



New siren goes online in Menlo

By Vera Sloan
Colby Free Press
vsloan@nwkansan.com

The tornado siren tower in Menlo is up and working. Emergency Management Director Susan McMahan reported on the new tower to the county commissioners Monday. She said she had information that tornado alley will live up to its name this year, and reminded the commissioners the county has no insurance on any of the towers. If they were to be destroyed in a tornado, they are \$20,000 a pop to replace them. Insurance is only \$20 to \$25 a year, with only a \$500 deductible for each tower and she highly recommended looking for insurance. McMahan said she needs a spot for a backup repeater and is looking at towers where she can mount it. She will report to them next week about possibilities for a permanent home for the repeater. She said she has a grant, but could send the grant back if she doesn't find a good place to put it.

County Road Supervisor Clair Shrock brought bids for the new sand screener to replace the 1984 model now in use by his department. The commissioners approved the purchase of the new one for \$128,300, with Berry Tractor in Garden City. The money will come out of the special equipment fund. Down payment is \$40,000 with an annual payment of \$21,300 for three years. Commissioner Byron Sowers said he had watched the new one work. "I hate to spend the money," he said, "but with the difference between the old one and the new one there is no doubt about the feasibility of this purchase." Sowers said it had been brought to his attention that the road in southeast Thomas County that leads to the ethanol plant needs some patrolling. He said he was told 70 to 80 trucks a day drive the county road at 70 miles an hour and above, and that the road is

See "SIREN," Page 3

Struggle to the top



Andy Heintz/Colby Free Press
Tyler Harry tries to make it to the top of the ladder with the help of Melissa Bentley at the Sacred Heart carnival Sunday at the school. Harry's goal was to hit the cowbell at the end of the rope ladder.

College board incumbent wants to focus on quality

By Andy Heintz
Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkansan.com

We have to be the best at what we do, said Arlen Leiker, Colby Community College board member, when discussing how the college could grow its enrollment. Leiker is running for re-election on April 5. He said quality programs are the only way the college can increase its enrollment and bring its financial situation under control. Leiker, a United Parcel Service driver, said state aid to colleges has been decreasing and he wasn't sure if it would ever go up again. He said although the board is the hardest job he's ever had, he is running again because he thinks he adds something to the board as a whole. Leiker pointed to his solo "no" vote against building a new residence hall in 2007 as proof of his ability to look at the big picture. He said the new residence hall, that has been partly responsible for the college's revenue shortfall due to lack of occupancy, has ended up being a worse decision than he previously thought. Keegan Nichols, vice president



Andy Heintz/Colby Free Press
Arlen Leiker, an incumbent candidate for the Colby Community College Board, said this week that program quality should be the college's focus.

of student affairs, said 111 out of the 158 beds in the residence hall — 70 percent — are filled. Leiker said the role of the board is not to come up with

new programs, but to assess ideas that come from instructors. He said he thought ideas should

See "QUALITY," Page 3

County attorney to look into Rovohl right-of-way dispute

By Vera Sloan
Colby Free Press
vsloan@nwkansan.com

Thomas County Commissioners put the newly appointed temporary County Attorney, Margaret Mahoney right to work on Monday when they asked her to finish research on boundary lines started by former county attorney Bruce Flipse nearly two years ago. In this particular case the dispute regards the location of a two-mile stretch of County Road Z from County Road 19 (K-25) west to County Road 17 in Rovohl

Township. One landowner, who farms on the eastern stretch of the road, says the road is not where it should be. Clair Shrock, the county's road supervisor, said the man was farming about 40 feet outside his property line. A neighbor just to the west found the original survey marker and put up a fence establishing a line for his property. Shrock said after the fence was put up, the landowner in question started farming to the south inside the county road right of way. Now he is claiming Midwest Energy power poles and the county road

are both in the wrong place and wants them moved. Shrock said a Midwest Energy estimate for the cost of relocating the power poles was around \$67,000 and affects about 1 2/3 miles of power lines. There is no estimate from the county on what it would take to tear up the road, which has been in place for 35 years, and build a new one. According to Midwest Energy pole-mapping records, the road was at one time more like a trail. It was built up into a road in 1975

See "DISPUTE," Page 3

Twelve-year-old boy in custody in Burlington, Colo., double murder

P. Solomon Banda
The Associated Press

BURLINGTON, Colo. — A 12-year-old boy who reported shots fired at his eastern Colorado home was in custody Wednesday after officers arrived to find his parents dead and two of his siblings in critical condition. The boy called 911 Tuesday evening to report at least three people had been shot at his Burlington home, said Steve Johnson of the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. When officers arrived, they found the bodies of 50-year-old Charles Long and his wife, 51-year-old Marilyn Long. Two of their children were wounded

— a 5-year-old girl and a 9-year-old boy. It was unclear whether the 12-year-old suffered any injuries. Warrants in the case were sealed, and authorities weren't discussing possible motives. Investigators referred the case to prosecutors for possible filing of charges. Johnson said there are no other suspects, and there's no reason to believe there's a continuing risk to the community of about 3,700 near the Kansas border. Less than 24 hours after the shootings, friends gathered for a candlelight vigil Wednesday evening

See "CUSTODY," Page 3

Briefly

Brewster holds prayer day

The Brewster Lutheran Church will hold a World Day of Prayer service Friday at the church. Fellowship time will begin at 9:30 a.m. and worship time will begin at 10 a.m. For information, call Nadine Kammer at (785) 694-2456.

Ag department food available

The United States Department of Agriculture will distribute extra commodities from 1 to 2 p.m. Monday at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center. Commodities are given according to income guidelines and distribution is first-come, first-served. Participants are asked to not arrive before 12:30 p.m. Commodities include canned beef, tomato soup, green beans, mixed fruit, vegetable soup, orange juice, cherries and milk. For information, call the program office at 462-6744.

Prom dresses on sale at church

Gently used, like-new prom dresses will be on sale from 6 to 8 p.m. until Friday in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church, 515 W. Fourth St. in

Colby. New styles, great colors and sizes, \$20 each. Proceeds go to Genesis-Thomas County Food Bank. For information, call Sue Draper at (785) 460-6322 or Shanda Mattix at (785) 460-5464.

Gem Lions plan soup luncheon

The Gem Lions Club will be serving homemade vegetable and potato soup, chili and cake for its annual Winter Soup Day from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday at the Gem Community Building. Donations will go for community projects. For information, call Ken Poland, 462-7809. The Lions will be collecting eye glasses and hearing aids to recycle.

Bass fisherman to teach seminar

Three-time Colorado Bass Federal State Team qualifier Brad Bennett, a business instructor at the college, will teach a spring fishing seminar from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Colby Community College. Cost is \$35 which includes lunch. All ages are welcome. All proceeds will be used to help update equipment in the Business Department at the college. For information or to enroll, call Bennett at

460-5526 or (303) 981-7026 or by email at brad.bennett@colbycc.edu.

Dance planned for Saturday

There will be a Singles and Couples Dance from 6 to 10 p.m. Saturday at the Meadow Lake Clubhouse. Gary Phipps will provide the music. For information, call Lue Duffey at (785) 269-7057.

Food sign up open now

Prairie Land Food sign up is open until Monday at the State Farm Insurance Office, 905 E. Fourth St. Delivery will be 12:15 p.m. Saturday, March 19, at Sacred Heart School gym. For information, call Gene Griffon at 460-3579.

Kids to do musical at school

Second graders from Colby Grade School will present, "From the Inside Out: A Musical Celebrating Positive Character," at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Colby Grade School Auditorium. For information call music teacher Jennifer Koel at 460-5100, extension 1104.

Seniors plan potluck Tuesday

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck dinner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share. Table service and beverage will be provided. For information, call 462-6342.

Diabetes group to meet next week

The "Journey for Control: Monitoring Your Blood Glucose" diabetes support group will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the conference room at Citizens Medical Center. The program is free but anyone interested should register in advance. For information or to register, call Jeanene Brown in the hospital's education department at 460-4850.

