



# COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

## We Win!



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Midwest Energy was on hand at the first Take Charge event in January to help explain the different types of light bulbs.

## Colby declared Take Charge winner

By Kevin Bottrell

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The nine-month energy efficiency challenge that pit Colby against other northwest Kansas towns came to a close Tuesday when it was announced that Colby had won the \$100,000 prize.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said eight representatives from the Colby Leadership Committee went to the Take Charge Challenge luncheon in Topeka on Tuesday. Armstrong said they were shown a video with clips from events in all the 16 towns in the challenge.

After that the winners were announced. Colby won the Northwest Region, which included Goodland, WaKeeney, Oakley and Hoxie. Manhattan won in the University Region, Fort Scott in the southeast and Baldwin City in

the northeast.

"I'm so thankful I live in Colby," Armstrong said. "It took the community to win."

Once it receives the \$100,000 Community Development Block Grant, Colby will be updating street lights on Range Avenue from I-70 to College Drive and on Franklin Avenue from Willow to College Drive with more efficient LED lights. Armstrong said \$10,000 would be used to update the city's Christmas lights and the stop light at Second Street and Range Avenue to LED lights.

The committee, which included representatives from the city, the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, Pioneer Memorial Library, Colby School District and more, kicked things off with a pancake breakfast in January at the community building. More than 1,200 people came and were given free compact fluorescent



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Take Charge committee member Melany Wilks (above) explained what types of materials can be recycled at the Big Splash event in August. Colby firefighters (right) cooked pancakes and sausage for more than 1,000 people at the last Take Charge event in September.

light bulbs. The Colby Kiwanis Club served the pancakes.

Throughout the year the committee brought the challenge to events like Picnic in the Park and the Home and Garden Show. They performed the Energy Bandit program, which teaches about how electronics can draw power even while turned off, at Thomas County schools.

In August, the committee held an energy efficiency program at the Community Building and a free swim in conjunction with

Farmers and Merchants Bank barbecue. The program included interactive activities about recycling and energy sources. Committee members ran the program at the pool several times throughout the day, so the city got more points for each person there.

They also gave away light bulbs and power strips at the college's block party and the Drive One 4UR School event at Tubbs and Sons Ford Sales.

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## Ferret celebration set for Nov. 5

Logan County farmers Tim and Rebekah Peterson are planning an event to celebrate the return of the black-footed ferret from 1 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 5, at their farm west of Oakley.

Activities will include tours of ferret and prairie dog habitats, live music, discussion groups and food. A live ferret is being brought out from the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs.

The Peterson's farm is 15 miles west of Oakley on

U.S. 40, 3.2 miles west of the intersection with K-25. There is no cost to attend.

Ferrets had been extinct in this area until their reintroduction into Logan County in 2007.

The reintroduction effort has met with strong opposition from landowners and county government, because the protected status of the ferret can make prairie dog eradication efforts difficult on land where the ferrets aren't living.

## Area Hospice service to hold auction fund raiser

By Christina Beringer

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The City Limits Convention Center will be set in a "City of Lights" with a night of entertainment and fund raising to benefit local Hospice services in Thomas County.

Beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5, a social hour will take place followed by a dinner at 6 p.m. and auction at 7:30 p.m. A dance with disc jockey Scott King will finish up the evening at 9 p.m.

Tickets for the event are \$35

per person or \$240 for a reserved table seating eight. Tickets can be purchased by calling advisory board members Mary Ann Downing at 443-1684 or LeAnna Soehner at 462-1095.

"The theme for this year's auction is 'man cave' and all of the items have to do with things that are designed and furnished for recreational activities and hobbies," explained Downing. "We have a recliner, flat screen TV and a pizza a month for a year that will be auctioned off, plus there will also be a raffle."

Donations are still being accepted for the live and silent

auction. Downing also said that raffle tickets for \$20 each will only be sold at the auction.

"We are only selling 100 raffle tickets this year," said Downing. "A lot of the time, people are reluctant to buy raffle tickets because they think the chances of them winning are so slim. We want to make sure that people who attend the auction and buy a raffle will get a pretty good chance of winning."

Downing said proceeds will be deposited locally to support care in Thomas County.

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## All that jazz



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Trombone player Rob Boone, trumpet player Jason Carder and drummer Ray Templin of the Original Wildcat Jazz Band performed for a small audience Monday night at the American Legion Club. The band was passing through on its way to a concert in Denver.

## Transportation secretary to resign

By John Hanna

The Associated Press

TOPEKA — Kansas' top transportation official is leaving her job in December to take a position with a national transportation planning and policy group, Gov. Sam Brownback's office announced Tuesday.

Secretary Deb Miller is the first woman to lead the Kansas Department of Transportation and was the only Cabinet holdover from past Democratic administrations after Brownback, a Republican, took office in January. Miller has been transportation secretary since 2003. Her last day will be Dec. 16.

Miller is joining Cambridge Systematics Inc., headquartered in Cambridge, Mass., as a senior associate but will continue to live in Topeka. The company says on its website that it provides consulting services to private companies, state governments, offices of the U.S. Department of Transportation and international agencies.

"I had to debate on it for a very long time because I really and sincerely love what I'm doing and am

nowhere near tired of this job," Miller told the Associated Press. "It hasn't run its course for me, but I also think it'd be a great opportunity to do something new."

Miller will be leaving almost 18 months after legislators enacted a 10-year, \$8 billion program of road, bridge, rail and aviation improvements. She called it one of the biggest accomplishments of her tenure and said she's confident the program has had a good launch.

She also said she'll miss not being secretary when some projects are completed, such as the last stretch of Kansas 10 linking Lawrence to the Kansas City area and a major rail-trucking hub, also in the Kansas City area.

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