



8 pages

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*How does this feel?*



Tina Harris of Tina Harris Physical Therapy demonstrated her technique on a patient at the Thomas County Wellness Fair on Saturday. Harris' was one of many area and statewide busi-

nesses and organizations, including Thomas County Extension and the Northwest Kansas Foundation for Hope, which had booths at the fair

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

## Orchestra to perform on Sunday

By Kevin Bottrell  
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The first of three Pride of the Prairie Orchestra concerts this year starts at 3:30 p.m. Sunday in the Colby Community College auditorium.

Sunday's performance, "Cornucopia of Music," includes several Thanksgiving songs as well as other music. The other concerts will be Sunday, Feb. 13, at the college and Friday, April 15, at Goodland High School. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$3 for children and senior citizens.

Mary Beth Akers of Weskan serves on the orchestra's board and plays piano. She said the orchestra offers a great way to see a good concert without having to drive for hours, and the audience gets to hear area musicians. The orchestra has 30 members from northwest Kansas and eastern Colorado.

Akers said the orchestra plays a variety of music.

"If you don't like one, you'll like another," she said.

She said one of her current favorites is "The Barber of Seville," because it is upbeat and has a variety of tempos.

The orchestra will feature different conductors throughout the year. Andrew Salvador, a music teacher from Burlington, Colo., will conduct Sunday's concert and the one April 15. Jan Wolf of Colby, a retired grade school music teacher who plays violin, will conduct the February concert. Akers said it takes some adjusting to work with different conducting styles, but it's not too difficult.

Akers said she joined the orchestra four years ago. Her two children play violin in the orchestra, and she would sit outside the practices. Eventually, they asked her to play in the percussion section, which was low on musicians. Akers said she hadn't played percussion instruments before, but she knew how to read music. Last

See "ORCHESTRA," Page 3

## Patrol catches suspect speeding towards Colby

By Kevin Bottrell  
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A brief chase ended just east of Colby last week after Thomas County sheriff's deputies used spike strips to stop a Mustang running from the Kansas Highway Patrol.

Todd Hileman of Colby, public resource officer for the patrol, said troopers first tried to stop the speeding car going west on Interstate 70 near mile post 67 — about 13 miles southeast of Colby. The car, a 1997 Ford Mustang, did not stop and the troopers chased him toward Colby, driving at more than 100 mph.

Hileman said the troopers notified the Colby Police Department and the Thomas County Sheriff's Office. Chief Randy Jones, Sheriff Rod Taylor, three police officers and two deputies responded. Jones

said the police blocked off the I-70 exits in town. "We don't like them getting into town," the chief said, noting the danger to innocent people in a populated area.

Deputies laid spike strips on the Interstate in the path of the speeding car. Hileman said the Mustang hit the strips — which punctured its tires — and came to a stop near mile post 55, about a mile east of the Country Club Drive exit.

The driver, Aaron Powell, 20, was not injured. He was arrested and charged with speeding, fleeing or attempting to elude law enforcement and reckless driving. Powell had a Florida driver's license and the car was registered in North Carolina. Hileman said a passenger, a young woman, was not arrested. She was not named in the incident report.

Powell was taken to the county jail, Hileman said, but jail records indicate he wasn't booked.

## County declared a disaster area for destructive July hail storm

By Vera Sloan  
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Thomas County has received a federal natural disaster designation to cover damage from a massive hailstorm that passed north and east of Colby on July 12, shredding thousands of acres of corn.

The declaration was one of two issued by the U.S. secretary of agriculture due to losses caused by high winds, hail, heavy rain and

flash flooding on July 10-12.

"What this declaration does is make producers in the county who were hit by the storms, eligible for Supplemental Revenue assistance, or the SURE program," said Ross Sloan, county executive director of the U.S. Farm Service Agency in Thomas County.

He said his office is just finishing up the 2008 disaster assistance program and is ready to begin the 2009 program. Sloan said farmers have to wait a year to see what the average price is when the year

ends, and then do all the paperwork to get a payment.

He said those who had crop loss can sign up now for the 2010 disaster program. They can get help from the 2009 year to help put crops out next spring, he said.

Thomas County was eligible as a contiguous or bordering county in a 2008 declaration, which took in several counties hit by drought, heat, hail and winds. The 2009 Thomas County designation came

See "DISASTER," Page 3

*It doesn't hurt a bit*



Student Council President Avery Spreser got some support from classmate and fellow donor Laura Clapp at the Red Cross Blood Drive sponsored by the Golden Plains Student Council at the school earlier this month. Golden Plains students, staff and patrons donated 18 units of blood Nov. 5.

JUDY ROGERS/Golden Plains High School

## Briefly

### Have a chance at a free meal

The Thomas County Coalition will meet at noon Thursday at El Dos Dde Oros restaurant at the Quality Inn. The group will offer a chance to win a free meal to some lucky guest. If you're interested in helping fight drug and alcohol abuse, join the group for lunch. For information, call Paige Campbell at 460-8177.

### Food bank needs donations

The Genesis-Thomas County food bank needs nonperishable items to fill its Christmas baskets. Donations can be dropped off at the Genesis office, 350 S. Range Ave., Suite 13, from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesdays; Leroy's Printing, 560 N. Franklin Ave.; Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 1065 W. Fifth St.; the First Presbyterian Church, 515 W. Fourth St.; the Colby United Methodist Church, 950

S. Franklin Ave.; or Trinity Lutheran Church, 855 E. Fifth St. Genesis also needs money to help buy food. Donations are being accepted now as well as after Christmas to restock the pantry. For information, call 460-7930.

### Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a neutered 7- to 8-month-old black, male pug available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

### City to measure home water use

If you need to water the garden or wash the car, it'd be wise to do it right away. The City of Colby will read water meters by Friday. Home water use from then through Feb. 21 will be used to calculate

sewer charges for the year beginning April 1. Any outdoor or excessive water use during that time may affect your bill. For information, call City Hall at 460-4400.

### Extension offers party lessons

Thomas County Extension will hold its ninth annual Harvest of Holidays program from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday at the Pioneer Memorial Library, with workshops on party dips and holiday food ideas. The cost is \$10. Reserve your spot by Tuesday by calling 460-4582.

### Area writers coming to museum

Kansas authors will be on hand to chat and sell autographed books from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Saturday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History. Area writers Ray Imhof, Larry Dilts, Jim Oliver, Nancy Sanders, Millie Horlacher and Gary Adrian will join out-of-

town writers Evelyn Ward, Helene Landenberger, Angela Bates, Doris Johnson and others. Each has agreed to donate 20 percent of their book sales that day to the museum. For information, call the museum at 460-4590, or e-mail museumed@st-tel.net.

### Ministers plan citywide service

The Thomas County Ministerial Association will hold a community Thanksgiving service at 6 p.m. Sunday in the Colby High School auditorium. Tom Peyton, pastor of the Mingo Bible Church, will speak. Donations will be taken for the association's benevolent fund. For information, call Jarrod Spencer at 443-2403.

