



New laptops mean fewer poll workers

By Vera Sloan
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Thomas County will introduce a new form of verifying voter identification in the upcoming November election.

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) has made available a computerized identification method that will enable county clerks across the country to accomplish more work with fewer workers and less time.

The system was made available through the office of the Kansas Secretary of State on a 90 percent, 10 percent split, with the county paying only 10 percent of the cost.

"We bought eight computers and the scanning equipment for only \$1,100," said Thomas County Clerk, Shelly Harms. "We couldn't have done it without the 90 percent grant."

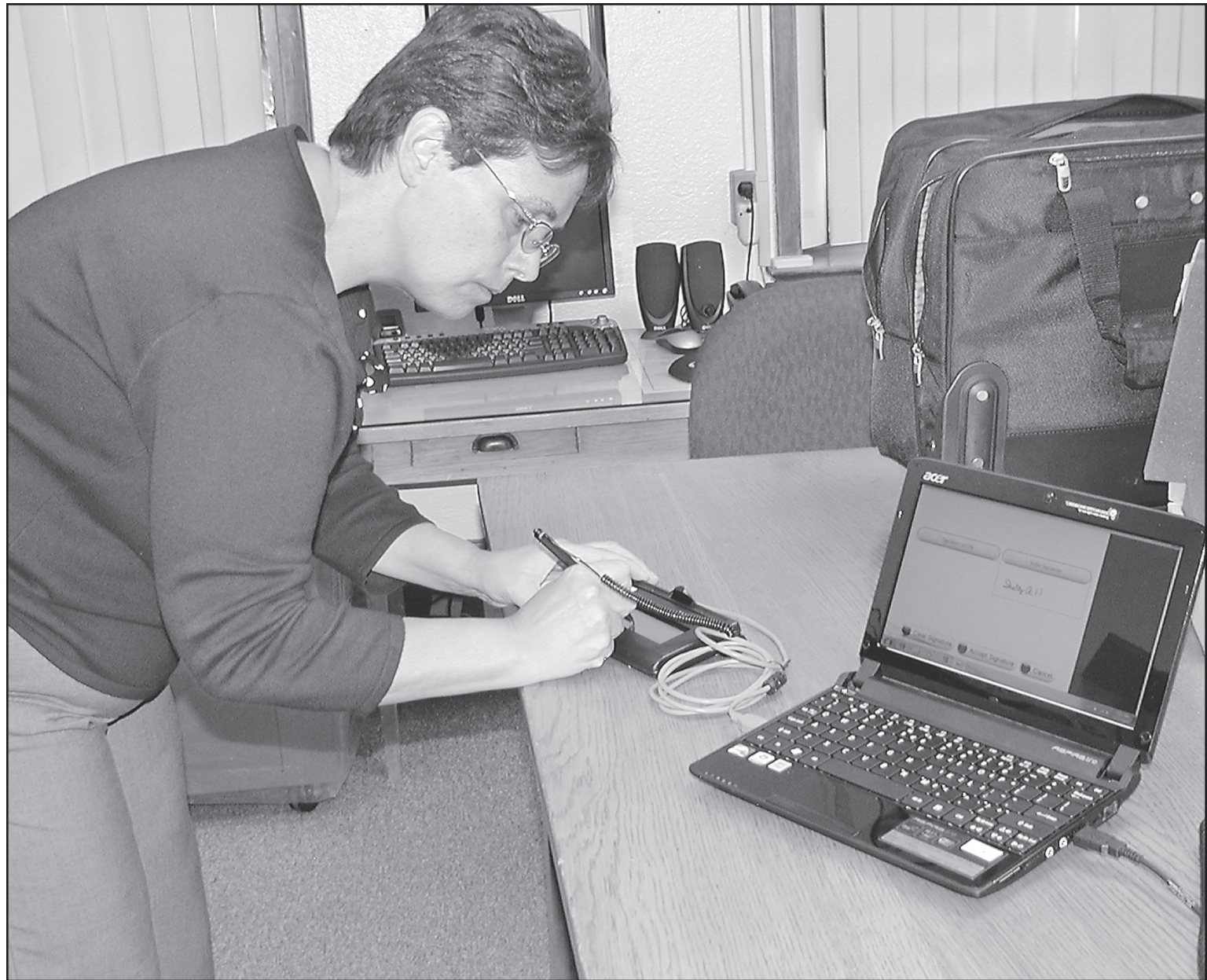
She projects she will need 13 voter helpers in November, but by the time the city election rolls around in April, she said she will

probably need only 6 people to work the polls.

Harms said with the new machines there will be no more waiting in line to vote. She said all the machines will have the same voter information, and that when a voter walks into the community building to vote, they can go to any machine to have their ID checked, get their ballot and vote without waiting. It will cut down on election workers, and all the time it takes to call to get people to work on election day, she said.

She noted that before this new system became available, names all had to be checked one by one in the voter roster, a notebook nearly four inches thick that held the names and addresses of every registered voter in Thomas County. Now, with this new system, all the information automatically goes onto a computer disc and is saved. After the polls close, the disc is pulled out and placed into another computer where registered voter names are cross checked against

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Thomas County Clerk Shelly Harms demonstrated the new voter identification verification computer on Monday. The small computer will scan the voter's identification card, verify the address and information, tell the party in which the voter is registered and

mark that person as having voted. Thomas County was able to purchase 11 machines, thanks to the Help America Vote Act administered through the office of the Kansas Secretary of State.

VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

4-Hers win top spots at state fair horse show

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Just getting to district horse show competition is a stretch, but to make it from the district show to state fair competition is even bigger. This year's state competition brought smiles to Taylor Todd of Rexford and MaKayla Hoffman-Kersenbrock of Colby.

Hoffman-Kersenbrock earned ninth out of 49 in western pleasure on her five year old quarter horse gelding, Hot Rod Impress.

"The kids from western Kansas work so hard," said Shawna Kersenbrock, MaKayla's mother. "They don't have access to the great indoor arenas to work in, so to make it to state competition, and then bring home a win is pretty exciting."

MaKayla was also a finalist in a class of 24 in English pleasure. Other classes she competed in were halter, showmanship, horsemanship and flags.



MELISSA LIPPLEMANN

MaKayla Hoffman-Kersenbrock placed ninth in the western pleasure category at the Kansas State Fair earlier in September. Taylor Todd, pictured on Page 1 of the Wednesday, Sept. 29, Colby Free Press, placed first in the reining category.

Todd earned first place in the 9-13 year olds out of a class of six, in reining competition, on "Jerry", her 18 year old paint

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Co-defendant sentenced in equipment theft case

By Kevin Bottrell
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The second of two men who plead guilty to taking stolen property across state lines was sentenced to prison time and restitution Wednesday in federal court in Wichita.

Matthew T. Jones, Colby, was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$496,311. Jones was charged with 12 counts of transporting stolen property across state lines. He plead guilty to three of the counts, in exchange for which the prosecution dropped the other nine.

The three charges included taking a combine from Oklahoma in 2006 and a tractor and planter from Nebraska in 2008. More than \$1 million in stolen farm equipment, including these three, was found on Jones' property north of Colby last September.

Co-defendant Ryan Hanzlick, Colby, was sentenced to 36 months and ordered to pay \$329,904 earlier in September for the same three charges.

Jim Cross, public affairs officer with the U.S. Attorney's office, said the defense requested the defendants be sent to a prison in Colorado, which the judge then recommended during sentencing.

Colorado has medium, high and maximum security facilities in Florence - west of Pueblo - and a low security facility in Littleton, both of which are closer to Colby than the federal penitentiary in Leavenworth.

Cross said judges often recommend a prison close to the defendant's families, but the U.S. Bureau of Prisons can send them anywhere it wants.

"They are under no obligation to follow the judge's recommendations," he said.

After the defendants report to the bureau, they will be sent to an evaluation center where the bureau will decide where to put them.

College team plans horse show

The Colby Community College Intercollegiate Horse Association team will hold their home show Oct. 16-17 at the College farm.

The team is coached by Shanda Mattix. "This will be the first competition for our Western Team," said Mattix. "I'd like to invite everyone to attend the show which will begin at 9 a.m. both

days." There is no charge to attend. The farm is located three miles east of Colby on U.S. 24, then one mile north. For information, contact Mattix at 460-5464. The college is a member of Zone Eight, Region Five, which includes schools in Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.

Democratic candidate labels opponent 'radical' in debate

By John Hanna
AP Political Writer

EMPORIA - The Democratic nominee in Kansas' 1st Congressional District described the Republican front-runner Monday night as "radical" and "extreme" in his conservative views as the two of

them sparred over health care and immigration.

GOP nominee Tim Huelskamp sought to counter Democrat Alan Jilka's criticism by linking Jilka to President Barack Obama and fellow Democrats who control Congress. Huelskamp's toughest attacks came on health care, after Jilka said

he would have voted for the new federal law championed by Obama, though Jilka also saw it as "a work in progress."

The two also disagreed sharply on immigration during the debate at Emporia State University before an audience of about 300 people. Huelskamp accused Jilka of supporting amnesty for illegal

immigrants, and Jilka said the Republican just doesn't understand the issue.

Huelskamp, a state senator from Fowler, is favored to win the seat for the sprawling, rural and heavily GOP 1st District, which covers western and central Kansas. Jilka, a former Salina mayor, is trying to appeal to Republican moderates

uneasy about Huelskamp's record as one of the Legislature's most conservative members.

Jilka suggested Huelskamp is ducking debates and prefers formats that don't allow the Democrat to rebut Huelskamp's

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Briefly

Clinic has stray ferret

The Colby Animal Clinic has a stray, black and tan ferret. The clinic also has a long-haired, white and gray kitten for adoption. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

Dance the night away in Colby

There will be a Colby Singles and Couples Dance from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Saturday at the Meadow Lake Golf Course clubhouse, 1085 E Golf Club Dr. Craig Stevens will be the musician. For information, call Lue Duffey at (785) 269-7057.

Olympic athletes bowl Saturday

The Special Olympics West Region Bowling Tournament will start with opening ceremonies at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at Colby Bowl. Teams from Hays, Wa-

keeneey, Atwood, Russell and Colby will compete. For information, call Denise Mentlick at 443-1719.

Play poker for Big Brothers

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Thomas County is sponsoring a poker run fund raiser at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at the American Legion Post, 1850 W. Fourth St. Registration will be from noon to 1 p.m. A silent auction will follow the run, and the Big Brothers Big Sisters will provide dinner at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call Diane Stithem at 460-9125.

Students plan massage clinics

Students from the Physical Therapy Assistant program at Colby Community College will hold a massage clinic from 4 to 8 p.m. Monday in room 804 of the Health Science Building. The cost is \$12 for half an hour - \$10 with college ID - or \$22 for a full hour. The students are raising money for a trip to the

spring physical therapy conference. For information or to make an appointment, call Trudy Wildeman at 460-4797.

Massage class needs clients

The Therapeutic Massage Program at Colby Community College is offering massages by students in the Massage Clinic I class from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesdays. For an appointment, call (785) 460-5427. The fee is \$5. Any gratuities will be put into the Massage Therapy Club fund to help students pay for the National Certification Exam for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork, said Debra A. Waites, director of the program.

Food distribution in October

U.S. Department of Agriculture commodities will be distributed from 1 to 2 p.m. Monday at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior

Progress Center at Fike Park. Anyone who's eligible may come and get commodities first-come, first-served. Items will include salmon, northern beans, cheese soup, peanut butter, applesauce, canned pork and rotini. For information, call the volunteer office at 462-6744.

Center offers dad program

The Northwest Kansas Regional Prevention Center is offering "24-7 Dad," a fatherhood program, starting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Redeeming Love Ministries, 345 N. Franklin in Colby. To register or for information, call Paige Campbell at 460-8177 or e-mail paigec@st-tel.net.

