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# COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Thursday

November 29, 2012  
Volume 123, Number 186  
Serving Thomas County since 1888

## Kiwanis accepting new gifts

By Christina Beringer  
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Members of the Thomas County Kiwanis Club are asking for a little help to buy new toys for area children this Christmas with the 25th annual Phoebe Harkins Memorial Toy Project. “Your help is needed to buy these gifts and make a child in your community smile,” said Kiwanis Community Chairman Tina Harris. People should buy gifts in Colby by Sunday at Dollar General, 1804 S. Range Ave., or between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on Tuesday at Walmart, 115 W. Willow St. Harris said that since the program’s inception, the number of kids receiving gifts keeps growing. About 10 children have been added to their program since last year, she said, totaling 244 kids up

to age 14. A tree hung with ornaments can be found at both stores, she said. The ornaments include the sex and age of a child in Thomas County who is looking forward to receiving a gift. After choosing an ornament, people can shop the store for a \$10 gift that the child might enjoy. “People should attach their ornament to their gift,” Harris said, “so we can match them up correctly with the child. Your unwrapped gift and ornament should be left at the checkout in Dollar General and will be picked up by Kiwanis members for wrapping and distribution.” She added that High Plains Radio out of Oberlin will be broadcasting live from the Colby Walmart during the special hours Tuesday. “KFNH radio is helping to make

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Thomas County Kiwanis Club President Toni Lindberg (left) and member Sean Hankin decorated a tree at Dollar General on Tuesday with ornaments that have the sex and age of a child who is looking forward to receiving a gift for the 25th annual

Phoebe Harkins Memorial Toy Project. Kiwanis, Dollar General and Walmart are working together to provide new gifts for area children this Christmas.

TINA HARRIS

## College board gets report from health director

By Kayla Cornett  
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Colby Community College trustees heard a report Monday from Monique Eaton, new student health director, during their monthly meeting. She reported that the department has been seeing about 15 students for regular illnesses. Amanda Reed, a physician

assistant, sees these students Tuesday mornings and sometimes afternoons. “We do a pretty good deal for them,” Eaton said. “They only have to pay 10 bucks to see her, and then we try to do the \$4 prescriptions at Walmart or Dillons, whatever they want to do, so that kinda helps the students out a little bit, too.” She said she also handles purchase requests for athletic insurance and said Athletic Director Ryan Sturdy has been a

great help in getting her the information she needs to complete those. Eaton is the head of the behavior care team as well, and she said they have several students they sometimes look after that have stress or personal problems. “We kinda take them in and try to get them situated so they can have a successful school experience,” Eaton said. She said she’s glad to be in student health and it’s been great so far.

Trustee Bill Shields asked Eaton and Dr. Keegan Nichols, vice president of student affairs and marketing, how many students the college has lost this semester due to health- or stress-related issues. Nichols said maybe three or four. Eaton said they try to refer students that have stress or mental health issues to Ryan Hale, a counselor and psychology instructor, or an outside source of help. She said these students all seem to be do-

ing well. “But trying to get the students sometimes to that point where they’ll go in and talk to them is kind of a struggle at times,” she said. “We try to work with them as much as we can to get them there. Sometimes it takes us walking them over to Ryan’s office to get them in there at least once.”

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## Crash occurs on K-25

An accident just north of town (above) Wednesday disabled a compact car. Randy and Linda Smith, owners of Palace Drug, said they had slowed to turn left onto Cottonwood Drive from K-25 about 12:15 p.m. when their car was hit from behind by a northbound truck (below). State troopers, sheriff’s officers and an ambulance rushed to the site just north of town. The couple was checked for injuries at the scene and were back at work today.

JANENE WOODALL  
Colby Free Press



## School board hears audit report

By Sam Dieter  
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The Colby School Board heard a report on last year’s audit from Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball at its monthly meeting, with the auditors finding no major problems. The company noted that the district has increased its cash reserves in recent years. Kalyn Ritter, a certified public accountant with the firm, said at the meeting Monday, Nov. 19, that the auditors found all the district’s cash balances are presented fairly in its financial statements. Ritter gave the board some recommendations, which included closing funds on which there is no activity, having two people both review and sign off on applications for free- and reduced-price lunches, keeping closer track of stamps used to sign checks and running a cash summary report after an \$840 discrepancy was found in the last fiscal year. Superintendent Terrel Harrison said the discrepancy was just an error in bookkeeping. The board later voted to accept

the audit. Harrison told the board the schools are implementing a character education and bullying plan. “We’re feeling like we need more one on one with students,” Harrison said. This includes having children’s author Julia Cook, known for books that address character issues and bullying, read several of her books at the grade school on Monday. The district is also considering hiring consultants and counselors to work with kids. Ron Alexander with the Colby Police Department and Mark Kendrick with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation talked to kids about the consequences of bullying with text messages and Facebook. “We also want to more thoroughly provide students with the skills to cope with bullies,” Harrison said, “because as we’ve talked about, it’s going to happen in life.” Grade School Principal Lance Krannawitter said that students held their own presidential elec-

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## Armed robbery occurs in Atwood

Police are looking for a man who robbed the Casey’s General Store in Atwood at gunpoint early Sunday. Atwood Police Chief Brian Withington said the robber is a white male about 6 feet tall dressed all in black. He entered the store as it was being opened at about 5 a.m. carrying a revolver.

Store employees would not comment on the robbery. Withington would not say how much money the man took, but asked that anyone with information about the robbery or the suspect call him at (785) 626-3833.

