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## Rollover on I-70



This U-Haul trailer being pulled by a pickup truck rolled onto its side into a ditch about 8:45 a.m. today at milepost 56 near the Pilot truck stop on I-70. The Kansas Highway Patrol responded to the scene of the accident. Rescue vehicles were also dispatched. The truck had been traveling east on I-70.

KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

# County continues search for new appraiser

By Sam Dieter

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Efforts to find a new appraiser were part of the agenda at the County Commissioner's meeting Monday.

Commissioners Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen were present for the meeting, along with County Clerk Shelly Harms. Commissioner-elect Mike Baughn attended part of the meeting.

The commissioners held a roughly-half

hour closed-session interview of Chris Gibson for the job of county appraiser to replace Mary Cech, who died July 16. Gibson is currently the assistant appraiser for Dickinson County, east of Salina.

Assistant appraiser Kathy Cunningham and Terry Ballard, appraiser for Sherman and Rawlins counties, sat in on the interview. Before and after the interview, Ballard talked with the commissioners about the possibility of acting as the appraiser for Thomas County until the position is filled, but no conclusion was reached.

Ballard said he would be qualified to sign off on paperwork such as recently-filed applications for tax rebates under the neighborhood revitalization plan.

Clair Schrock, vice president of the Fair Board, told the commissioners that the county has been renting out space in buildings on the fairgrounds for private citizens to use as storage, but the rental agreement which they sign with the county does not cover insurance.

"Our insurance company wants us to have a contract with some different word-

ing in it," he said.

Schrock also said he would discuss membership of the Fair Board at the board's meeting. Harms counted 17 people on the Fair Board, which is the same as the number of taxing entities in the county, although there is not one person on the board from each entity. There are 13 townships in the county and four wards in the city. At its meeting Thursday, the board decided to contact members who have not been showing up to meetings.

District Attorney Kevin Berens pre-

sented a draft for an agreement between the state, the city and the county to share the cost of the Interstate 70 Area Transportation Plan. The Kansas Department of Transportation intends to study of traffic in certain parts of town such as South Range Avenue, looking at how stop lights could help the flow of traffic in this area.

Of the money needed for the plan, \$5,000 will be covered by the city, \$142,500 by the state and \$2,500 by the

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# Anonymous donor pledges up to \$17,500 to schools

By Christina Beringer

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An anonymous donor has pledged to match support for art at the Colby Public Schools, said Melinda Olson, executive director of the Thomas County Community Foundation, and she is asking peo-

ple to make a donations to ensure continuation of art education.

"We are happy to announce that an anonymous donor has stepped forward with matching funds of up to \$17,500 to benefit the art subcategory of the Colby Public Schools Education Endowment Fund," Olson said. "The new matching funds that have been

extended will be a one-to-one offer. That is, for every dollar that is donated to this fund, the anonymous donor will match it with an additional dollar, up to the limit of \$17,500.

"Now, more than ever, your help is needed to provide a quality art education to future leaders in our community and help with events

that would not otherwise be possible. By making a tax-deductible gift to the foundation ... you can ensure that your donation directly benefits our art program at the Colby Public Schools."

The contribution, Olson said, came in response to the Young at Art fund-raising event held June 21 at the Prairie Museum of Art

and History. It featured a Birger Sandzen oil painting donated by the Colby High class of 1946 to the school district, as well as art work by students from Thomas County schools.

Rather than selling the painting, the school is displaying the work, valued at over \$60,000, at the museum for everyone to enjoy, she

said. The importance of having art education in schools was the focus of a speech by art teacher Trish Starbuck.

"Besides art's value by itself," she said, "art allows students to be successful in other areas. There's

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## New power poles



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

Jason Schur rode in a bucket to help lift cables over a new power line pole as it was set into the ground Tuesday morning just west of Country Club Drive along the old train tracks. Schur said he and his co-workers had been setting up new power line poles starting by the elementary school and working east near First Street.

# New Sacred Heart principal has passion

By Christina Beringer

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Sacred Heart Catholic School in Colby has a new face behind the principal's desk this year, taking the spot filled for 12 years by Dave Everett, who moved to Illinois this summer with his wife Cheryl.

Although she's new to the office, Laura Krejci had served the parochial school for eight years before she was offered the job as principal. Since 2004, she has been the director of religious education and music teacher.

In addition to being the principal, she said, she'll continue teaching music part time. Church members Megan Augustine and Alex Williams have taken over as co-directors for religious education.

"I've always had a passion for kids and music," said Krejci, "and became interested in teaching when I was in college after getting scholarships to participate in music. Teaching just seemed to be the perfect fit for me."

When Everett retired, Krejci said, she was offered the position by Father Dana Clark, who said he wanted to fill the vacancy with someone who loves the school and the kids.

"I worked closely with him as the religious education director," she said, "and he must have been happy with my work. I do love the school, and the kids are like my own, since I'm not married and don't have children. I'm happy that he asked me to take the position."

"I love a chance to do something different and the challenge of a new role. We have some new teachers here, great kids and great parents who really make it a joy." A native of Aurora, Neb., Krejci



CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press

Preschoolers Heidi Gray (from left), Katelyn Diederich, Hannah Rose and Vance Dempewolf in Sharon Shirley's class at Sacred Heart Catholic School were eager to play with new principal Laura Krejci on Tuesday's Yellow Day at the water tub.

is a 1999 graduate of the University of Nebraska in Kearney. She received a bachelor's degree in vocal and instrumental music education for all grades.

As a student of music, she said, she learned the basics of all instruments but is most proficient at playing the guitar, piano, clarinet and recorder, and has given private lessons to students over the years.

She did her student teaching in Central City, Neb., before taking her first teaching job in Colby

in 2001 as the music teacher for third through fifth grades for Colby Public Schools. She was there five years. While at the public schools, Krejci said, she served on the school's improvement team, which helped her during her first major task as the principal of Sacred Heart.

"Every five years, schools are evaluated for accreditation, and a board gives a report and recommendations," she said. "After Dave left, I volunteered to take his place on the team since I had

some experience serving on the improvement team at the public school.

"We finished our process this summer and just received renewal on our accreditation here."

Krejci said the school was evaluated on five standards, based on test scores and other factors.

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