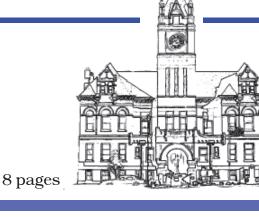
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FREE PRESS

First snowstorm of the year

armers & Merchants

ank of Colby

Wednesday

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Postmaster under federal investigation

Colby Postmaster Kenton Krehbiel and customer services supervisor Stanley Strange were placed on paid leave last week in an ongoing internal investigation.

The Office of the Inspector General for the U.S. Postal Service issued a statement this morning, saying they conducted an investigation at the Colby Post Office. in Colby since February of 2004. They found there was a violation Before that he was postmaster in of Postal Service procedures regarding the External First Class Measurement system. The system involves using an outside contractor to independently measure delivery time of local mail.

said no one was arrested, and the results of the investigation were turned over to Postal Service management so they could take appro- dowment Association board. priate action.

Brian Sperry, regional spokesman for the Postal Service, said that due to privacy laws concerning personnel, the service couldn't comment any further.

Goodland Postmaster Penny Sheldon will be temporarily filling the Colby post.

Krehbiel has been postmaster Goodland for seven years. He has also worked in post offices in Oakley, Garden City and Hutchinson since joining the Postal Service in 1975 as a clerk and carrier.

Krehbiel is currently the presi-The Inspector General's office dent of the Colby Community College Board of Trustees. He has been on the board for 22 years and before that served on College En-

Changes in store for medic service

By Christina Beringer

Colby Free Press colby.society@nwkansas.com

Big changes are taking place at Thomas County Emergency Medical Services, explained training coordinator Candy Bryant at Monday's commissioner meeting. In addition to searching for a

new director to replace Kenny Gatlin – whose last day is Nov. 16 – the county agency is also undergoing a statewide mandatory transition.

"It's all hitting at once," said commissioner chairman Ken Christiansen. "I can only imagine how stressful it is for you (EMS employees), trying to get transi-

tioned without a director." Bryant said it has, indeed, been tough waiting for a new director to be hired, "but it's for the best," she said after the meeting.

"Right now we are on a hold up. We need a director to help guide tors and make decisions before we can

See "CHANGES," Page 2

Safety issues at forefront after explosion

By Michael J. Crumb and Roxana Hegeman

The Associated Press

WICHITA - No one needs to tell Steven Stallbaumer about the dangers of working in grain eleva-

when it exploded, killing seven miles northwest of Kansas City.

baumer underneath a railroad car, through the buildings as the grain and he figures that saved his life. is moved. A spark from equipment A big motor fell from the top of or an overheated bearing on a conthe elevator and landed beside the veyor can ignite the dust, sending at the Bartlett elevator and will dump truck where he had been working.

A similar blast killed six people cility. He was unloading fertilizer out- last weekend at the Bartlett Grain side a Kansas elevator in 1998 Co. elevator in Atchison, about 50 elevator happened while workers destroy evidence.

workers. The blast knocked Stall- combustible dust particles flow plosion. Bartlett officials declined a pressure wave that detonates the be interviewing employees and rest of the dust floating in the fa-

The explosion at the Bartlett happened because the blast can were loading a train with corn.

to answer questions about their safety procedures or facilities.

OSHA has several inspectors company officials. But, investigators can't always determine what

"It's kind of like going into a

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colbv Free Press

Colby woke up to its first taste of winter this morning as a half off, with a forecast high of 43 Thursday. Unsettled weather is inch of snowfall was recorded at the Kansas State Northwest predicted for this weekend into the beginning of next week, Research-Extension Center by 8 a.m. Though it continued to with the next storm system due through the region on Satursnow through the morning, the storm was expected to taper day.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

School, church provide safe activities



Two local organizations provided safe alternatives to traditional trick-or-treating on Halloween. Diane Carter (above) painted faces at the Heartland Christian School Fall Festival on Monday, one of several activities available including bowling and volleyball. Pastor Jarrod Spencer and his wife Aubrey (left) passed out candy at the Church of Christ's "Trunk or Treat" earlier that afternoon.

Farmers take corn and other Figuring out what sparked it could building that's burned and trying grain to elevators to be stored take up to six months, said Scott to determine what happened," Aland sometimes processed before Allen, spokesman for the Occupait's marketed and sold. There are tional Safety and Health Adminismore than 10,000 commercial tration. The elevator had not been about the DeBruce explosion. His grain-handling operations nation- inspected since Bartlett purchased voice breaks when he remembers wide, with large numbers in Il- it about five years ago, although his buddies who died, and he said linois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, OSHA has stepped up inspections he still thanks God every day that Nebraska and Texas. Fine, highly in Kansas since the DeBruce ex- he survived.

len said.

Stallbaumer still gets flashbacks

Kansas Secretary of Revenue says growth is a high priority



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press Kansas Secretary of Revenue Nick Jordan met with local officials and residents on Tuesday at the Thomas County Office Complex.

Western Kansas may get air service

have tentatively selected air ser- Dallas. vice providers for several western Kansas cities.

ports (http://bit.ly/uZH8yA) that and Dodge City, Great Bend, Hays the U.S. Department of Transportation issued an order Monday

GARDEN CITY (AP) - Fed- to provide federally-subsidized air the one issued Monday are genereral transportation authorities service between Garden City and

The same order tentatively chooses Great Lakes Airlines to cial. The final day for objections The Garden City Telegram re- provide service between Denver is Nov. 9. and Liberal.

Garden City's aviation director selecting American Eagle Airlines says "show of cause" orders like

ally followed. However, the order requires a 10-day period for anyone to object it can become offi-



By Kevin Bottrell

Colby Free Press kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Everything is on the table, said Kansas Secretary of Revenue Nick Jordan to a small group of Colby residents Tuesday.

Jordan was asked by Larry Barrett whether programs that rely on tax credits would be impacted by the tax reform the state is now discussing. He specifically referenced NetWork Kansas, a program that helps new and expanding small businesses. Jordan said that when he was a state legislator he was instrumental in forming NetWork Kansas and would like to see it and other programs remain viable.

"Everything is on the table," he said, "but nothing is decided yet."

Things have been looking up for Kansas lately. The state has had six straight months of revenue growth. However, the state took in \$4 million less in taxes than it had expected to in October. Jordan said revenue collections were actually higher than projected, but the state had to pay tax refunds to several companies.

"We've had seven months of growth," he said, "but

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