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Authorities begin investigating an accident Thursday afternoon near the Hi-Plains Co-op gasoline station along South Country Club Drive. The driver of a car collided with the trailer of a semi. The driver of the car was injured.

Truck, car collide: one injured

By **Patty Decker**
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A car crashed into the trailer of semi resulting in one injury at about 4 p.m., Thursday, on Country Club Drive, about south of East Fourth Street.

The accident, according to the Kansas Highway Patrol, involved Tracy Jo Langdon, 33, of Colby, driving a 2006 Monte Carlo and Clinton T. Horinek, 24, of Brewster, driving a 2001 International truck. Patrol officials said the Horinek was driving north-

bound on Country Club Drive and Langdon's car was following. Horinek signalled to turn right. He prepared to turn by merging into the center lane but Langdon stayed in the right lane, did not slow down, and struck trailer of the truck. Langdon was taken by

Thomas County Emergency Medical personnel to Citizens Medical Center in Colby where she was treated and released that day. One other passenger in the car, Samantha Langdon, 10, was not injured. Horinek was not injured.

Fair board eyes events

By **Kevin Johnson**
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The Thomas County Fair Board convened on Thursday night in the 4-H building at the Thomas County Fairgrounds in order to discuss some pertinent issues concerning the 2008 Thomas County Fair.

The first order of business was to elect the Thomas County Fair Board President and Vice-President for the 2008 year. Thomas County Commissioners Byron Sowers and Ken Christiansen, as well as Thomas County Clerk Shelly Harms, were on hand to conduct the elections. Mark Anderson was nominated for Fair Board President and was elected unopposed, renewing his term for another year. Nominees for vice president were Mark Bredemier and Darrel Dible; Dible won with a final tally that was not announced.

Christiansen thanked all those present for their hard work over the past year and encouraged them to make 2008's Thomas County Fair, "the best one ever", before saluting the board members one last time and exiting the building.

Various agendas were discussed, including the cost to bring hometown hero, Ms. Rodeo America, Amy Wilson, to town for the rodeo. That will cost about \$300 to bring Wilson back to Colby for a two night stint.

"Her people told me they would work with us on that \$300, being this is her home town," Board Member Clair Shrock, who is

heading up the rodeo committee, said. "Abilene and Dodge City have already put in requests for her, so we've just got her for the two days of the rodeo maybe, but I will know a little more when she gets her schedule set up."

Shrock vowed to find out more information concerning Wilson's appearance at the 2008 Thomas County Fair for the next time the fair board meets, and then added, "but I did get the contract in so we are on the list."

Other issues were discussed, including the theme for the 2008 fair, which will be "Discover the Stars at the Thomas County Fair", as an homage to Wilson. Adding "Dairy Classes" into the fair book passed unanimously.

The main discussion of the night centered on the entertainment for the 2008 fair. The entertainment committee, which was led by board members Nancy Rundel and Kathi Wright, brought the board several options for entertainment, ranging from a traveling medicine show to a variety of country-western singers, to a traveling "mutton buster" kid rodeo.

Several discussions were undertaken concerning the best way to get people to come out to the fair on Saturday, when the EMS will hold their barbecue. There was no official word as to what the entertainment would be for certain, but several ideas were discussed and board President Mark Anderson concluded the meeting by saying, at the next meeting, entertainment for the 2008 Thomas County Fair would be contracted.

Numbers show the success, struggles of Colby High Eagle athletics

By **John Van Nostrand**
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It's not just the win column Colby High School Athletic Director Larry Gabel cares about. He said it is the Colby kids what he is more interested in.

Gabel, in his second year on the job, informed Colby Rotary Tuesday about the current status and future of Colby High School sports.

"Colby High has good kids," he said. "I'm the one who's blessed."

So far this school year, Colby High has been blessed with success. He gives some of the credit to that for Colby High's variety of programs.

"Not every kid can be a football player," he said. For example, there were nine girls out for golf in the fall, three times more than the number out during the 2006 season. Colby hosted a regional girl's tennis tournament for the first time this year. Some of those

girls went on to place in the state tournament. Both Colby boy's and girl's cross country teams won league titles and competed at state. Josh Baden placed second at state.

Gabel said it has been interesting transitioning to Colby from Saint Francis, where he was for 20 plus years before Colby. Saint Francis has just six programs. He said he is occasionally teased by his friends in Saint Francis that Colby has six programs just in certain seasons of the year.

But sometimes, the numbers are not all fun and games.

Next year, because of declining enrollment at area schools, Colby will have a different football schedule than in year's past.

"Colby is the leader in this area," he said. "We are the only 4A school. That is good and bad."

After school's enrollment for this year were submitted, Goodland fell below the minimum needed to be considered 4A. That forced a change in football schedules. At

the same time, Gabel said schools in the Mid-Continent League, based in north central Kansas, related to the struggles with the Northwest Kansas League, which Colby and Goodland were a part of. "We put our heads together and found a solution and compromise," he said.

In football in 2008, Colby will still play Saint Francis, Goodland and Hoxie, like it has in the past, but added Plainville, Phillipsburg and Smith Center. That led to the break up of the Northwest Kansas League in football. The Colby-Goodland game won't have the same atmosphere.

Smith Center has dominated in football with lengthy winning streaks and state titles. Gabel asked Colby football coach Chris Gardner what he thought about playing Smith Center.

"That's a standard we want to have," Gabel said of Gardner's answer.

"We wanted to schedule competition to get us better," Gabel

said.

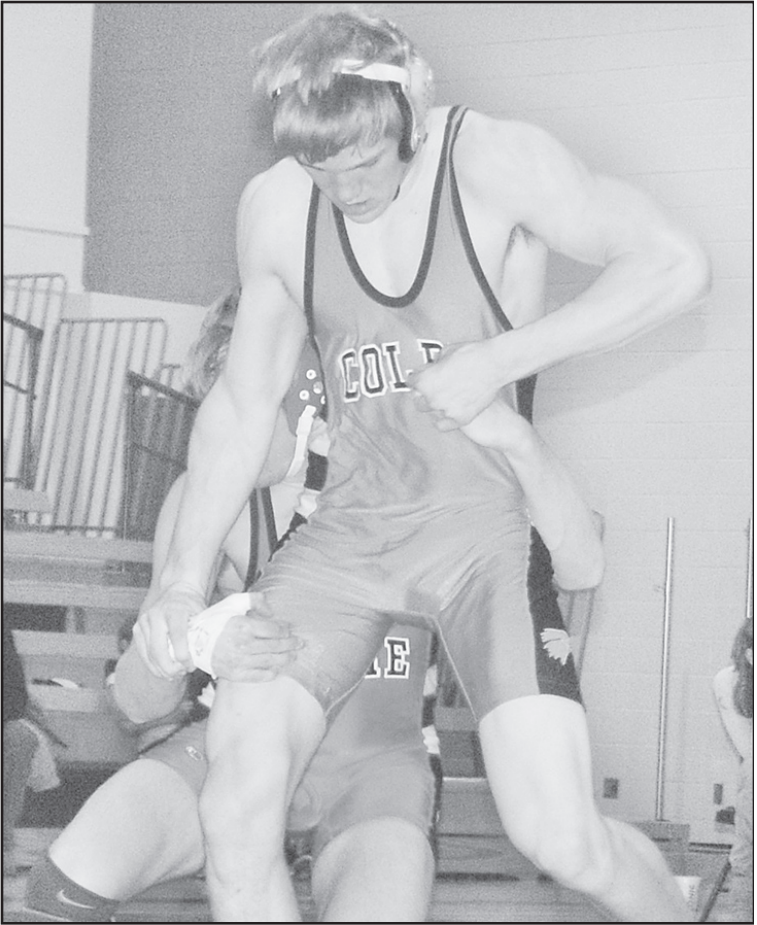
Gabel did ask for help among Rotary members who are basketball fans. Gabel explained how last year and this year's basketball seasons have been plagued with the trouble of finding, let alone scheduling, enough basketball referees.

"The number of officials are going down for a number of reasons," he said. Age, family commitments, health or job relocation are some of the factors, but treatment by fans is another.

"Fans get on them," Gabel said. "Officials are not out there to get people mad, but we attack them, demean them."

The Northwest Kansas League and other area leagues have gone farther than their normal boundaries to find available referees. Before the current basketball season began, a clinic was held in Brewster for veteran referees to network with younger referees.

"You guys can help. It starts right here," Gabel said.



JOE FALKOFF/Colby Free Press

Colby High wrestler Breck Arnberger goes up against a Hoxie Indian in a match Thursday. Colby High wrestling is just one of the several successful athletic programs the school has. Athletic Director Larry Gabel said he is blessed to have good programs and student-athletes.

Briefly

Clothes wanted

Gambino's of Colby is sponsoring a clothing drive to help the Children's Orphanage in Honduras. Items sought include new or like new clothing for ages 1 to 18 years of age. Organizers prefer items cleaned and boxed. If interested, the drop-off sites include Gambino's, Kansas Country Store, Taylor Motors or call 443-1673 for questions.

Dog classes to begin

An orientation meeting for dog training classes is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, at the Thomas County 4-H Building in Colby. The instructor, Carrie Bredemeier, asks that anyone interested bring a copy of their animal's current vaccination papers for this enrollment/orientation meeting, but no dogs. There is a fee. For questions or costs, call Bredemeier at 460-3816. The classes are sponsored by Pawsome Paws 4-H Dog Program.

Cookie sales begin

Colby Girl Scouts will begin their annual cookie

sales Saturday, Jan. 12 through Jan. 25. For those who would like to purchase cookies and have not been contacted by a Girl Scout before Jan. 25 are encouraged to call Mint Culver, 460-6005 or Penny Cline, 460-2929 after 6 p.m.

Free throw contest set

The Colby Knights of Columbus is sponsoring their annual free throw contest for all boys and girls ages 10-14 (age determined as of Jan. 1, 2008). The free throw contest is scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 13, at the Colby Elementary school gymnasium. Doors open at noon and the contest begins at 1 p.m. Proof of age is required (copy of birth certificate). Winners of each age group will advance to the district contest which will also be held in Colby (date to be determined). There is no cost to participate. For questions, call Dewey Augustine at 443-1548.

Hays fundraiser planned

The Taste of Hays, a fundraising event to benefit unwed mothers, is scheduled from 4 to 7 p.m., Sun-

day, Jan. 13, at the Fort Hays State University Memorial Union Ballroom. Many Hays restaurants are donating. The fundraiser is for The Mary Elizabeth Maternity Home, a Christian home that exists for the purpose of giving unwed mothers an alternative to abortion by providing an environment to bring their pregnancies to term, said Jill Foulke, executive director of the maternity home. It is a place where young women can grow spiritually, emotionally and socially. In addition to housing the young ladies, the ministry has developed its programs in a way that structures daily classes covering a wide variety of life issues that both the birth mother and baby benefit from. For questions or tickets, call (785) 625-6800 for tickets.

Blood drive Jan 17

The Thomas County Chapter of the American Red Cross is holding a blood drive from noon to 6 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 17, at the Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin Ave. To schedule an appointment or questions, call toll-free (800) 448-

3545. Walk-ins will also be welcome.

New programs underway

The Colby Recreation Department is introducing two new fitness classes, said Stacy Lee, director. The first boot camp, "Abs, Back and Buns," is scheduled from 5:45 to 6:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays and the other camp, "Abs," will run from noon to 12:45 p.m. on the same days. Both camps are underway. "These are great ways to kick off the New Year. For questions, call 460-4440.

Childbirth classes set

Citizens Medical Center, Inc. is holding a four-week series of childbirth education classes. The series will run from 7 to 10 p.m., started Thursday; however, the next series of classes will be April 2008. Classes are held at Citizens Medical Center, 100 College Dr., Colby. For questions or to register, call Brown at (785)460-4850.