



10 pages

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## County gives extra \$4,100 to recycling

By Vera Sloan

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With the price of materials the program collects and sells plunging, the Northwest Regional Recycling Organization is asking cities and counties to pay \$1.50 per resident to make a deficit that's already reached \$20,000 this year.

Director Lynette Koon came to Thomas County commissioners Monday as they struggled with budget requests, and they agreed to kick in nearly \$4,100.

Koon said her program has been hit hard by drops in the prices recyclers pay for materials. She told the commissioners that there is hardly any market for used cardboard right now. The price has fallen from \$77 a ton to \$13.

"The plastics market is worse," she added, "falling from \$16 a ton down to zero."

Money promised by the state has been late coming in, she said, adding to the budget woes of the eight-county group.

"The market is inching up a little, but not nearly enough to meet the budget needs," she said. "The commitment from counties is still

strong, and I have heard from all but one county that they are willing to kick in \$1.50 per capita to help keep us going to the end of the budget year."

The commissioners approved a budget supplement for \$4,095 for Thomas County's share of the per capita fee, based on 2,730 county residents. The cities will be asked to do the same for residents inside their limits, she said.

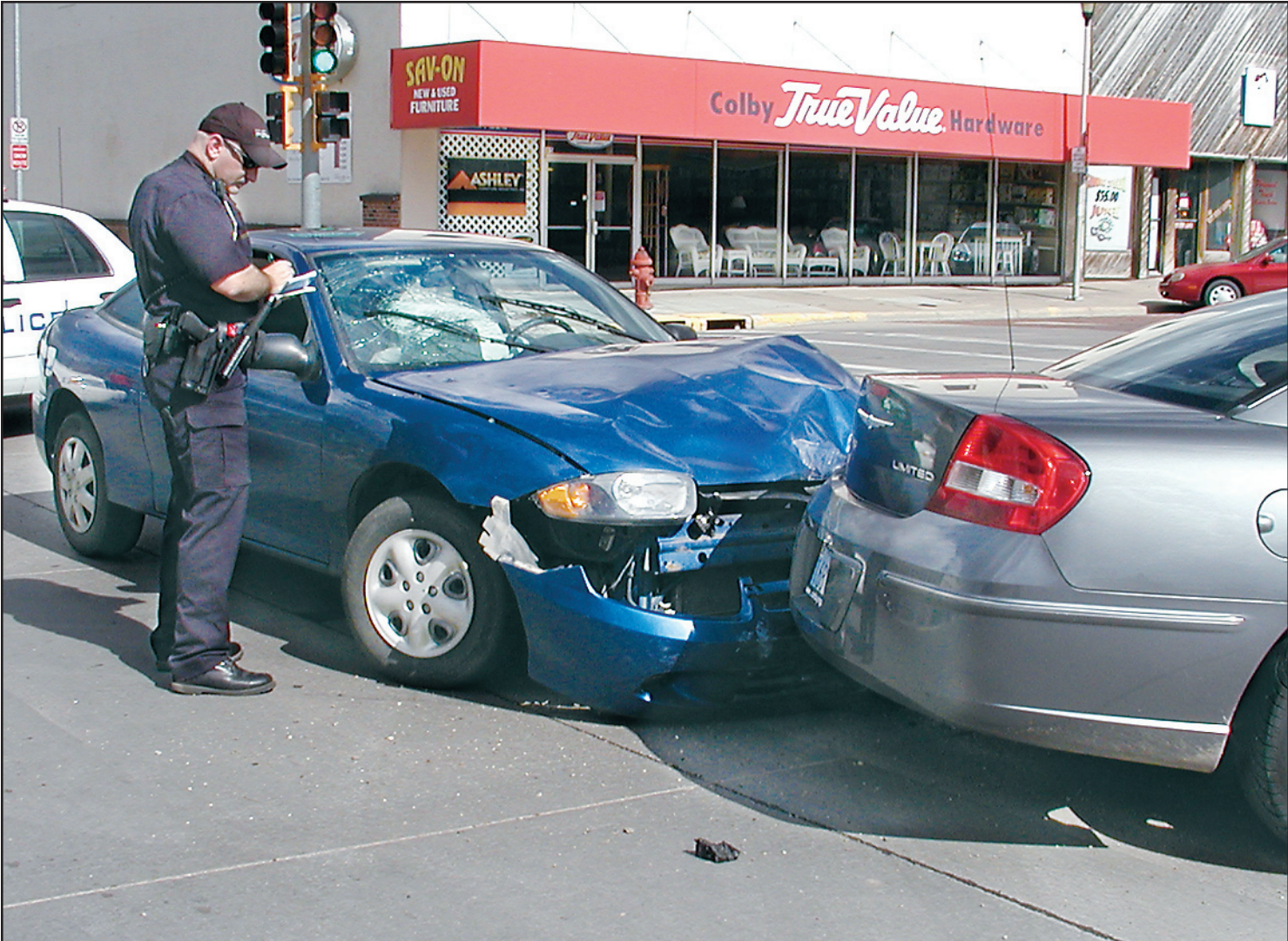
"Our board has considered every possible way we can think of to make the situation better," Koon said. "Last year our sales at this time was \$30,000 and to date this year it is \$10,000."

A pilot program to collect electronic waste, including old computers and televisions, was never assured to be permanent, she said, but public demand may be strong enough to continue the project.

"We have an e-waste store, where the public can buy perfectly good TVs, microwaves, computers and keyboards," she said, "and we have quite a collection. They have been tested (and work)."

The store is located in the former Lang Diesel building at 1190 S. Country Club Drive.

## Texting leads to downtown crash



HEATHER WOOFER/Colby Free Press

Colby Police Officer John Drummond assessed the damage from an accident at Fourth Street and Franklin Avenue downtown about 5:15 p.m. Wednesday. He said Ashley Davis, 21, was making a left turn at the intersection when her car was hit by a westbound vehicle driven by Chris Gary, 29, who said he

was texting on his cell phone. Gary was alone at the time of the crash, while Davis had two passengers, Heather Juvanek, 24, and her 11-month-old daughter, Kaylee Glover. There were no injuries, but damage to both vehicles was extensive.

## State to increase minimum wage

TOPEKA (AP) — After more than two decades of struggle, the Kansas minimum wage is finally getting a boost where it no longer will be the nation's lowest.

A law that takes effect July 1 bumps the hourly wage from \$2.65 to \$7.25, starting Jan. 1. That will mirror the federal minimum after July 24 and comes as the state's unemployment

rate stands at 6.9 percent, the highest this decade.

Supporters call it both a needed symbolic gesture and a practical move to give an estimated 20,000 Kansans a chance for a pay increase after the first of the year. Opponents say it will raise employer costs and is an example of government meddling in the marketplace.

## Intern home after months overseas

By Vera Sloan

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Eleven weeks as a media analyst for the U.S. Mission's European Media Center at the European Union in Brussels, Belgium, is all behind Clarissa Unger now.

She returned to the plains of Kansas with invaluable experience and "tons" of memories — but no job.

"It was a great experience," she said, "and I've applied for 75 jobs with the government since returning home."

Unger spent three months in Brussels as an intern for the Bureau of Public Affairs of U.S. State Department, from mid-January to mid-



C. Unger

April.

Her job was to search through newspapers from eight European countries to spot articles that would show any trends about what other countries perceived the United States was doing.

"It was actually all pretty good," she said. "I began my work on the day President Obama was inaugurated. There was evidence that a new page was turning, and there hadn't been anything seen that was that good for a long time."

She said the information she gathered was translated, then she would make a report and give it to the deputy director of the Media Center. They would send it to Washington, where

top officials in the department and some of the top national security people would review it. They then let the president know what the atmosphere was from the tone of the newspapers in other countries.

Unger said she worked from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. nonstop, in a studio with a television and radio, where government officials would come in and meet with journalists.

She said after graduation at from the University of Kansas in May, she returned to Washington and met with State Department people, but her experience as an intern apparently did not give her an edge for a job.

"However, my experience may give me an

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## Care center uses voice system for records

By Aubrey Spencer

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The Colby Care Center staff is excited about a new computer program, AccuNurse, that lets nurses and aides record information about each patient by talking, rather than having to write everything down at the end of a shift.

Director of Nursing Shelly Crocker said the program provides a voice-assisted system which allows nursing staff to post to patients' charts as they make rounds. That gives the center more accurate, complete documentation and aides more time to spend with the residents.

The center is only the second in the company, Deseret Heath, to have this system. AccuNurse is part of the bigger company, Vocollect, a software firm with several voice-activated documentation programs, Crocker said.

Aides wear an earpiece hooked to a computer device in their pocket, she said. When ready to document something, the aide pushes a button to "awaken" the system, waits to hear bells, selects a room number, and then adds to the chart just by talking. The computer asks questions, requiring the aide to chart completely.

The computer knows what to ask because the charge nurse who does the admitting enters the information into the system. The staff can chart meals, fluid intake, bowel movements, weights, baths and more, Crocker said.

The system will send alerts if a resident needs more fluids, a weight is off, bowel movements haven't taken place or even to eliminate pressure points. Crocker says she gets reports on everything. She can monitor daily when the aides are charting and the accuracy with which they do it.

"I'm just really excited," said Crocker. "This is just one more thing that makes me glad I work here."

Before, the aides had to write everything down at the end of their shift, Crocker said. This allowed for information to be missed. AccuNurse lets the staff chart information immediately, as it's happening, she said. With the voice-activated system, aides also are able to hear personalized care needs for each patient, page others or all staff for help, and chart while multitasking.

Crocker said that this "change" was a big expense for the company, not just for AccuNurse itself, but training for the staff as well. She said the company spared no expense. A training staff was brought in for three days. She said the company is always looking for ways to improve the continuity of care and is willing to do whatever

is needed.

The new system has been an adjustment, she added, but the staff is getting more comfortable using AccuNurse every day. Most are adapting very well, she added.

Certified nurse aides Cody Crocker and Keegan Bangerter talked about the benefits of using AccuNurse.

"It's quicker, easier, and less paper," Cody Crocker said. "It's just much much easier, and there's always someone to talk to."

"This gives us more time to spend with the residents," Bangerter said.

The center is in its fourth week of using the new technology. Sharon Bauer, clinical manager for AccuNurse, was here this week helping to train the staff.

"This system saves a lot of in-

See "ACCUNURSE," Page 3



AUBREY SPENCER/Colby Free Press

Certified Nurses Aide Keegan Bangerter was taking resident Mary Jane Engelhardt for a walk and a cup of coffee last week, while using the new voice system to update her chart at the Colby Care Center.

## Briefly

### View student art at museum

Through Tuesday, visitors to the Prairie Museum of Art and History can see artwork of Thomas County students in the Garvey Educational Room. Students from kindergarten through high school have work in acrylic, pastels, watercolor, colored pencil and ink, and other media in the free exhibit. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For information, call 460-4590.

### Food delivery this weekend

Prairie Land Food delivery will be from 10 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the Sacred Heart School Gym, 1150 W. Sixth St. For questions, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579 or State Farm at 462-7525.

### Picnic in the Park Wednesday

Next week's entertainment at Picnic in the Park will be Scott Cameron. The series continues at noon

every Wednesday through July 29 in Fike Park. For information, call the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at 460-7643.

### Nursing home plans dog show

The Colby Care Center will hold a doggie fashion show at 2 p.m. Saturday, July 11. Dress up your dogs and bring them by, along with a \$5 donation for the Residents Activity Fund. Veterinarian Tammy Swarts will judge the entries and award prizes, and give some free advice for dog owners. For information, call Amanda Hillis at 462-6721.

### College pool open weekdays

The Colby Community College indoor swimming pool is open to the public for lap swimming from 5 to 7 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Open swimming is 4 to 6 p.m. Monday through

Friday and 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Cost for general admission is \$3. Monthly and yearly passes are available. Call Kipp Nelson at 460-5476 for information.

### City picking up grass clippings

City crews are picking up grass clippings. Clippings must be at curbside by 8 a.m. on your regular trash day in a separate tipper can from household trash. Put clippings in the tipper loose, not in plastic bags. For questions, call the Public Works office at 460-4420.

### Church holding Bible study

The Colby Wesleyan Church will offer a 12-week Beth Moore Bible study, "Daniel: Lives of Integrity, Words of Prophecy," from at 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays through Aug. 19 at the Pioneer Memorial Library's community room. No homework is required

and discussion will focus around the videos. For information, call the church at 462-8391.

### Groups offer free shoot

The Colby Trap Hunting Heritage Group and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks will hold another free shoot for youths and inexperienced shooters at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, July 19. Shooters will learn weapons handling and range safety. Shotguns and shells will be provided at the Colby Trap Club at County Road R (West College Drive) and County Road 14, one mile south of U.S. 24 west of Colby. For information, call Wildlife Conservation Officer Benny Young at 462-7602.

