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Driver shot in high-speed chase Sunday

By Tom Betz
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A car chase on I-70 that started about eight miles from the Colorado state line ended on a county road about two miles north of Brewster when a state trooper returned fire from the car and hit the man driving.

The man and woman, both unidentified as of today, were taken into custody

after troopers returned fire near Brewster, wounding the driver. He later was flown to a Denver hospital. The car apparently had stolen Colorado tags.

Trooper Perry Frey reported that he stopped the vehicle, a blue Toyota Scion, about 7:20 p.m. on Sunday about nine miles west of Goodland because it did not have any license plates.

Frey said when he asked for the registration, the man took off. Frey followed with his lights on, and the Toyota stopped

again about a mile later. Again as Frey started toward the vehicle, the driver took off.

The trooper told the dispatcher he was in pursuit and asked for help from Sherman County to set up “stop sticks” at the west Goodland exit.

Frey reported following the Toyota at speeds of up to 90 mph as they approached the exit. He said a man was driving with a woman passenger that he could see.

Sherman County Deputy Asa Stiles had

stop sticks ready, but the driver swerved to avoid them and the chase continued east with the trooper and two Sherman County deputies behind.

Trooper Charlie Brattin had stop sticks set up at the Edson exit and Trooper Terry Kummer was waiting with another set at the Brewster exit.

As the Toyota went past the Goodland exit, a sheriff’s deputy said he saw something sticking out of the window on the passenger side.

As the car sped east, officers said, the passenger began firing at Frey’s car. He reported his car had been hit, but he continued following the Toyota.

As the chase approached the Edson exit, Frey warned Trooper Brattin to take cover. The Toyota hit the stop sticks but continued east at a slower speed.

A Goodland ambulance was called to be on standby by Sherman County Sheriff

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Crashes kill two over the weekend

Even though the weather was clear, it was a dangerous weekend for travel, with two fatal highway crashes near Oakley.

One east of town Sunday killed a Grinnell woman who plowed into the rear of a parked semi; the other west of town Saturday killed an Oakley businessman who apparently lost control of his motorcycle.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported one crash at noon Sunday about two miles east of Oakley on I-70. Lila Walz, 59, of Grinnell, was driving east in a 2006 Pontiac Grand Prix when she lost control and drove into the south ditch, then collided with a semitrailer rig parked on the shoulder.

Walz was pronounced dead at the scene. She had not been wearing a seatbelt, the patrol reported. The driver of the truck was not in the vehicle at the time.

The other wreck happened at 4:54 p.m. Saturday about six miles west of Oakley on U.S. 40. Eric Robben, 39, Oakley, was riding west on his 2005 Harley Davidson motorcycle when he entered the eastbound lane and went into the south ditch. Robben was thrown from the motorcycle as it rolled. According to highway patrol report, the patrol does not know why Robben veered into the wrong lane.

He was taken to Logan County Hospital in Oakley, where he was pronounced dead by Dr. Victor

Hildyard. He had not been wearing a helmet, the patrol reported.

Eric Francis Robben was born July 29, 1971, the son of Larry Robben and Brenda Anderson.

He graduated from Oakley High School, Colby Community College and the Northwest Kansas Technical College in Goodland. He spent two years in the Navy, and was a co-owner of Oakley Motors and Colby Motors.

Robben was a volunteer fireman in Oakley and a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Tri-County Amusement Board and the Hoxie Elks Lodge.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Francis and Laverna Robben, and Ithyl Hughes.

Survivors include his parents; three sisters, Tonya (Todd) Schwarz, Rexford; Anita (Steve) Robben, Wichita; and Misty Hockersmith, Oakley; friend Shelly DeJenzen; three step-daughters; five step-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Memorial services will be at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 20, 2011, at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Oakley with burial to follow at the St. Joseph Cemetery.

Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at the church with a rosary service at 7 p.m.

The family suggests contributions to the Eric Robben Memorial Fund in care of Baalmann Mortuary, Box 204, Oakley, Kan., 67748.

New building for old businesses



SHELBY PULKRABEK/Colby Free Press

Work continues on the newest commercial building in Colby on West Willow Drive. Maurice’s and the Sports Shoppe will be moving to the location next to Walmart from their current buildings on South Range Avenue, near the old Walmart, and downtown on North Franklin Avenue.

Colby people in the lead so far in energy efficiency challenge

By Andy Heintz
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The City of Colby is leading the Take Charge Challenge, an energy-efficiency competition among five area towns, by a big margin in the early going.

The challenge pits the people of Colby against those in four other northwest Kansas cities – Hoxie, Goodland, WaKeeney and Oakley.

The contest, sponsored by the Kansas Corporation Commission, which regulates utilities, promotes efficient energy use. Sixteen cities and two big universities are involved, including towns from the northwest, northeast and southeast regions of the state. The University of Kansas and Kansas State University will be competing against one another, as will towns in each region.

The commission hired the Climate + Energy Project to coordinate all the efforts across the state, City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said. The towns

compete with others in their own regions.

Even though people are already switching light bulbs, Armstrong said, the challenge here will kick off with a pancake feed from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 5, at the Community Building. A drawing will be held for a 46-inch Samsung high definition television. To get a ticket and have a chance to win, you have to give the city your e-mail address and provide proof that you live in Thomas County, Armstrong said.

A team in Colby is directing the city’s participation and planning events. Its members include: Barry Kaas of Colby Community College, Pat Tubbs; Rocque Russell and Skyler Mengel, Colby High students; Armstrong; Wayne and Millie Horlacher, Paul Bailey and Cindy Cervosky, local business people; Beverly and Curtis Eichler, representing the City Council; Michael Volker, Midwest Energy; Holly Whitaker, Chamber of Commerce; Melany Wilks, Pioneer Memorial Library; Sandy

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Workers conference to bring Christian resources to Rexford

By Kevin Bottrell
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Looking for new ideas for Sunday school? Or maybe a creative way to lead a Bible study? The Christian Workers Conference at Shepherd’s Staff in Rexford may be what you’re looking for.

The conference will run all day Saturday, Feb. 19, at Shepherd’s Staff, 240 Main St. in Rexford. Director of Ministry Development Tim Griffiths said the conference will include Christian vendors from Kansas and Nebraska and speakers from around the Midwest on subjects such as youth ministry and missions trips.

Vendors’ booths will open at 8 a.m. and close at 5 p.m. Tickets are \$25 through Tuesday, Feb. 1, or \$35 on the day of the conference.

Lunch is included, and if you buy six tickets, you get one free. For tickets and information, call Griffiths at (888) 687-2565.

Griffiths said he intends the conference to be for any church member, including vacation Bible school and Sunday school teachers, worship-team members and lay members.

“This is not just for pastors,” he said.

The original idea for the conference, Griffiths said, was to bring Christian publishing companies that develop vacation Bible school curriculum to Rexford so that rural churches from this area could see them.

“It’s not every day you have these vendors come to a small town,” he said, “but then I thought, ‘why not also have workshops?’”

Vendors include Baptist, Meth-

odist and Lutheran publishers – with their 2011 vacation Bible school curriculum – as well as the Puppet Factory, a teaching resource for Christian education using puppets, the New Life Christian Bookstore of McCook, Neb., Answers in Genesis, Dan Keller Audio, and Hands in the Cookie Jar.

Workshops will include two on missions trips by Mike Klumpp, a pastor from Dighton; “Strategic Planning for Churches,” by Dr. Ernest Griffiths, Tim Griffiths’ father and a retired school superintendent; “Worship 101,” by Gerald Steinsiek, a worship leader from Denver; “New Ideas in Discipline,” by Corey Barnett of Liberal; “Creative Ideas for Kid Ministry,” by Martha Bishop from

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Briefly

Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a 1-year-old female, black-and-white lab mix 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.

Commodities available Monday

The U.S. Department of Agriculture will distribute commodities from 1 to 2 p.m. next Monday at the Retired Senior Volunteer Program office at the Senior Progress Center in Fike Park. Commodities are given according to income guidelines’ distribution is first-come, first-served. Participants are asked to not arrive before 12:30 p.m. Commodities include canned pork, peanut butter, rice cereal, mixed veg-

etables, corn, juice, rotini, milk and fig pieces. For information, call the program office at 462-6744.

Conservation group to meet

The Local Work Group, experts who provide guidance to Kansas Technical Committee of the Natural Resources Conservation Service on conservation issues, will meet at 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 27, at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center, 915 W. Walnut St. For information, call Debbie Potter at the Thomas County Conservation District at 462-7482.

Heartland plans annual barbecue

Heartland Christian School will hold its annual barbecue from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 30, at the school. The meal will include barbecue pork,

corn, salad, baked potatoes and dessert. Donations will be accepted. For information, call the school at 460-6419.

Scrapbook day Feb. 5 at school

Heartland Christian School will hold a scrapbooking party on from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 5, at the school. The cost is \$30 for adults and \$15 for students for a full day, and \$15 for adults and \$8 for students for half a day. Meals are included. To make a reservation, call Lucy Wood at (785) 460 2721 or the school at 460 6419. To preorder supplies, please call Sally Runnalls in the evenings at (785) 672 4910.

Hospital offers blood-sugar class

Because of the snow, Citizens Medical Center

has postponed Journey for Control, a free class on monitoring blood sugar for diabetics, until Tuesday, Feb. 8, at the hospital. For information or to register, call dietitian Courtney McCarty at (785) 460-4849 or education co-ordinator Jeanene Brown at (785) 460-4850.

Head Start looking for kids

Head Start, a tuition-free preschool, is accepting applications for its 2011-2012 school year. The school accepts applications all year long for kids aged 3 and 4. For information, or to get an application, call 460-6067.



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