



8 pages

COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Thursday

December 15, 2011
Volume 122, Number 195
Serving Thomas County since 1888

Medical director overhauling service

By Christina Beringer

Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkansas.com

Thomas County Emergency Medical Services is in the process of rebuilding everything, director Joe Hickert told the county commissioners during his weekly briefing Monday.

“There’s definitely going to be a good future for EMS in Thomas County,” he said.

Hickert said the department had a business meeting last week where he briefed his volunteers on changes within the department and facilitated a training session, as well.

“We are going to start going from two meetings a month to four,” he said. “In addition to the increase, we are also planning a class for new EMT training in January and we have eight participants enlisted so far.”

Briefly joining their business meeting was Commissioner Paul Steele.

“I wanted you and the staff to know that we care, but I didn’t want to intrude (on the meeting),” said

Steele.

Commissioner chairman Ken Christiansen shared his appreciation to Steele for attending and told Hickert, “we’ve learned more from you than we have in years and we thank you for all the work you’ve done.”

Hickert also explained that he is still working on updating protocols and said their manual of policies and procedures is being expanded upon tremendously.

“I’ve gotten feedback from colleagues in the field who have shared with me their guidelines and we are going through them page by page and making notes on how they can work for us. Basically, our manual of 60 pages will be expanded to about 200 pages when we are done,” said Hickert. “We don’t intend to reinvent the wheel, we are just modifying them so our EMS runs more smoothly.”

“So you are taking the best ideas from several and compressing them into one protocols manual?” asked Christiansen.

See “DIRECTOR,” Page 2

Tech support, fax scams reported by Colby citizens

By Kevin Bottrell

Colby Free Press
kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Two more scams have popped up in Colby this week, targeting citizens and business owners.

Colby resident Kathy Brown was called by someone claiming to be from a tech department affiliated with Windows and Microsoft.

The man said her computer has a bad virus that could destroy the hard drive. He wanted her to open her computer for remote access. She asked that the man call back, but he never did.

Microsoft’s official web site lists this as a scam to watch out for. The company says people may call claiming to be from a help desk,

service center, technical support or research and development. The company itself does not make any unsolicited calls, it said.

Microsoft warns customers not to trust unsolicited calls and not to provide any personal information. The company also says not to purchase any software or services from one of these callers and never give control of a computer to a third party.

Colby Glass owner Diane Karlin said she received a fax from “Your Yellow Book” proposing a business listing for \$98. Although the fax looks like an invoice or a bill, it is labeled as a proposal and the fine print says the document is “not a bill, invoice or statement of payment due.”

The fax did not list a phone

number, just a fax number. Karlin said she called the fax number and a man on the other end picked up. The man, whom Karlin described as “very smooth,” identified himself by the name of someone who works at Yellow Book. Karlin said she later called Yellow Book and spoke to that employee, who said he was not the one she spoke with.

The fax included an address to make checks payable to in Oklahoma City. The address is a shopping center near the south end of the city that includes a Panera Bread, a sushi restaurant, a tanning salon and a UPS store, but no Yellow Book office. Yellow Book has several offices in Oklahoma, including one in Oklahoma City, but not at that address.

Choices, choices...



MELINDA OLSON/Thomas County Community Foundation

April Swartz picked out a gift at Santa’s Workshop on Dec. 3. About 60 kids came to the workshop, which is put on by the Thomas County Community Foundation as a way for kids to get low-cost gifts for family members.

War in Iraq officially over, says U.S. military on Thursday

By Lolita C. Baldor
and Rebecca Santana

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD – There was no “Mission Accomplished” banner. No victory parade down the center of this capital scarred and rearranged by nearly nine years of war. No crowds of cheering Iraqis grateful for liberation from Sadd-

am Hussein.

Instead, the U.S. military officially declared an end to its mission in Iraq on Thursday with a business-like closing ceremony behind blast walls in a fortified compound at Baghdad airport. The flag used by U.S. forces in Iraq was lowered and boxed up in a 45-minute ceremony. No senior Iraqi political figures attended.

With that, and brief words from top American officials who flew in under tight security still necessary because of the ongoing violence in Iraq, the U.S. drew the curtain on a war that left 4,500 Americans and more than 100,000 Iraqis dead.

The conflict also left another 32,000 Americans and far more Iraqis wounded, drained more than \$800 billion from America’s

treasury and soured a majority of Americans on a war many initially supported as a just extension of the fight against terrorism after the 9/11 attacks.

As the last troops withdraw from Iraq, they leave behind a nation free of Saddam’s tyranny but fractured by violence and fearful of the future. Bombings and gun battles are still common. And ex-

perts are concerned about the Iraqi security forces’ ability to defend the nation against foreign threats.

“You will leave with great pride – lasting pride,” Defense Secretary Leon Panetta told the troops seated in front of a small domed building in the airport complex. “Secure in knowing that your sacrifice has helped the Iraqi people to begin a new chapter in history.”

Many Iraqis, however, are uncertain of how that chapter will unfold. Their relief at the end of Saddam, who was hanged on the last day of 2006, was tempered by a long and vicious war that was launched to find non-existent

weapons of mass destruction and nearly plunged the nation into full-scale sectarian civil war.

“With this withdrawal, the Americans are leaving behind a destroyed country,” said Mariam Khazim, a Shiite whose father was killed when a mortar shell struck his home in Sadr City. “The Americans did not leave modern schools or big factories behind them. Instead, they left thousands of widows and orphans. The Americans did not leave a free people and country behind them, in fact they left a ruined country

See “WAR,” Page 2

Presidential candidate to stop here on Friday

Presidential Candidate John Davis will bring his “votecade” tour bus through Colby at 11:02 a.m. Friday, stopping at the Thomas County Courthouse.

Davis, from Grand Junction, Colo., describes himself as a con-

servative Republican candidate on his web site. He supports balanced budgets, term limits, smaller government, border control, work visas and citizenship for law abiding aliens.

Regents want policies on sex abuse reporting

LAWRENCE (AP) – The Kansas Board of Regents has directed the state’s public universities to develop policies on mandatory reporting of suspected sexual abuse.

The Lawrence Journal-World (<http://bit.ly/seXo0B>) reports the board issued the directive Wednesday in response to events at Penn State University, where critics say officials failed to inform law enforcement of suspected abuse of

young boys by a former assistant football coach.

Leaders of the six Regents universities in Kansas are to report back to the board in January with proposed policies on mandatory reporting. Board chairman Ed McKechnie says the proposals could be combined into a single, statewide standard.

Rexford kids make cookies

Tressie and Taydem Mitzner (above)

worked on saltine toffees during the Shepherd’s Staff Cookie Making Day on Saturday. Brenda Claassen and Jesalynn Griffiths (right) cut out candy canes from sugar cookie dough.



GWEN GRIFFITHS/Shepherd’s Staff



8 04879 113898 3