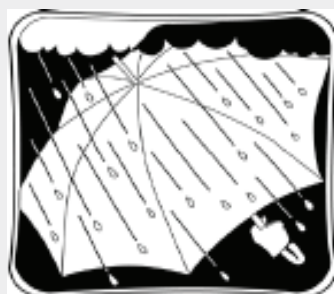


Weather Corner



Tonight...Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the mid 60s. South winds 10 to 15 mph.

Thursday...Sunny. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs in the upper 90s. South winds 10 to 15 mph. Thursday night...Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the lower 60s. South winds 10 to 15 mph.

Friday...Mostly sunny with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 80s. Northwest winds around 10 mph shifting to the north in the afternoon.

Tuesday's low, high: 62, 89.
Monday's low, high: 56, 89, trace precipitation.

Josh and Kim Schwarz visited with Cory Knowles and Bobbi Walker, all of Colby, about Schwarz's 1931 Ford A Coupe they entered in the Hoxie car show as part of the second annual event sponsored by the Hoxie Rodders. Cars line both sides of two city blocks in downtown Hoxie and spectators talked with owners and later in the afternoon enjoyed a drag race at the Hoxie airport located one-quarter mile north of town.



JAN KATZ ACKERMAN/Colby Free Press

Officials consider incentives for store

By Pat Schiefen

pschiefen@nwkansas.com

An incentive package to keep the J.C. Penney in Goodland open could include \$25,000 from economic development funds, a 50 percent discount on city utilities for two years, worth around \$10,000 a year, and lowered rent from landlord Pete Whalen.

At a meeting of city, county and economic development officials at 7:15 a.m.

Friday morning, City Commissioner John Garcia said there is interest in giving Penney's \$25,000 for a second year.

Garcia said Whalen has offered to cut the rent in half.

Garcia said he checked with the county, the development council would have the money available. The first \$25,000 is already in the budget, Garcia said.

"The whole community has shown interest in doing this," said Economic Development Chairman Chuck Wilkens.

City Manager Wayne Hill, who is writing the proposal, said he wanted to ask Penney's to commit to keeping the store open five years. The store has three full time employees.

"If they agree, we will get it in legal form," he said.

"It's OK to ask for five year," said Economic Development board member Mike Cochran of Cochran Farm Supply

Other economic development members present were Danny Archer from Finley

Motors, Don Newell from S & T Communications, Jerry Fairbanks from First National Bank and Steve West from Western State Bank.

City Commissioner Dave Daniels attended, along with three county commissioners, Kevin Rasure, Mitch Tiede and Chuck Thomas.

Garcia said other options — like a different building — are being explored, but those are out of the hands of the public officials represented at the meeting.

Officer retires

From "RETIREMENT," Page 1

report writing computers, numerous radio frequencies are controlled remotely by using a computer to select frequencies and paging for police, fire, ambulance, tornado sirens and highway patrol."JU

Shull said that contrasts having only two radio channels in patrol cars during the early years of his career, to current radios with "dozens of channels," night sticks and mace and now Taser guns.

Besides changes in equipment, Shull said his job duties have changed over the years.

"The most difficult part of my career has been dealing with physically and sexually abused children," Shull said. "It is also hard dealing with children that don't get their emotional need met by their parents. There are some parents who just don't care about their children. There are some people who just should never be allowed to be a parent. During the last three years, I estimate that 80 percent of my investigations are dealing with sexually abused, emotionally neglected and physically abused children, in that respective order. Ten percent of my investigations involved adult sex crimes and the remainder is usually frauds and other felony property crimes."

Shull said the best part of his career has been working with other area agencies and comparing similarities and developing leads towards suspects.

"Burglars and thieves usually don't just commit their crimes in their home towns," Shull said.

Shull said while many people retire so they can spend more time with grandchildren, his three grandchildren are scheduled to move about three and one-half hours away from him on July 1.

"I plan to take it easy this summer and catch up on all those projects that keep getting put off," he said. "Then in the fall, I may make an effort to find a new career. I'm really looking forward to not being on call 24/7 and knowing that I can sleep the whole night without any phone calls."

Kansas seeks road money

TOPEKA (AP) — State transportation officials are worried they won't have enough money to pay for planned highway projects because of decreased federal funds, unless Congress comes up with an additional \$120 million to bridge the expected shortfall.

"It has a serious impact on whether we have to cut some projects that have been scheduled or delay them," Kansas Department of Transportation spokesman Steve Swartz said Tuesday. "Projects that are under construction most likely wouldn't be impacted."

The department is nearing the end of a 10-year, \$13 billion comprehensive transportation plan approved by the Legislature in 1999. Lawmakers will be asked to approve a new 10-year plan next year.

Swartz said KDOT gets \$360 million a year from the Federal Highway Trust Fund. The \$120 million reduction would amount to more than a 30 percent cut in funds for state and local transportation projects.

Last week, KDOT Secretary Deb Miller sent out 125 letters to local governments, legislators and transportation interest groups urging them to contact members of the Kansas congressional delegation about the issue.

"I am becoming increasingly worried that time and reasonable options to fix the problem are quickly running out," Miller said

in a written statement Monday. "I can't state this too strongly. Congressional action is needed soon."

Swartz said no decision has been made on how many projects would be cut or delayed if the shortfall in the trust fund isn't fixed by Oct. 1, the start of the federal fiscal year.

The problem is the fund gets the bulk of its revenue from the federal fuels tax. Kansans are driving less these days because of increased gas prices, meaning less money for the state.

Adding to the problem is that the fund has been used in recent years for non-transportation issues. In 1998, \$8 billion was transferred out and never replaced. Congress also dipped into it for recovery efforts in New York City after Sept. 11 and New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina.

In Washington, the House and Senate are considering bills to transfer \$8 billion from the general fund to the highway fund. Rep. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., said the legislation "simply makes sense."

But Swartz said any additional money this year would be a "one-time fix."

"The problem does continue beyond this year. Our focus is get funding for 2009 shored up and then we can address the larger picture," he said. "We need a more sustainable revenue source for funding transportation. Nothing is off the table."

Swartz said reduced federal funds could have an impact on

KDOT's long-range transportation plan that has a \$58 billion price tag over two decades.

"The amount of revenue we have will dictate the kind of work and how much work we can have," he said.


He said the cost of the long-range plan assumes every project, including new highways, bike paths and mass transit, would be implemented.

"We don't expect we would be funded at that level. With what we would get, we wouldn't anticipate that every need would be addressed," Swartz said.

The long-range plan outlines needs that would cost \$2.9 billion annually, and that federal, local and state transportation revenues are expected to be \$1.4 billion — leaving a \$1.5 billion gap.

"An awful lot of it is going to depend on what happens with our revenue in the next few years," said Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Les Donovan, a Wichita Republican.

Sen. Jay Emler, a Lindsborg Republican who worked on the long-range plan, said what legislators eventually will approve for a new 10-year plan probably will be smaller than the two previous plans.




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MEXICAN BUFFET

THURSDAY, JUNE 26TH
5:00 - 9:00 p.m.
462-6565

VOTE WYRICK

District Judge, Div. 2

I will be visiting COLBY on Friday, June 27th @ 9 a.m. at the Thomas County Courthouse Commissioner's room and REXFORD on Friday, June 27th @ 5 p.m.

"Come on out and enjoy refreshments and conversation! I look forward to seeing you there!"

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