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Lady Eagles win Orange and Black

By Andy Heintz

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Clutch seems like the appropriate word to describe the Lady Eagles 47-45 victory over Holcomb in the championship of the 26th annual Paul Wintz/Tom Bowen Orange and Black Classic.

The girls did all the right things during the game's most critical moments, allowing them to avoid defeat, win the tournament and increase their winning streak to 10 games.

Whether it was sophomore Lauren Bell's three-pointer that gave Colby a 43-40 lead with less than a minute and a half left, or the four straight free throws seniors Katherine Kaus and Kayla Hockersmith combined to make, which clinched the win, the Lady Eagles played their best during the game's toughest situations.

Senior Katrina Kaus, Katherine's twin, said it was fun to win the classic three out of her four years at the high school.

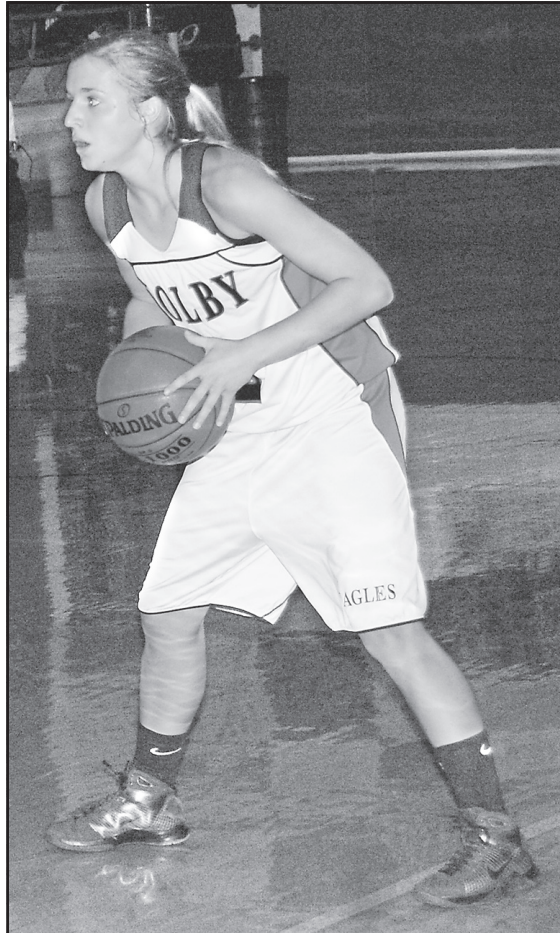
Colby's near-flawless play during the final minutes came just in the nick of time. Things had not been going well for the Lady Eagles in the fourth up to that point. The girls looked disoriented, committing unforced errors that were not like them, unbecoming of a fundamentally sound Parker McKee-led team. It was unclear if they would be able to rediscover their rhythm before the buzzer sounded.

"We finally pulled it together," Katherine Kaus said.

McKee said it was big for his team to play in and win a close game. The Eagles had been routinely blowing out their opponents, winning comfortable margins early in the contest.

The Lady Longhorns, however, jumped out to an 6-0 lead in the first quarter. Later in the half, sophomore Morgan Bell took a couple of dribbles and buried a midrange jumper, cutting Holcombs' lead to 8-6. The Lady Longhorns' Amy Stegman knocked down a three-pointer from the top of the key at the buzzer, giving Holcomb a 13-8 lead.

Senior Lauren Bell, Morgan's sister, found a cutting Kenzie Curry (sophomore) with a nice backdoor



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Colby High School senior Kayla Hockersmith (above) passed the ball and junior Morgan Bell (right) got ready to take a shot inside the lane in the semifinal game between the Lady Eagles and McCook High from Nebraska on Friday. The girls went on to win the game 47-28.

pass from the right elbow for a layup to make it 16-10 in the second. Morgan Bell knocked down a three, narrowing the gap to 22-20 with 43 seconds left in

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File by Tuesday for area elections

By Kevin Bottrell

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There's just a few hours left to file to run in school board and city elections coming this April. The deadline is noon Tuesday.

Quite a few people have already thrown their hats in the ring. Incumbents Dale Hershberger and Arlen Leiker have filed for re-election to the Colby Community College Board of Trustees. Hershberger is a broker for ZEZ Commodities and Leiker a driver for United Parcel Service.

Susan McMahan, Thomas County's emergency management coordinator, has also filed. There

are three seats open. Incumbent Mark Winger has not filed.

Four people have filed for the four seats on the Colby School Board. Incumbents Ed Geihlsler and Omar Weber are running, as well as Angela Gaede and Brice Barton. Incumbent Kevan Taylor said he would not be running while Stan Molstad, who holds the other seat, was undecided.

In Brewster, Bonnie Holm, a contributor to the *Colby Free Press*, and Jessica House have filed for the school board. Paul Bruggeman of Rexford has filed for the Golden Plains School Board. There are four seats up for

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Leaders hoping for better job report

By John Milburn

The Associated Press

TOPEKA – State officials will close the books on the 2010 Kansas economy this week with release of the unemployment report for December.

Fixing the economy and restructuring government have been the focal point for Republican Gov. Sam Brownback in his first two weeks. Among his goals is creat-

ing jobs for the 100,000 Kansans out of work.

The November 2010 unemployment rate was 6.8 percent, up slightly from 6.7 percent in both October 2010 and November 2009.

Brownback said there were signs Kansas is stabilizing but that far too many residents are still out of work. Creating more jobs

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Featured speaker



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Former Denver Broncos linebacker Karl Mecklenburg spoke about using passion to overcome obstacles in life to a crowd Saturday morning. Mecklenburg was the featured speaker at the annual Orange and Black Tournament breakfast.

State school debate all about the money

By John Hanna

AP Political Writer

TOPEKA – Some of the Kansas parents who roust their children from bed each morning, prepare their sack lunches and bundle them up for school undoubtedly wonder at least a little about the meaning of the vague talk out of the Statehouse about defining "suitability" in public education.

Gov. Sam Brownback and many Republican legislators contend it's important to change the way the state pays for its public schools, but they're a little fuzzy about what the key issue of defining what "suitability" actually means. Brownback is letting House Speaker Mike O'Neal, a Hutchinson Republican who's had a keen interest in school finance since the 1990s, take the lead, and O'Neal isn't yet certain what form any proposal will take.

But they've been clear about the practical results they want. The Legislature wants to regain control over the costs of aid to the state's 293 school districts. The work is supposed to prevent the courts from demanding ever-increasing financial commitments and forcing legislators into considering a tax increase.

The debate over defining suitability – the Legislature is supposed to make "suitable" provision for financing schools under the state Constitution – is about keeping the state budget in check.

"We can't have a situation where the schools decide what to offer and then just send us a bill for it," O'Neal said last week.

Brownback called on legislators in his State of the State address to define suitability or, more precisely, what's required by the Kansas Constitution to provide a suitable education for every child. He's argued that the state needs a clear definition to end lawsuits over school aid and ensure that legislators, not the courts, make decisions about spending and how state aid is distributed.

Last week, he tied the issue to the state's long-term financial health, along with overhauling Medicaid, which covers health care for the poor and disabled, and addressing long-term funding problems facing the pension system for teachers and other government workers. The state must close a projected \$550 million budget shortfall in the fiscal year that starts July 1, and Brownback said such gaps will continue to appear the next few years if the state doesn't act on all three at once.

As for what solutions O'Neal and fellow House members are supposed to pursue, he said: "I'm not at a point of announcing, 'Here are broad guidelines I want to include in it.' I really want to encourage the legislative process."

Though Brownback and legislators talk about defining suitability,

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Briefly

Business After Five is Wednesday

The Colby Chamber's Business After Five will begin at 4 p.m. Wednesday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History, 1905 S. Franklin. "In the Mood" is the theme, a World War II Red Cross Canteen, after two exhibits: a traveling show on Anne Frank and a new local exhibit called "Over Here! Over There!" Both opened Tuesday. For information, call Sue Taylor at 460-4590.

Conservation group to meet

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

tion 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 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.

Exercise class will help arthritics

An Arthritis Foundation exercise classes will be offered from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday evenings from next week to March 10 at the Sacred Heart School gym. There is no sign-up deadline; members can start anytime. For information, call Brenda Mazanec at 443-4010.

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.

Senior group offering tax help

The American Association of Retired Persons will offer tax preparation help for low and middle income taxpayers – with preference to those 60 or older – by appointment from early February to April 15. For information or to set up an appointment, call Earle Rice at 462-2990.

Hospital offers blood-sugar class

Citizens Medical Center will offer Journey for Control, a free class on monitoring blood sugar for diabetics, 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.



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