



Autumn breaks out colors of the season

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

These trees on West Fifth Street (above) halfway into their autumn costumes, may have gotten a jump start with the cooler weather in recent days. Some folks have decorated their home for Halloween (right) and the red bushes backing the sign at Fike Park (below) are not shy about showing off their fall dress.



Soup supper to help family

A soup supper and silent auction will be held at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 12, at Colby High School to benefit Brennen Ostmeyer. Brennen, the 20-month-old son of Jason and LeAnn Ostmeyer, has Rhabdomyosarcoma, a rare form of cancer. Jason and LeAnn Ostmeyer moved to Colby to become teachers at Colby Grade School after graduating from Kansas State University in 2008. Brennen was born Jan. 25, 2012. "He has been a healthy, vibrant child since day one," said LeAnn. "He's always on the go, and loves to play outside." Over a year later, in July 2013, the couple noticed a mass on Brennen's upper lip that quickly

began to grow. The mass was removed, but Brennen was diagnosed with Rhabdomyosarcoma, an extremely rare form of aggressive childhood cancer, on Sept. 17, just two days before his little brother Carter was born prematurely. The family travels to Denver weekly for chemotherapy treatments for Brennen. His treatment plan includes up to nine months of chemotherapy and five weeks of daily radiation during which the family must live in Denver. The medical bills and traveling have strained the family's finances, especially since LeAnn had resigned her teaching position to start a daycare. The benefit supper and auction will raise money to help the family through this treatment. "We are truly blessed to have such caring and supportive people in our lives," said LeAnn.



Brennen Ostmeyer

County decides on mowers

By Heather Alwin
Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkans.com

New rotary mowers will now be chopping grass at the county landfill and in Rovohl Township, the Thomas County Commissioners decided at their Monday meeting. The new mowers will cost the county \$24,292. At their regular meeting, the commissioners opened bids from two companies, Farm Implement and Supply and Colby Ag Center. After the bids were opened, Larry Jumper, the landfill supervisor, and Clair Schrock, the road and bridge supervisor, left the meeting to "make a few phone calls" since the commissioners had questions about the bids. When their research was complete, the pair returned to the meeting. They reported that each bidder's proposal was for the same mower, a Land Pride rotary cutter

with a 10.5-foot cutting deck. Colby Ag's bid was \$24,504 for two mowers; Farm Implement and Supply's bid was \$24,292. After clarifying questions about the mowers' warranty, the commissioners voted to go with the lower bid from Farm Implement and Supply. The landfill's mower will be used with the new landfill tractor the county purchased at a previous meeting. The road department's mower will be used on roadsides in Rovohl Township where the county is reimbursed by the township for mowing its roads, said Schrock. In other business, the commissioners: Received a report on the number of flu shots given by the county health department: over 60 at Brewster, over 50 at Rexford and over 120 in Colby. Commissioner

See "MOWERS," Page 2

Medicine drop sees high usage

Saturday is National Drug Take-Back Day, and a drop-off site for unused prescription medications is available at the Law Enforcement Center in Colby. A prescription drop drop-off box was set up in front of the center at the beginning of September this year, and Undersheriff Marc Finley says it's getting a lot of use. "We're getting more and more people from Goodland and surrounding communities, including those outside of Thomas County, dropping off unused medicine,"

Finley said. He said some people bring plastic bags of medicines, too much to put into the box, and just bring them to the window inside the Law Enforcement Center. Anyone is welcome to do that, he added. As word of mouth gets out about the drop-off site, he said, he believes use will continue to rise. He stressed that the site is available all the time, not just one day, so people can dispose of medications at any time it's convenient for them.

Conservation plan key to bird listing

WICHITA (AP) - Federal wildlife regulators have endorsed a voluntary conservation plan for the lesser prairie chicken drafted by five range states. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' plan calls for financial incentives to landowners managing their land for the species' benefit. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Wednesday it will

consider the plan's effectiveness when it makes a final decision next year on whether to list the bird as an endangered species. FWS director Dan Ashe says when regulators first proposed in December 2012 to list the bird, there were fewer than 45,000. A survey this past year counted 18,000 across its range in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado.

Seminar for kids to address bullying

A martial arts studio in town is holding a seminar this weekend to help kids deal with bullying. Christine Zejda, owner of Zejda's Martial Arts, will have the seminar from 4 to 6 p.m. this Saturday at her studio. Kids of all ages and their parents are welcome to attend, Zejda said. There will also be free pizza at the end of the seminar. She plans to show the video "Agent G, the ATA Defender Bullying Prevention Program" during the seminar, and talk with the kids

about what they see in the video. "It helps them know where the hot spots are, where people are being bullied," Zejda said, "it explains who the bullies are, and sometimes you've got pacifist people ... and they're going to learn how to help out if someone's being bullied." The video, she said, is based on the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and distributed through the American Taekwondo Association.