



## Area bank makes offer on branches

By Cynthia Haynes

The Oberlin Herald  
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The Bank of Oberlin has made an offer and is asking for state and federal authorization to buy three branches of First National Bank of Goodland.

The Bank hopes to acquire the Colby, Bird City and Quinter branches of First National and has placed legal notices in *The Oberlin Herald*, *Colby Free Press*, *Goodland-Star News*, *Bird City Times* and the *Gove County Advocate* in Quinter as part of the purchase process. Publication was to begin today.

The Bank President Gary Walter said that the first step in the purchase was to reach an agreement with First National to buy the assets and liabilities of the three branches.

The second, he said, is to get permission from the state Banking Commissioner and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., which insures both banks.

The third step, required by law, is to publish a notice in the local newspapers of the three branches — Colby, Bird City and Quinter — and two home offices — Oberlin and Goodland — of the affected banks for four weeks.

During and after the publication period, people have a chance to comment on the sale and say if they have some problem with it, he said.

If everything goes right and there are no huge problems during the comment period, the state and federal agencies will either OK the application or ask for additional information.

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## Foundation creates fund for swim passes

By Christina Beringer

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The Thomas County Community Foundation is taking donations for a new fund that has been established to provide 10-day passes to the Colby Aquatic Park for children who receive free and reduced-priced lunches at Thomas County schools.

A 10-day kid's pass normally costs \$25, said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong.

Donations can be sent to the foundation at 350 S. Range, Suite 14, Colby, Kan., 67701. Specify the Aquatic Park Pass Fund in the memo line, said the foundation's executive director, Melinda Olson. Contact her at (785) 460-9152 or [tcfcf@st-tel.net](mailto:tcfcf@st-tel.net) for information.

Olson said the pool passes will be distributed each summer, beginning Tuesday, May 15, by

the city manager's office. To apply, parents or guardians should submit a letter from their child's school documenting eligibility for Child Nutrition Program benefits.

Verifying documents can be mailed or delivered to the manager's office at City Hall, 585 N. Franklin Ave., Colby, Kan., 67701.

Priority will be given to children who receive free lunches, Olson said, with any remaining money used to provide passes to children who receive reduced-rate lunches. If there are more applicants than money available, a random drawing will be conducted.

"This pass-through fund is still very small, but the thought behind it is very large," she said, "to help all children in Thomas County be able to enjoy our wonderful aquatic park.

"We encourage the public to join in this endeavor."



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

## Colby featured in show

Smoky Hills to air program

Colby is one of several towns across the nation featured in a PBS special next week on Smoky Hills Public Television, along with other public television stations nationwide.

Smoky Hills marketing director Michael Freeland said the piece on Colby is in a documentary on climate change and sustainable energy called "Quest USA," part of the series *Earth: The Operators' Manual*.

The three-part program is designed to work as stand-alone episodes.

The Energy Quest program will premiere this weekend at 5 p.m. on Saturday and at 6 p.m. on Sunday.

The City of Colby planned to have a preview for city workers and the public on Wednesday, but a copy never arrived, said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong.

Colby is one of four Kansas cities shown in the episode for competing and winning the 2011 Take Charge! Challenge, along with Baldwin City, Fort Scott and Manhattan.

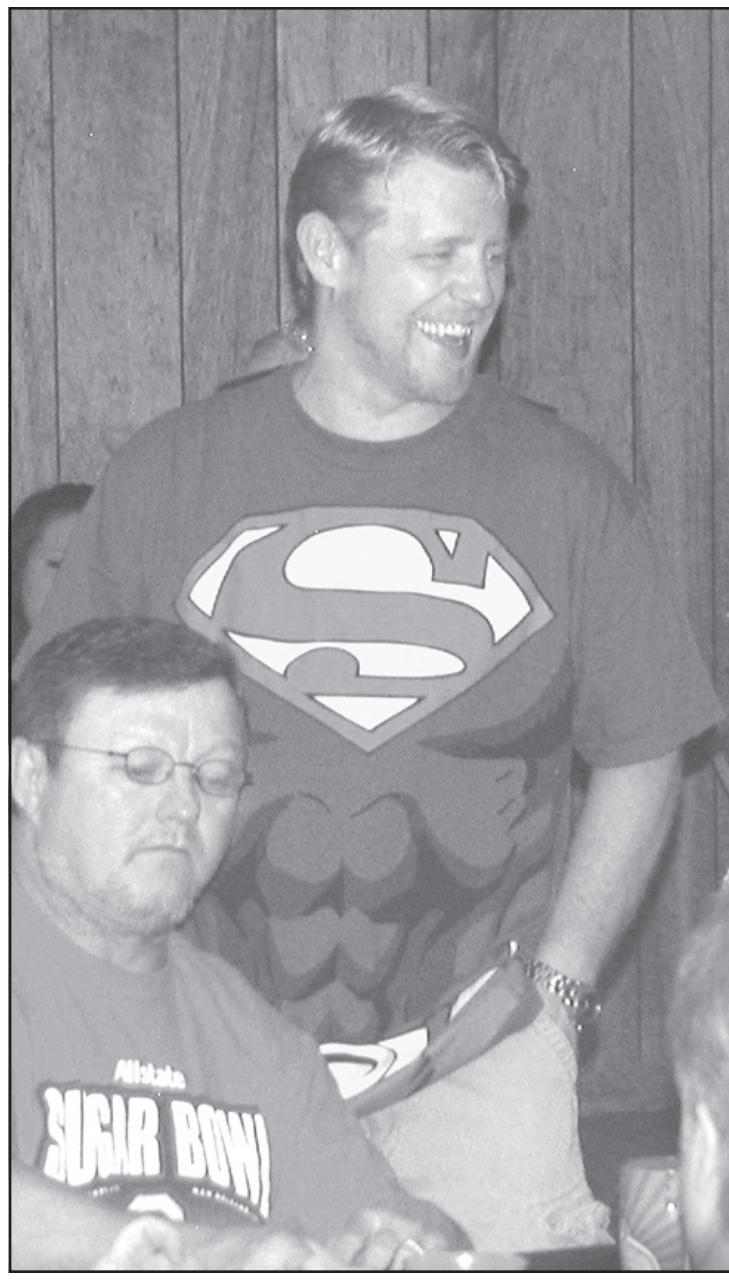
The challenge pitted 16 communities against each other over the course of nine months in an energy efficiency competition, with four prizes of \$100,000 each for the winning towns.

Experiences during the challenge and smart energy choices are shown as a path that every U.S. community can follow as they chart their own energy goals and adapt to the challenges that climate change may bring.

Nancy Jackson, founder of the Climate+Energy project, says her goal is to reset the norm for energy consumption in the Heartland, "putting the 'conserve' back in 'conservative'" and promoting what she sees as a "win-win-win" proposition — save money, build local economies and ensure a healthier energy future.

"At the end of the day, the atmosphere doesn't care one whit what people think," she said. "The atmosphere cares what people do."

In total, the cities in the challenge saved 110.2 billion BTUs of gas and electricity with an annual value of \$2,341,025; 22 million kilowatt hours of electricity, and kept 19,002 barrels of oil from being imported and 22 million pounds of carbon dioxide emissions from being released.



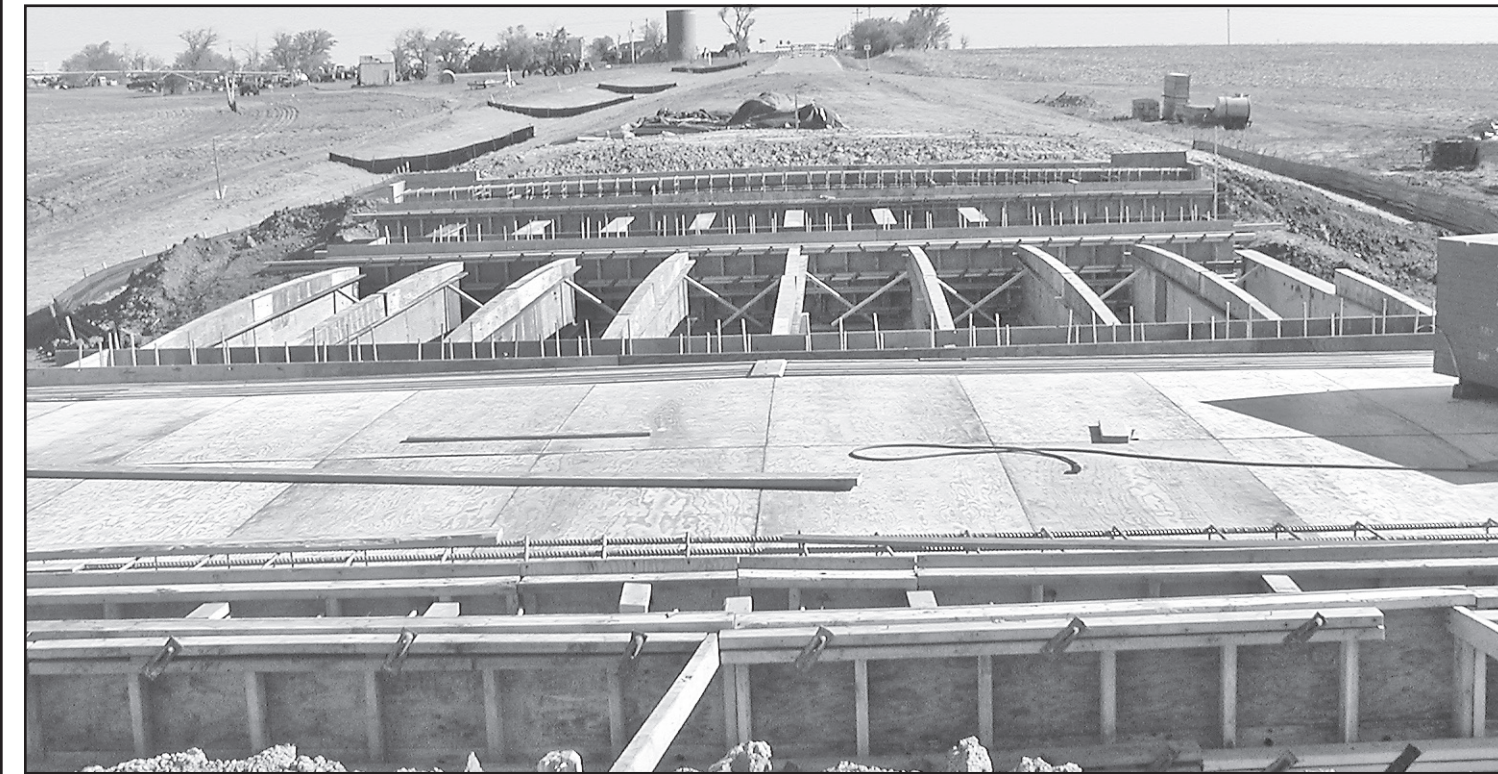
## Couple wins contest

Wonder Woman and Superman were among the celebrity waiters at an annual fund-raising dinner put on by Colby's Farmers and Merchants Bank on Thursday at the American Legion Hall. Wonder Woman (Tricia Carney, above) and the Man of Steel (her husband, James Carney, left) won a contest among teams of waiters for the most tips with \$1,353.

At Wonder Woman's table were Marvin and Betty Albers (facing camera) and Martin and Ceanne Rinehart. They were part of a big crowd; 235 people signed up for the dinner this year, compared to 76 last year.

Bank officials said the event made \$7,777 after expenses, with \$2,635 going to the Colby High School band and \$2,821 to help the FFA chapter fix up Copeland Park. In all, the waiters brought in \$5,517 in tips.

## Building a bridge



STEVE HAYNES/Colby Free Press

A crew from Simon Contractors of North Platte, Neb., and Cheyenne, Wyo., has been busy building a new concrete bridge over the North Fork of the Solomon River about three miles south of Colby on K-25. The firm has another couple of

months to finish the job and reopen the bridge by the end of June. Traffic is using a township road a mile to the east or the "official" detour on state highways through Scott City.

## Jail escapes prompt move of prisoners

WICHITA (AP) — State prisoners won't return anytime soon to a Kansas jail where four inmates escaped earlier this month, and most of the sex offenders and convicted killers housed in three other county jails have been moved to state prisons, the state's corrections secretary says.

The four inmates, including a former gang member convicted of killing two people when he was 17, were captured within 60 hours after they broke out of the Ottawa County Jail in Minneapolis on April 18.

See "JAIL," Page 2

## Kansas Motor Vehicles offices down this week

If you needed a driver's license or auto registration or title, you needed to have it done by today.

Starting Tuesday, all driver's license and motor vehicle offices in Kansas will be out of business for a week while the state installs and tests a new \$4 million computer system and employees learn how to use it.

In Colby, that includes both the county treasurer's office at the courthouse and the state driver's license office. Both will be open,

but unable to do any license or title business.

County Treasurer Donita Applebury said her office will be open for county business, however. She noted that the second half of property tax payments is due next Tuesday, May 10, and said the office will be taking payments.

