday

Heartland Christian School's annual Fall Festival will begin with games and supper from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Friday. Soup will be served for a donation. A

volleyball scrimmage will follow from 8 to 10:30. For information, call Deena Bandy at the school, 460-6419.

### Coaches offer coffee, talk

Join the Colby High School football staff for "Coffee with the Coaches" at 9 a.m. Saturday and every Saturday after home and away games at the Sports Shoppe, Fourth Street and Franklin Avenue. For information, call Eagles' Coach Chris Gardener at 460-1390.

### Town hall meeting Tuesday

The City of Colby and the Colby Pool Committee will hold an open town hall meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the community building. The meeting will be to discuss the proposed sales tax that will pay for the fire station and a new pool. For information, call City Manager Carolyn Armstrong at 460-4400.

### Hospital auxiliary needs help

The Citizens Medical Center Auxiliary is looking for volunteers to greet visitors, operate the gift shop and help patients and their families, among other things. For information or to volunteer, call Tama Unger at 460-1214 or Mary Smith at 462-3387.

### Transit bus' day to be brief Nov. 6

The Thomas County transportation van will run only from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 6. For information, call County Clerk Shelly Harms at 460-4500.

### Food bank taking applications

Genesis-Thomas County food bank has forms available for families who will need food baskets this holiday season. These can be picked up from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. on Wednesdays at the

Genesis office, 350 S. Range Ave. Suite 13. Applications are due by Tuesday, Nov. 10. For information, call Genesis at 460-7930.

### Veterans needed for list

The *Colby Free Press* will be publishing the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars list of all area military veterans on Veteran's Day, Nov. 11. To be certain that we have the names of all Thomas County veterans, the *Free Press* would like all veterans or their relatives to please stop by the office, 155 W. Fifth St., or call 462-3963.



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