



10 pages

# COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Wednesday

March 13, 2013  
Volume 124, Number 41  
Serving Thomas County since 1888

## County learns about service agencies

**By Heather Alwin**  
*Colby Free Press*  
*colby.society@nwkansas.com*

Thomas County Commissioners Mike Baughn and Byron Sowers heard presentations from the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development Commission and Pioneer Country Development Inc. at their meeting Monday.

These groups, based in Hill City, help counties and cities across northwest Kansas obtain grants and loans to fund large community projects such as affordable housing and infrastructure development. Baughn said the presentations were for informational purposes only.

Peggy Pratt from Northwest Kansas Juvenile Services also provided an update to the commission. Pratt reviewed the five

programs the agency offers to the Thomas County community. Services range from assessments to first-time offender programs to intensive supervision for certain juveniles. Thomas County gave \$1,000 to the agency this year, which Pratt said was spent primarily on "Thinking for a Change" classes. The classes teach decision-making and problem-solving skills to teenagers through role-playing exercises.

Northwest Kansas Juvenile Services provides transportation to the participants so that the classes are accessible and free of charge to all northwest Kansas teenagers.

The commissioners, including Commissioner Paul Steele participating by telephone, awarded a sealed-bid contract for asphalt to Hi-Plains Sand Inc. of Kanopolis, the only company to sub-

mit a bid on time. Road Supervisor Clair Schrock said he thought the bid amount was about 20 cents higher per ton than last year, so he will adjust his usage accordingly.

Thomas County Health Department Administrator Kasiah Rothchild presented grant applications for the 2013-14 fiscal year.

**See "COUNTY," Page 2**

## Furniture store purchased by new owners

**Heather Alwin**  
*Colby Free Press*  
*colby.society@nwkansas.com*

Pauls Furniture, a Selden tradition, continues to serve the community in its 88th year, thanks to new owners Leroy and Renee Spreser.

The Spresers purchased Pauls Furniture from long-time owners Dick and Betty Pauls. The 17,000-square-foot store was founded by Dick's father in 1925. Dick purchased it in 1958 when his father died. Dick ran both the furniture store and the funeral home that was in the basement at the time. The basement is now a showroom.

The Pauls operated the store into their 90s, but they eventually decided to sell it. According to Renee Spreser, the Pauls assumed they would have to sell it to a big company who would buy the furniture and close down the store.

When the business came up for sale, the Spresers did not want to see the store leave their community.

"We started thinking about buying it in October," Renee said. By Nov. 1, the Spresers had purchased the store and Renee began operating it. "I wanted to sell something people would be happy about," she stated.

Previously, Spreser sold insurance products, commuting 58 miles one-way to Hill City each day. Spreser moved to Selden

from Goodland when she married Leroy, who is originally from Selden, 10 years ago.

Pauls Furniture sells all types of furniture, such as traditional dining sets, living room furniture and bedroom sets. They also offer an extensive selection of floor coverings and lead crystal.

The most popular brands Pauls Furniture sells are La-Z-Boy, Best Home Furnishings, Oakwood, Furniture Traditions, Amish Impressions, Vaughan-Bassett, Bassett, Lacrosse, Charles Schneider, Ashley and Eagle. Spreser said customers frequently purchase Tempur-pedic mattresses, Oakwood and Amish Traditions tables and Furniture Traditions bedroom sets.

Under Spreser's management, the store has expanded its offerings to include children's furniture and more home décor. She will soon begin consignment arrangements with local artists to offer local decorative products, too.

Spreser's goal is to keep the small-town feel of the store but bring in more modern touches. In keeping with this focus, she has reduced prices on much of the old stock and added dozens of new items. The store also has a new website, [www.paulsfurnitureco.com](http://www.paulsfurnitureco.com).

"We have over a hundred re-

**See "STORE," Page 2**



Renee Spreser reviewed a sales brochure (above) at one of many large dining tables featured at Pauls Furniture in Selden. Customers can custom-order tables through the store in a range of styles and prices. Pauls Furniture also carries several grandfather clocks, wound here by Spreser (left). The store stocks traditional furniture and decorative items, like these clocks, as well as more modern items.

HEATHER ALWIN  
Colby Free Press

## Changing light fixtures



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

City workers were changing out the old light fixtures on a traffic signal Monday afternoon at the intersection of Range Avenue and Fourth Street.

## Cardinals divided: who should be pope?

**By Nicole Winfield**  
*The Associated Press*

VATICAN CITY — Cardinals remained divided over who should be pope today after three rounds of voting, an indication that disagreements remain about the direction of the Catholic Church following the upheaval unleashed by Pope Benedict XVI's surprise resignation.

In the second day of the conclave, thick black smoke billowed from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel, prompting sighs of disappointment from the thousands of people gathered in a rain-soaked and chilly St. Peter's Square.

"I'm not happy to see black

smoke. We all want white," said the Rev. ThankGod Okoroafor, a Nigerian priest studying theology at Holy Cross University in Rome.

The Vatican spokesman the Rev. Federico Lombardi insisted that the continued balloting was part of the natural course of the election and didn't signal divisions among cardinals. He noted that only once in the past century had a pope been elected on the third ballot: Pope Pius XII, elected on the eve of World War II.

A winner must receive 77 votes, or two-thirds of the 115, to be named pope.

That said, a conclave has rarely

**See "POPE," Page 2**

## Oakley man in accident

An Oakley man was sent to a hospital out of town after a roll-over crash on Interstate 70 late Saturday night.

At 11:50 p.m. Saturday, Michael Leigh Shirley, 39, was driving east on I-70. He was in the left lane at the Mingo exit, when he lost control of his 2012 Toyota pickup. The truck went into the

median, rolled and stopped on its wheels.

Shirley, who was wearing a seat belt, was taken to Citizen's Medical Center, then transferred to another hospital.

