

Happy Valentine's Day!



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County tops statewide list for retail pull

By Kevin Bottrell

Colby Free Press
kbottrell@nwkansas.com

A report released last week by the Kansas Department of Revenue says Thomas County is the best in the state at drawing in retail dollars.

The department puts the County Trade Pull Factors report out each year. The report looks at the amount of money spent by out-of-county residents versus the amount spent by county residents somewhere else. A pull factor over 1 means more money is coming in than going out.

The report puts Thomas County's pull factor at 1.58, beating Ellis County's 1.56. Pottawatomie County in northeast Kansas has the third-highest at 1.49.

Pull factor is reported per cap-

ita, so that smaller counties like Thomas can be compared to higher-population counties like Ellis. Previous reports listed Colby as second behind Ellis County, but the last two years Colby has pulled in more money per capita.

Lailani Thomas, director of the Thomas County Convention and Visitors Bureau, credited much of the county's pull factor to I-70. A town of less than 7,000 that has 10 motels and even more restaurants obviously gets a lot of revenue from travelers, she said. Sherman and Gove Counties – with I-70 retail centers Goodland and Oakley – also have pull factors over 1.

Thomas said the pull from I-70 can be seasonal, with more people passing through in during hunting and skiing.

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It's the most wonderful time of the year



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Boxes and boxes of Girl Scout cookies arrived in Colby today. Delivery men unloaded them at TNT Auction. These boxes are for the first round of orders. Scouts will be selling more through March.



LEXI DAVID/Colby Community College

Colby police officers and sheriff's deputies stormed the Bedker Building at Colby Community College on Thursday with fake weapons, showing police procedure for the criminal justice students.

College has shooting talk, drill for criminal justice class

By Shelby Pulkrabek

Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkansas.com

Colby Community College Criminal Justice graduate Josh Hunter spoke to students and faculty about the importance of a crisis plan Thursday at the Bedker building on campus.

Hunter, now a Colorado policeman, started the presentation by telling his audience about the April 20, 1999, massacre at Columbine High School in metro Denver. He said it was the fourth deadliest school massacre in the United States following the 1927 Bath School Disaster, the 2007 Virginia Tech Massacre, and the 1966 University of Texas Massacre.

In the Colorado shooting, gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, both students at the school, shot and killed 12 students and a teacher and injured 21. Three were injured trying to escape; both shooters took their own lives.

He then talked about the April 16, 2007, Virginia Tech Massacre, where senior Seung Hui Cho embarked on an 11-minute killing spree, firing 174 rounds (with 204 still left on his person), killing 27 fellow students and five professors, and injuring 20. Most of the shooting took place in Norris Hall, he said. After hearing police shoot the lock off a door, Cho shot himself. It took nearly four hours to docu-

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Basketball teams plan cancer awareness nights

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkansas.com

Colby High School and Colby Community College basketball teams will be helping raising money for a group that helps area families pay the expenses of breast-cancer patients during basketball games Tuesday and Wednesday.

The high school will have a "Pink Raffle" during games against Holcomb on Tuesday at the Community Building. The girls' game begins at 6:30 p.m. and the boys about 8 p.m., said Pink Zone coordinator Stacy Lee, Colby city recreation director. Pink cake, cookies and cupcakes will be raffled off to help the Northwest Kansas Foundation for Hope.

Festivities will take place throughout the girls' and

boys' games. Lee said there will be a competition to decide which Eagle is the "pinkest." Lee said anyone who'd like to donate baked goods for the raffle should give her a call at (785) 460-4440 or 632-0604 or e-mail recreation@cityofcolby.com.

Another Pink Raffle will be held during the Trojans' basketball games against Butler County Community College from El Dorado on Wednesday at the Community Building.

The women's game starts at 6 p.m. and the men's at 8. Lee said she will be collecting raffle items through Tuesday. Anyone wants to donate prizes, especially pink prizes, should contact her. She encouraged everyone to wear pink to the games Tuesday and Wednesday.

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Colby High forensics team places first at Norton tourney

The Colby High School varsity forensics team won the tournament in Norton on Saturday, scoring 123 points more than second-place Oakley.

Colby had 339 points, while Oakley score 216 and Oberlin 162, said coach Nancy Rundel.

Individual results:

Humorous Solo: Colton Rundel, second; Jennifer Schwanke, third.

Serious Solo: Gabby Brown, first; Paige Roopchan, third; Audra Fleming, fourth; Lauren Mountford, sixth.

Informative: Madison Gawith, third; Ian Koerperich, fourth.

Oration: Kate Ostmeyer, first; Michael Tubbs, second; Sam Kendrick, third.

Extemporaneous Speaking: Tubbs, second; Kendrick, third; Ostmeyer, sixth.

Duet Acting: Madison Tubbs and Christina Ostmeyer, first; Madison Gawith and Blake McNinch, fourth; Anna Taylor and Megan Dougherty, sixth.

Improvised Duet: Schwanke and Lacy O'Neal, second.

Prose: Blake McNinch, third; Mountford, fourth.

Poetry: Christina Ostmeyer, second; Gabby Brown, fourth; Amy Schroeder, fifth.

The junior varsity team was in Scott City the same day:

Poetry: Sarah Lamm, sixth.

Serious Solo: Lauren Bell, fifth.

Improvised Duet: Bell and Billy Selley, sixth.

Duet Acting: Connor Schwanke and Karly Kriss, fifth.

Business After 5 at S&T office

The Colby-Thomas County Chamber of Commerce will hold its February "Business After Five" event at S&T Communications at 755 Davis Ave. on Wednesday. Join us for an evening of food, fun and networking. For information, call Holly Whitaker at the Chamber, 460-3401.

Chamber banquet Tuesday

The Oakley Area Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual banquet and meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Logan County 4-H Building, Second Street and Kahler Avenue. Former National Football League player and CBS color commentator Steve Tasker will speak. Tickets are \$15 in advance. For information, call Jodie Wright at (785) 672-4862.

Program to detail Kansas forts

The Prairie Museum of Art and History will offer

a program on "Kansas Military Forts" as part of its monthly Food for Thought series at noon Thursday. Leo E Olivia, a retired Fort Hays State professor, will lead the discussion. A light lunch will be served. Call the museum at (785) 460-4590 for details.

Genesis to meet on Thursday

The annual meeting of Genesis-Thomas County Inc. will begin at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the Thomas County Office Complex conference room, 350 S. Range Ave. Everyone in attending is invited. For information, call President Wynn Duffey, 462-6342.

Storm spotter class here March 7

The National Weather Service will offer its annual Storm Spotter Class at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 7, downstairs at the Community Building. For information, call the Goodland weather office at (785) 899-7119.

Baptists offer eight-week study

The First Baptist Church plans a "40-Day Bible Adventure" program Thursdays from March 10 to April 21 and covering the full sweep of the Bible story as it has played out in history. There will be two sessions, one from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. and another from 7 to 8 p.m., at the church. Everyone is invited. Call 462-2867 or 462-2336 for information.

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 until April 15. For information or to set up an appointment, call Earle Rice at 462-2990.

Apply now for foundation grant

The Thomas County Community Foundation is

accepting applications for the "Kids Can Do!" The grants provide \$200 for nonprofit organizations or classrooms. Applications are due by March 1. For information, go to www.thomascountycommunityfoundation.com or call 460-9152.

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.

