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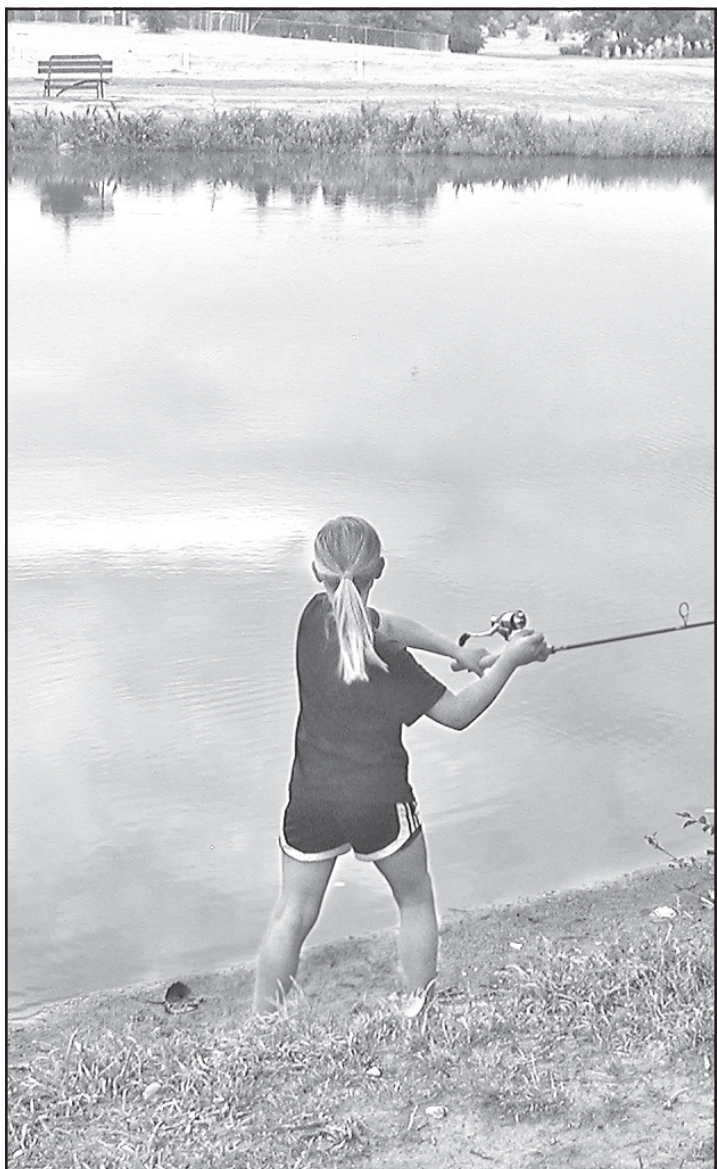
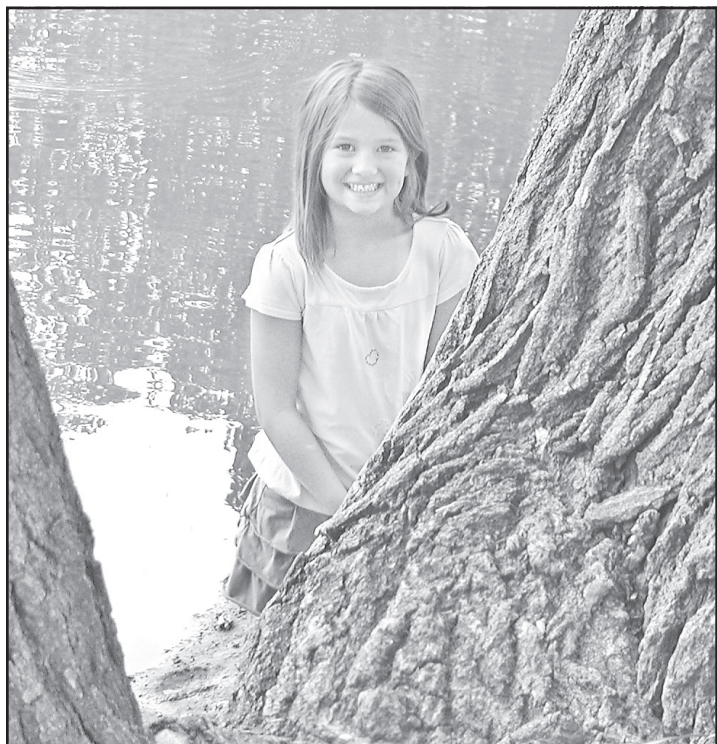
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Kids go fishing at Villa High pond

Carter Stanley (above) and sisters Brenn (below) and Kennedy (right) were fishing Tuesday morning at the Villa High pond while their mother sat and read a book. Kennedy practiced her casting technique while at the pond.

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press



State rep re-elected in 120th

Rep. Ward Cassidy missed election day in Kansas last week – but not his re-election.

Cassidy retained his seat representing the 120th District in the Kansas House in a close race with Rep. Rick Billinger, a Goodland Republican. He and Cassidy, of St. Francis, were thrown together in the Republican primary when federal judges drew new district lines for the state with little regard for existing boundaries or incumbents.

Cassidy, it seems, had booked a Caribbean cruise for his entire family, including the couple's two daughters, sons-in-law and grandchildren. Or his wife had. The couple celebrated their 43rd anniversary and her retirement from teaching.

"She planned this back when I didn't have an opponent," he said. "I told her I couldn't go ... and she said, 'Yes, you can.'"

He said they were out of cell phone range, but had Internet access, so he followed the returns on

the Web.

"I lost, I won," he said of the see-saw race. "It was pretty exciting. There were some pretty crazy elections."

He said he hated being placed in the same district with a colleague and friend but was glad he'd won.

"It was a good race," he said. "He's a good guy. The only thing better would be if we'd both be going back."

Cassidy said he hopes to improve his position in the House committee structure, but that depends on who is elected speaker in January. With many new members, that's still a tossup.

His new district includes Cheyenne, Rawlins and Decatur counties from his "old" 120th and Sherman and most of Thomas from Billinger's 121st, plus Wallace. The representative carried "his" counties heavily, while Billinger ran up a big majority in Sherman and a smaller one in Thomas. Cassidy carried Wallace.

Colby hospital reaches milestone

By Christina Beringer

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In just eight short months, the fund-raising arm for Colby's Citizen's Medical Center has reached the \$1 million milestone in a three-year, \$1.9 million facility expansion campaign.

Citizen's Foundation Director Tama Unger said Thursday that so far, the foundation had received \$1.12 million in contributions and pledges and the effort is well ahead of schedule.

The campaign, which began in January this year, will pay for efforts to expand medical facilities, upgrade surgical suites and make room for a general surgeon and two family practitioners the hospital is bringing to Colby.

The first of the two practi-

tioners, Dr. John Dygert, has begun taking patients at the Family Center for Health Care, the clinic run by the hospital.

A husband-and-wife team, Drs. Kelly and Sarah Gabel, will join the team in August 2013. Kelly Gabel, a general surgeon, will add specialized services for Citizens and northwest Kansas, Unger said. The new surgeon is the son of Colby High School Athletic Director Larry Gabel and his wife Beth. His wife will come aboard as the only female obstetrics doctor in Colby, and Unger said this new "power couple" is expected to draw many new patients here.

"This expansion is so important to our entire area," said Sue Evans of Colby, who chairs the campaign and for the Citizens

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Firefighters receive money for relief fund

Thomas County firefighters will receive \$55,544 from the annual distribution to state and local firefighter relief organizations of money from the state Firefighters Relief Fund.

Colby Fire Chief Bob McLemore said this money is used to buy life and accident insurance policies for paid and volunteer firefighters.

"That's all those funds can be used for," he said, "and the insurance commissioner makes the rules on how they can be spent."

McLemore said the Thomas

County relief organization tries to use all the money it receives each year to set up the policies.

"We're allowed up to 30 members," he added, noting part of money goes to the insurance commissioner's office. McLemore said the disbursement is based on taxable assessed valuation.

"And then they have some formula they use to determine what each department gets," he said.

More than \$10.4 million will be distributed among 578 firefight-

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Water suit back in court

TOPEKA (AP) – A dispute between Kansas and Nebraska over use of water from the Republican River is heading back to court – in New England.

The trial begins today in federal court in Portland, Maine. A special master appointed by the U.S. Supreme Court will take evidence and recommend a resolution.

Kansas officials allege Nebraska is violating a 2003 settlement over use of water in the Republican River basin. The state claims Nebraska exceeded its allotment by more than 78,000 acre-feet of water from 2005 through 2006.

Kansas asked the U.S. Supreme Court in 2010 to reopen the case and enforce the settlement. The court agreed to reopen the case last year and appointed a special master.

Teaching volunteers



B.J. Gore of the Kansas Children's Service League spent Tuesday at a community "fatherhood cafe" event, talking to a group of volunteers in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church about how to talk with parents at training sessions.

Bruce Bynum, also of the league, and Mary Hess, of the Institute for Educational Research and Public Service at the University of Kansas, attended the event.

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