



10 pages

# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Colby students hold literary battle

### Grade schoolers test their skills in reading

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Colby students scored a victory Friday over the Oakley Plainsmen in the Battle of the Books at Colby Grade School.

Nineteen students from Colby and 12 from Oakley answered questions on books they had read over the course of the school year. The Colby team comprised students from the Thomas County Academy and the fourth-grade at Colby Grade School while the Oakley team included the fifth graders from Oakley Grade School.

Academy teacher Theresa Morgan organized the competition with a \$500 grant from Midwest Energy she received at the beginning of the school year. Morgan said she found a web site, [www.battleofthebooks.org](http://www.battleofthebooks.org), with instructions and materials.

Morgan got a list of 30 books at three skill levels for the students to read and discuss in class. The teacher said she initially asked for \$400 for just the academy students, but included in the grant proposal that for an additional

\$100, she could include the fourth graders.

Morgan and fourth-grade teacher Kathy Vaughn coordinated with Oakley teacher Kristen Eberly so that the Oakley fifth graders got the same books to read.

The books on the list included "The Tale of Despereaux," "Farmer Boy," "Fahrenheit 451" and "The Witch of Blackbird Pond." Morgan said many of the books were ones the students wouldn't check out from a library on their own, such as "The Skin I'm In," by Sharon Flake, about an African-American student. Morgan said the upper reading skill level had a multicultural theme.

On Friday, the students met for a friendly competition in the Colby Grade School auditorium. A moderator asked questions on characters and events from the books and each team could buzz in with the answer. Some of the other grade-school classes came to cheer on their fellow students.

Morgan said she is already planning next year's Battle of the Books. She said the book list is posted on the school web site and the students are excited to continue reading.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Students from Thomas County Academy and Colby Grade School waited for Cassie Wells to answer one of the questions at their Battle of the Books against Oakley on Friday. Team mem-

bers had buzzers the students could push to answer questions, which the team rotated among themselves.

## Forensics team places at state

The Colby High School forensics team finished eighth out of 50 teams at the Class 4A State Speech and Drama Tournament on Saturday.

Seniors Brock Wagoner and Gray Henry were runners-up in improvised duet acting. Henry also was runner-up in humorous solo.

Sophomore Christina Ostmeier and freshman Cameron McLaughlin placed sixth in improvised duet acting.

Several other students placed in the top 20 in their events. Senior Seth Bredemeier was seventh out of 44 students in original oration, Sophomore Michael Tubbs placed 13th out of 46 in extemporaneous speaking and Ostmeier placed 15th out of 60 in poetry.

Coach Nancy Rundel said there were 512 entries in nine events in the tournament.

"I am incredibly proud of our

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## Newspaper wins for ads and writing

The Colby Free Press won four awards this year in the Better Newspapers Contest sponsored by the Kansas Press Association, including a first place for an agricultural ad for a page put together by the staff for the Sunflower Celebration held in Colby last year.

The celebration, organized by Kansas State University Research and Extension, had been held in Goodland in previous years. The page featured a schedule and ads by SunOpta, Golden Plains Ag Tech and Woofter Construction and Irrigation.

Copy Editor Marian Ballard

won second place for column writing for her *Collection Connections* column. One of the winning entries talked about the switch from manual means to computers – and how helpless we all are when the computers go down.

Awards were presented at the association's annual convention April 23 in Topeka.

The advertising staff took second place in the category for "most adaptable promotion," for its Business Honor Roll.

Former Advertising Manager

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### Razzle dazzle



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Bryant Plummer gave the audience a bit of "razzle dazzle" at the Colby Community College Spring Vocal Concert on Thursday. Plummer and the Sunflower Singers sang "Mister Cellophane" from the musical "Chicago," as well as other songs. The college concert choir also performed.

## Pregnancy service plans open house for anniversary

By Vera Sloan  
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Emergency Pregnancy Services, where young women or couples can go for help coping with an unplanned pregnancy, plans to celebrate 30 years of aid and assistance with an open house from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday at its office on Range Avenue.

The idea for the service began in the late 1970s and early 1980s when a group of Colby women heard about a college student who couldn't afford to buy larger clothing to hide her pregnancy.

The young woman told a friend and classmate about her problem, and she talked with her mother about it. The prospective parents wanted to give life to their baby. Both wanted to finish college and eventually marry when school was over, but their finances would not cover the immediate need for maternity clothes, medical care and in a few months, the needs of a newborn.

A big concern was how to talk with their out-of-state parents about their situation. They feared the parents would want an abortion, which was not something the couple was considering.

Friends and their families came to the couple's aid, and Emergency Pregnancy Services got its wings.

Questions like "how do we begin" were answered when organizers met to discuss how they could best serve the needs of people in that situation. They decided it was best to start small and grow, so they developed a plan to train volunteers, arrange for free pregnancy testing and solicit maternity clothing, baby clothes and other supplies.

A phone number was listed as soon as possible and later a toll-free number to call for confidential support was put in place. The commissioners offered space in the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave.

"Emergency Pregnancy Services has always been a non-denominational service," said Geri Landry, a member of the volunteer group, "and we are extremely grateful to members of the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, private donors and to the county commissioners for their generosity in providing a place for the service to house an office where young women and families can come for loving support and care."

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## Briefly

### Offices open all day again

The Thomas County clerk's and road and bridge offices are back to regular hours starting today. The offices had been closing over the noon hour for software training. Both will conduct business from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. For information, call the clerk's office at 460-4500.

### College offers spring concert

The Spring Band Concert, with the concert and jazz bands, will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Frahm Theatre at Colby Community College. Admission is free.

### Class will cover child seats

A an update class on safety seats for child passenger safety technicians will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday at the Midwest Energy building,

916 Sheridan Ave. in Hoxie. Seating is limited to 50 people. Contact Lynetta Cressler at (785) 675-2101 for information.

### Prayer Day at the flag pole

A National Day of Prayer observance sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance will be from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. Thursday at the Thomas County Courthouse. For information, call Jarrod Spencer, minister of the Colby Church of Christ, at 460-6322

### Rally planned for Thursday

There will be a multi-denominational Praise and Prayer Rally for the National Day of Prayer at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Little Theater at the Colby Community Building. The evening will include singing worship songs as well as prayers led by pastors and lay persons from several area towns. For information,

call Karen Merryman at 443-3715.

### Brewster offers garden training

The Brewster Recreation Department and the K-State Extension Master Gardeners will offer the last of four landscape training sessions at 7 p.m. Thursday at Hunter Hall in Brewster. The topic is Trees for Northwest Kansas by Jim Strine, state forester. For information, call the Sherman County Extension office at (785) 890-4880.

### Group plans friendship day

The Church Women United will hold a May Friendship Day at noon Friday at the First Presbyterian Church in Colby. A salad lunch will be provided. For information, call the Joyce Gatlin at 460-3656.

### Lions plan fund raiser Saturday

The Gem Lions Club plans a spaghetti supper

from 4 to 8 p.m. Saturday to raise money for Bill Dewey of rural Gem, who lost his wife Jennillee in a home fire early March 29. The Lions ask everyone to come help.

### Citywide cleanup this week

Colby's 2010 Spring Cleanup is this week. The city urges everyone to use the week to clean and spruce up their yards and have the city remove debris placed at the curb. To schedule a day for your items to be picked up or to volunteer to help others, call Jo Strange at the city office, 460-4410.

