



Police receiving reports of phone scam

By Sam Dieter
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Colby Police have been getting reports of a phone scam involving credit and debit card information, with many complaints coming in Monday. Even the chief got one. People have been getting phone calls saying their credit or debit card is about to expire, be suspended or be otherwise

blocked from use, said Police Chief Randy Jones. In many cases, people get a recorded call on their cell phones and are asked to press "1" for further instructions. Another recording then asks people for their account information. "I even got one on my cell phone," Jones said. The chief said he was on his lunch break Monday when he got a call on his department cell phone. He said he did not press "1".

"So you know they're just randomly going down (the list)," he said. "They have all the phone numbers." He said the best rule is never to give information over the phone to someone you do not know. If you have questions about a credit or debit card, call the bank or lender that provided the card and talk to them directly. "Never give out your credit-card information to anyone that you do not absolutely know," he said, "Hopefully in

Colby, you speak to somebody that you know." No one had any idea how many calls have been made, but banks around town had heard some of the same details about the scam. They reported that lots of calls came in Monday, people got a recorded voice and calls even came to people who did not have cards. "I don't know what kind of breach it was, but even customers without debit cards were being contacted," said Velma

Goodheart, vice president of Farmers and Merchants Bank. She added that most Farmers and Merchants customers did not fall for the scam. "For the most part, all of our customers were proactive and called us right away," Goodheart said. Roger Aumiller, branch manager of The Bank in Colby, and employees at Sunflower Bank reported that when customers checked their caller ID, they saw a number with lots of zeros.



Legislators talk to voters about issues

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Thomas County's state legislators came to Colby on Saturday to talk with voters and ask what they wanted to see done – or not done – in the Legislature.

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, from Grinnell, and Reps. Don Hineman, Dighton, and Ward Cassidy, St. Francis, were at a meeting room in the Colby Community College student union to talk with about 20 people, including community leaders, at a "town hall" session.

All the legislators are Republicans.

The first to speak, Sen. Ostmeyer, who is on the education committee, told the crowd where he stands on issues, including tax cuts hitting schools in west Kansas.

"The teachers contacted me and said now they have to bring their own supplies," he said. "That's just sad."

He said he felt legislators from the eastern part of the state often weigh in on budget cuts without understanding that school districts

in this part of the state have already been consolidated.

Sen. Ostmeyer brought up the issue of corporate farms, saying he used to vote against them, but he wants to know if they could help northwest Kansas now that the population has gone down.

He also said he did not like the way the state's gambling laws apply to community events and things like poker runs and fund-raising raffles.

The open meetings law discourages elected officials from talking to each other about personal matters, he said.

"We could all be at the farm sale," Ostmeyer said, "and if we're standing there talking, we're breaking the law."

Rep. Cassidy talked about how he does his job as chairman of the Education Budget committee and a key member of the appropriations committee, and how he can use his position to stop unfavorable legislation. He also is vice chair of the Education Committee.

The chairmanship gives him control of legislation assigned to his committee, he said.

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Library here holds murder mystery

Lynette Ball (above right) played Agatha Fletcher, a reporter for the Colby Free Press, at the murder mystery play "To Wake the Dead" Saturday at the Pioneer Memorial Library. Murder mystery writer Fred Finnegan, played by Will Higerd (above), had a hard time believing he was dead, even though he was the victim in the play, which drew about 75 people. Diann Gerstner (right) played Fred's bereaved widow, Joyce Finnegan. A wake was held for the victim and one of his die-hard fans, Clyde Barker – played by Brett Bandy – pointed out suspects at the funeral (below).

EVAN BARNUM/Colby Free Press



Shooting occurs in McAllaster

A shooting Tuesday afternoon in the small Logan County town of McAllaster left one person injured and one in jail.

"There has been a shooting and we have someone in custody," said Logan County Sheriff Pat Parsons.

Parsons would not release the names of the people involved, saying that family members of the victim had not yet been notified, and charges have not yet been filed against the man in jail. He did say that one person was injured, but would not say how

badly. Officials at Logan County Hospital were not immediately able to say if someone had come in with a gunshot wound.

The shooting occurred "around mid-afternoon" on Tuesday, Parsons said.

McAllaster is just off of U.S. 40 about four miles northeast of the Wallace County line and a couple of miles from the North Fork of the Smoky Hill River. It has a couple of homes, plus a railroad siding. The location is between Winona and the Wallace County line.

County approves new medical cots

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Thomas County's Emergency Medical Services will replace two of the cots it uses to move patients and secure them for the ride to the hospital after deciding the old ones were inadequate.

County commissioners approved the purchase of two new cots, along with some accessory equipment, for a total of \$8,765 at their meeting Thursday morning. Director Joe Hickert told the commissioners that EMSAR, a company that sells medical supplies and equipment, inspected the

old cots and said that two of them were unsatisfactory.

"We saw bare metal showing when the legs were extended," Hickert said, "which means the holes wobbled out."

He said later the firm would not warranty the cots any more because the bare metal on the legs indicated they might not be able to take a lot of weight. The medical services bought the cots from a company called Stryker.

There were several options, he

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