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Bid on 250 items at college auction

By Kevin Bottrell

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Just a few tickets remain for the annual Colby Community College Endowment Foundation Auction at 5 p.m. Saturday at the City Limits Convention Center.

The auction helps raise money for the foundation's scholarships, said Director Nick Wells. Last year, the event netted about \$80,000. This isn't the endowment's only fund raiser, Wells said, but it's the most social.

"It's a great evening of fun and fellowship," he said. "I've had people say to me 'I go to a couple weddings and this all year.'"

To get tickets, call Wells at 460-4684. Cost is \$35 per person or \$250 for a table of eight. The center seats about 360 people,

he said, and the event usually fills up the room.

Wells said the doors will open at 5 p.m., and people will have a chance to walk around and look at the auction items before dinner. The prime-rib dinner will begin at 5:30. Wells said the goal is to have everyone done with dinner by about 7 p.m., when the auction starts. The whole event should be over by 9:30 p.m., he said.

Wells said he picked out the prime rib himself, and it will be smoked by Traci Galli. City Limits will take care of the rest of the meal.

Wells said the foundation will put about 100 items up for live auction and about 150 for the silent auction. The silent auction will be broken up into three parts, he said, which will last about a half hour each.

"They're staggered so people can keep track of the items they want," Wells said.

Farm and Ranch Realty is handling the live auction, Wells said, with several of their in-house auctioneers. Steve Bugbee, who works the ring at Colby Livestock Auction, is also pitching in.

The auction items come from individuals and businesses all around the area, he said. Items include a seven-day Alaska cruise, an iPad, bags of Golden Harvest seed corn, designer purses and more.

Each department at the college built windmill centerpieces for the tables. The information technology department made a windmill out of circuit boards – it's motorized – while the art department made one out of paint brushes. Wells said he made his out of brand new dollar bills.

The windmills will be auctioned along with the other items.



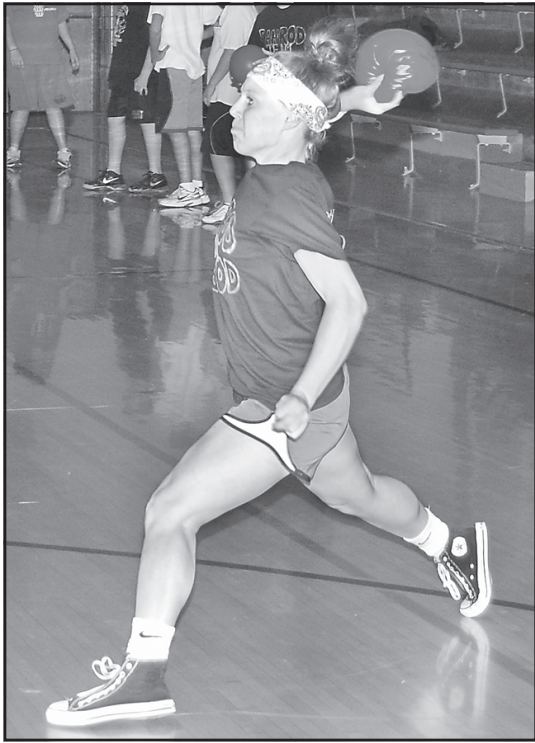
KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press
Endowment Foundation Director Nick Wells examined some of the windmill centerpieces built by Colby Community College departments.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Dodgeball nets \$1,700 for relief

Colby High senior Shelby Terrell (left) prepared to fire a ball at the opposing team at the "Dodge a Disaster" dodgeball tournament Friday at Colby Grade School. Eighteen teams in two divisions faced off in tournament brackets. Teams of high schoolers (above) played against each other and adults while middle-schoolers were in their own category. High school senior Caitlyn Wark (right) threw the ball across the court during one matchup. The tournament was organized by the high school's Young Humanitarian club and the Red Cross. The groups raised \$1,700 for the Red Cross' disaster relief fund.



First case of pine wilt found in Thomas County tree

By Marian Ballard

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An "always-fatal" disease that's been killing pine trees to the east and creeping across the continent has turned up in Colby.

Thomas County Extension agent Clint Milliman reports that there has been a positive test for

pine wilt in trees here. Owners are being advised to keep an eye on their pines and report any that may be infected.

The invasive, insect-borne disease has been steadily moving westward across Kansas, Extension experts says. It is said to be always fatal to infected trees.

While spread by a flying beetle called a pine sawyer, the damage

is done by pinewood nematodes carried by the beetles. Both beetles and nematodes spend the winter in dead pine wood, said Megan Kennelly, plant pathologist with K-State Research and Extension, so the best time for control is before they emerge around the first of April.

The only sure way to halt the disease is to destroy dead pines –

remove the tree and immediately chip or burn the wood. Firewood cut from affect trees can spread the disease, so it's best not to store the logs.

Milliman said he and forester Jim Strine are still investigating the source of the infestation, though one possibility could be firewood brought from an infested area.

While some samples sent to the Kansas State University diagnostic lab from Thomas County have proved negative, Milliman stresses the need to have suspect trees tested.

"Usually, the first symptom is off-color, gray-green needles, or wilt," said Kennelly. "Those needles then turn brown, but don't fall off. Typically, that happens in

late summer or early fall, and the trees are dead within a few weeks or months."

If you suspect a problem with your trees, the extension agent said, call Milliman at 460-4582.

For more about pine wilt, go to www.plantpath.k-state.edu/DesktopModules/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=943.

Briefly

Power outage planned for Friday

The City of Colby plans to shut off power to a section at the south end of downtown for five or six hours beginning at 8 or 8:30 a.m. Friday. Crews will be repairing a power pole. The section affected is between 100 S. Chickamauga, 100 E. Webster, 100 W. Webster and 100 S. Franklin. For information, call the city at 460-4400.

Hospital plans childbirth classes

Citizens Medical Center will offer a four weeks of childbirth classes from 7 to 10 p.m. Thursdays starting April 7. Women due to deliver before August should attend with their labor support partner. The next classes will begin July 7. For information or to register, call Jeanene Brown at the hospital Education Department at (785) 460-4850.

'Rolling Thunder' of prayer soon

For the second year, Operation Rolling Thunder will call people to prayer for the 30 days leading up to the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 5. Anyone in northwest Kansas, individuals, groups or churches, interested in participating in a prayer team from Tuesday through May 5 should contact Marsha Berens at 462-0388.

Scouts invite girls to bowl

All girls in fourth through sixth grades are invited to spend Friday night with area Girl Scouts as Girls Go Extreme – Bowling from 10:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Friday at the Colby Bowl and Fun Center, 1175 S. Range. Girls will join in bowling, games, dancing and pizza. Parents are welcome, too. Cost is \$5. For information, call Becky Ayers at (785) 259-6743.

Pilots to talk safety Saturday

The Federal Aviation Administration will sponsor the 2011 National Safety Stand Down, a full day of discussion for pilots on accident factors and approach-landing reviews, starting at 8:30 a.m. Saturday at the Colby Municipal Airport. For information, call Mark Ostmeyer at 460-4438.

Supper, auction to help man

Help raise money for John Morgan at a benefit supper and silent auction from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday in the Colby High School commons. The proceeds will help with medical bills from a motorcycle accident Feb. 16. For information, or to donate, call Mandy Focke at 462-2120.

Church offers concert on video

The Colby Berean Church will have a free Gaither

Homecoming video concert at 6 p.m. Sunday at the church, featuring a group called Alaskan Homecoming. For information, call the church at 460-2863.

Dance team tryouts Monday

The Colby High School dance team will hold tryouts for the 2011-2012 squad at 6:30 p.m. Monday and next Thursday in the high school gym. Tryout packets are available in the middle and high school offices. For information, call sponsor Denita Rodgers at 460-1325.

