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## Couple waiting for word on 'trust' license tags

By Marj Brown  
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Francis and Geri Landry of Colby are awaiting news from the state Senate as to whether Kansans will be able to buy their new license plate with the message, "In God We Trust."

The bill (HB2134) will have a hearing

Thursday in the Senate Transportation Committee, with a vote expected later. Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, who represents the Colby area, plans to speak for the bill, his secretary, Judy Crasper, said, and Rep. Jim Morrison planned to send written testimony.

The bill has passed the House and if passed in the same form by the Senate, it would go to the governor to be signed

into law.

Francis Landry said he designed the tag, with the help of John Bremenkamp on his computer, in 2007. It pictures the "In God We Trust" motto in front of stalks of wheat on a blue background. If the bill passes into law, they will be available for \$40 each.

She said the bill was introduced last year with a statement that the cost of

manufacturing these plates would be paid by the state and all revenue would go to the state. It passed in the House last year.

When the bill arrived at the Senate, the couple said, the waiver had been misplaced and the bill was set aside. The bill, now containing the provision, is back on track now. The Landrys said they feel that it has a better chance this time.

If the tags are approved, they will sell

for \$40 each and will take the place of the regular Kansas tag, a plain white with a light underprint of the state seal in nearly invisible blue. They can be used until they are damaged or wear out. Owners will still have to pay registration each year and put on a sticker.

"We already have a list of 2,000 people who want to purchase the tag," Francis said.

## Voters crowd session to talk to legislators

By Marj Brown  
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State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer of Grinnell and State Rep. Jim Morrison of Colby were at the Quality Inn on Saturday morning to talk with people about bills being either passed or considered in the Kansas legislature.

Sue Draper from the Thomas County Farm Bureau, which sponsored the session, counted 35 people there for the discussion. She said it was the best turnout they have had since she started helping with the meetings.

Ostmeyer started out by reporting that public schools had been cut 3 ¼ percent for 2009, but may have to cut as much as 10 percent in 2010 because the budget is short.

The senator said he is in favor of building a new coal-fired power plant in Holcomb.

"It will be a clean plant due to new technology and is something Kansas really is in need of," he said. Morrison also said he is in favor of the plant.

Ostmeyer said he thinks it's important that they find a way to keep the prison in Norton open. The secretary of corrections, Roger Werholtz, threatened early in the year to close it if his budget

is cut.

"It would be financially devastating to Norton if it was closed," Ostmeyer said.

At first, both Ostmeyer and Morrison said they were against a statewide smoking ban. Ostmeyer said he thought this would be too much government control and the decision should be handled locally. Morrison said most of the mail he is receiving is from constituents who don't want a ban.

However, after a discussion at the meeting, a show of hands revealed that more than two-thirds of those present wanted a smoking ban. Both Morrison and Ostmeyer said they may have to rethink their position. Someone mentioned that perhaps health care costs are increasing because secondhand smoke is making people sick.

Ostmeyer said he opposes a "primary" seat-belt law because he thought this also was infringing on personal rights.

"They charge a \$25 fine now if you are stopped and don't have your seatbelt on and you also pay a \$100 court cost," he said. "That should be incentive enough to cause people to wear their seat belts."

There was no opposition to this from the voters present.

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## Voters trim ballot to 9 in school race

By Andy Heintz  
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Golden Plains School District voters narrowed the field from 10 to 9 candidates in the school board primary election Tuesday. The results eliminated Desiree Wark, who had just five votes.

Candidates who'll be on the ballot for the general election on Tuesday, April 7, are board President Teri Brantley, David E. Gould, Ben L. Hoeting, Don Koerperich, Kim Moss, Terry L. Moss, Todd M. Schwarz, Matt Vogler and Brandi Wark.

Terry Moss was the top vote getter with 56 votes and Brantley had the second most with 46. Schwarz got 44 votes, Vogler 39, Koerperich 36, Brandi Wark 34, Hoeting

28, Kim Moss 26 and Gould 12.

Rexford citizens can begin advanced voting for the general elections on Wednesday, March 18, said Thomas County Clerk Shelly Harms. The voting booths at the clerk's office will close at noon on April 6, she said.

People can vote in advance at the Thomas County Courthouse or by mail ballot. Rexford area residents can vote during satellite voting later this month at the Red Barn and Gem residents can vote, possibly the same day, Harms said. Times and locations have not been determined.

This should help people avoid driving to Colby on election day, Harms said. The only polling place will be at the courthouse in Colby for this election. For information, call 460-4500.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Store owner Carolyn Richards (above) unpacked supplies at artist, showed students tricks to make them paint like a pro the Craft Peddler in Brewster. Carol Raboin (below), a Hill City during a watercolor class, one of many offered at the store.

## Craft shop takes off in Brewster

By Vera Sloan  
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Tucked away in quiet downtown Brewster, a couple of miles off I-70 and well off even the old highway, the Craft Peddler might be among northwest Kansas' best-kept secrets.

But crafters know it's not only one of the few such stores in the area, but one of only a few of its size anywhere that carries such a wide array of products.

March is National Craft Month, and 2009 marks the Craft Peddler's 25th year in business.

Owner Carolyn Richards said she has customers from every state including Alaska and Hawaii, and has some outside the United States. She recently had a customer from Australia order less than \$5 worth of supplies, so the bill was actually less than the postage.

Richards, a native of Syracuse, said she was a church secretary and preschool teacher and had no knowledge of crafts before she opened the store. She said she always thought crafts looked like fun, but after she took a wheat-weaving class, she was hooked.

She moved to Brewster from Syracuse in 1984 when her husband Steve took a job as plant supervisor with S&T Telephone.

Her children were young and she was busy being a mom, she said. Then Steve called one day and said the bank had a building for



sale, and she thought it might be a great spot to start a little craft store.

"I had never even run a cash register," Richards recalled, "and I had no idea where to begin, but I found a couple of wholesalers in Denver and called them to ask what I

should have to begin a store."

The store grew from bare necessities in 1984, things like glue, felt and ribbon, to the 27,000 items in her inventory today. She built the present store on Main Street in 1991.

"People come into Brewster from the Interstate because of my big billboards," she said, "and they tell me I have things they can't find in the city."

Many of them become repeat customers as they travel the Interstate from year to year on their way to visit relatives, she said.

Richards said she has done hundreds of classes and continues to schedule classes which include everything from cake decorating to Christmas ornaments to jewelry making, scrapbooking and painting.

Word of mouth and a newsletter list with 2,400 names were Richards main routes to growing her business. Later, she got an eBay store, she said, and she now sells items all over the world.

Richards said she has over 500 customers for her Wilton line of cake-baking supplies just through her eBay store. She said one person ordered from a little island they had never heard of and they had to look it up. She said she is always mailing packages to some far off place. Her store can be found at [www.nwkansasonline.com](http://www.nwkansasonline.com) and at [www.thecraftpeddler.net](http://www.thecraftpeddler.net).

"I don't know if I could open a craft store

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## Briefly

### Women back history lecture

The Colby chapter of the American Association of University Women a program at 2 p.m. Sunday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History in honor of Women's History Month. The event, open to the public, will be in the Garvey Education Room. Marla Matkin of Hill City talk on "Cherishing Our Historical Legacy," delving into that left to us by past generations through stories, songs and archival records.

### Two 'Pickin' bands here Friday

The bluegrass bands that headlined the Pickin' on the Plains Festival last year will be back in Colby on Friday at the Frahm Theater at Colby Community College. Marshall Allen Bailey and the Silver Bullets will perform at 7 p.m. and Gold Wing Express at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at Plum Creek downtown, Farmers and Merchants Bank at Dillons and

the Colby Convention and Visitor's Bureau at \$15 for adults and \$10 for youths. For information, call (800) 611-8835 or 460-7643.

### Students plan massage clinic

Colby Community College Therapeutic Massage students will have a clinic for pregnant women at 10:30 a.m. Saturday. Massages are especially good for those in their second and third trimester, said Carol Johnson, program director. The students plan a pediatric clinic on Saturday, March 14. Children must be accompanied by a parent or adult. Cost is \$15. For information or an appointment, call Johnson at (785) 460-5427.

### Open house to honor worker

An employee appreciation open house is planned for Darrel Follis from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday at

Woofter Construction, 1110 Plains Ave. Stop by for a sandwich and refreshments. Follis worked 17 years at Woofter, 45 years for KN Energy and was a long-time Colby Ambassador. Everyone is invited.

### Group offers family portrait

Thomas County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council is offering a 10-inch-by-13-inch portrait of your children for a \$10 sitting fee. Sepia tone portraits, said to be a \$90 value, will be taken with vintage attire and props. Raffle tickets are available for a drawing for two portrait packages. Portraits will be taken by appointment on Saturday, March 21, at the Colby Community Building. For information or to reserve a sitting, call 462-6111.

### Gem Lions cooking soup, chili

The Gem Lions Club will have its annual win-

ter soup day on Saturday at the Gem Community Building. The menu includes homemade vegetable, chili and potato soup, plus crackers, corn bread and home-baked cakes. Donations will be accepted, with profits used for community betterment. Bring used eye glasses and hearing aids for recycling. Everyone is invited.

### Soccer camp coming up

A soccer skills camp for boys and girls age 6 to 12 will be held at Heartland Christian School from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. Fee for the program, sponsored by the American Youth Soccer Organization, is \$5. For information, call Greg Griffin at (785) 460-0647.



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