



Defending our Freedoms Inside

75¢

Monday

November 11, 2013

Volume 124, Number 177

Serving Thomas County since 1888

COLBY FREE PRESS

10 pages



Pickin' for the veterans

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press
The singers of Prairie Rose Harmony took the stage Sunday afternoon (top) during the annual Hometown Gospel Show at Colby Community College. Veteran Norman Whitaker (above, left) rose during an Armed Forces medley near the end of the show as Leon Woofter sang the hymn for each branch of the service. The Schroeder girls (above, from left) Julie, 15, Nikole, 25, and Chelsy, 18, sang along to piano music provided by their mother Lisa. They were one of 10 acts lined up for the show, which also included Gary Wiggins (right). The show is put on as a tribute for veterans each year by the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass and Folk Festival.



Insurance questions get answers

Many questions and much confusion surround the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, particularly how the act affects people and businesses in northwest Kansas. The following commonly asked questions have been answered with the help of Vernon Hurd of Colby's Farm Bureau Financial Services office. Hurd said he became passionate about health care reform because of his own personal experiences. "For more than a decade," he said, "I've been one of the millions of Americans who are uninsurable because of a pre-existing health condition." After he lost his job a few years ago when the corporate division he worked for closed, Hurd said, he was most worried about find-

ing health benefits at a new job. "Having lived that experience, I know what a weight it is to bear," he said. Hurd said he thinks he is the only agent certified to sell Health Insurance Marketplace plans in a 90-mile radius of Colby. Q: If I don't buy health insurance, will I be charged a penalty? A: The law requires almost all Americans to buy "minimum essential" health-insurance coverage. If you do not buy at least minimum coverage, you may be assessed a tax penalty in 2014. Penalties start at about 1 percent of your income and grow over the next few years. Q: What happens if I already have health insurance? See "QUESTIONS," Page 2

Entrepreneur to speak here

A man who co-founded a backpack company in the 1960s plans to speak about business opportunities at Colby High School this week. Skip Yowell, who describes himself as a hippy entrepreneur, will talk to high school students and anyone else who's interested at 1 p.m. Wednesday in the high school auditorium. Yowell, his cousin Murray Pletz, and Pletz's wife Jan Lewis founded Jansport in 1967. Yowell now lives in Morland, in Graham County, with his wife Winnie.

Yowell wrote "The Hippy Guide to Climbing the Corporate Ladder and Other Mountains" in 2007. He served on the boards of the Outdoor Industry Association and the Outdoor Foundation from when they were founded in 1989 until 2012 and is affiliated with Big City Mountaineers. As a qualification for becoming an Eagle Scout, he says, he contributed to the Leave No Trace Program at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. He still travels the world giving presentations on the company he helped found.

Lost semi tire lands car in ditch

A tire came off a semi-trailer rig Sunday evening near Oakley, sending a passenger car apparently carrying a family into a ditch along Interstate 70. The Kansas Highway Patrol reported that the accident happened at 7:43 p.m. Sunday at mile marker 69 on Interstate 70, just north and west of the north Oakley exit. The driver, David E. Hagerman, 46, McClure, Pa., was headed west when a tire came off the 2006 Volvo semi-tractor he was driving. The tire rolled into the east-bound lane, where it hit a 2002

Chevrolet passenger car. All five occupants of the car were taken to the Oakley hospital after it spun out and went into the south ditch. Hagerman reported the accident, as did other drivers. Hector Maldonado, 38; Nancy Martinez, 37; Yancey Maldonado, 12; Erick Maldonado, 11; and Brisa Maldonado, 9, all of Hutchinson, were taken to the Logan County Medical Center, where they were treated and released. The patrol reported that everyone except Brisa was wearing a seat belt.

New Colorado? Rural voters approve idea of secession

By Ivan Moreno
Associated Press
DENVER — The nation's newest state, if rural Colorado residents had their way, would be about the size of Vermont but with the population of a small town spread across miles of farmland. There wouldn't be civil unions for gay couples, new renewable energy standards, or limits on am-

munition magazines. After all, those were some of the reasons five counties on the state's Eastern Plains voted on Election Day to approve the creation of a 51st state in the first place. Secession supporters know the votes were symbolic, designed to grab the attention of a Democratic-controlled Legislature. They say the vote results emphasize a growing frustration in conservative prairie towns with the more populous and liberal urban Front Range, which has helped solidify the Democrats' power.

"We can't outvote the metropolitan areas anymore, and the rural areas don't have a voice anymore," said Perk Odell, 80, a lifelong resident of Akron in Washington County, which voted to secede. The five counties share borders, covering about 9,500 square miles and have a combined population of about 29,200. Four of the counties — Philips, Yuma, Kit Carson and Cheyenne — border Kansas. They are solidly Republican areas that have long identified more with Kansas and Nebraska be-

cause of their agricultural background than with Denver. Towns like Akron, population 1,700, were founded in the 1880s along railroads and thrived as agriculture producers, booming in the 1900s during grain shortages. They began a decline in 1920s that continued through the Dust Bowl and their populations have decreased or remained stagnant since then. What remains are tight-knit communities where grain silos are sometimes the tallest structures around.

Parade cancelled

Colby's Veterans Day parade this afternoon was cancelled because of cold weather. Dale Deaver, who organized the parade, said he cancelled it because the temperature was supposed to plunge below freezing after hitting a high around 42 this morning. Ryan Husted, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service station in Goodland, said a cold front from Canada

caused the sudden drop in temperatures. The weather system formed over central Canada on Saturday, he said, then moved south into Kansas on Sunday. Events usually held outside the courthouse for Veterans Day instead were moved to the Colby American Legion Hall. This included a performance by the Colby High marching band and a memorial ceremony by the Legion.

