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City plans public hearing on Embark

By Andy Heintz
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The Colby City Council unanimously approved holding a public hearing to get comment from citizens on a \$100,000 loan to Embark Health, the end-of-life services company now operating in Colby, from the economic development sales tax fund.

Mark Beringer and approved by the council at a meeting Tuesday at City Hall. The hearing will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the same place.

At a council meeting March 2, Embark Chief Executive Officer Michael Brouthers asked the city to consider giving the company a loan. Brouthers said he had been encouraged by two councilmen to ask for money to help with cash flow after talking with them at a reception the firm held Feb. 18.

Brouthers said the councilmen had told him how excited they were about the company, which hopes to have more than 100 jobs here, coming to Colby. He said he responded that he was also excited, but his company could use some money until cash starts to flow in from customers. He said the councilmen suggested he get the money from the city's sales-tax fund.

At the meeting March 2, City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said guidelines for the fund prohibit the sales tax money from being used to refinance debt, or to pay salaries or administrative expenses. City attorney John Gatz said since the council made the rule, it could change it.

See "EMBARK," Page 3

Fancy a race before work?



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

When the cat's away, the mice will play, but only for a little while. Servi-Tech employee Wyatt Watson just had to try out his new remote control car during a lull in traffic early Thursday morning in front of the office on Fifth Street before settling in

for his work day. He said the car will run about 30 mph for five to 10 minutes on a full tank of gas. The tank holds slightly over a half cup of nitromethane, the same fuel used by full-scale dragsters.

Dem to testify in ethics probe

By John Hanna
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — The Democratic leader in the Kansas House is expected to face questions Thursday about his party's misconduct complaint against the chamber's Republican speaker.

Minority Leader Paul Davis, a Lawrence Democrat, was scheduled to be the first witness before a special bipartisan committee investigating Speaker Mike O'Neal, a Hutchinson Republican.

See "ETHICS," Page 3

House Republicans present budget cuts

TOPEKA (AP) — Kansas House Republicans are proposing a 2011 state budget that would cut government spending and create more than \$300 million in reserves, all without raising taxes.

The plan being outlined by GOP leaders of the House Appropriations Committee would close the state's projected budget shortfall by not replacing federal stimulus dollars for education and borrowing \$50 million from the state highway fund.

Thomas County couple named Master Farmers by K-State

By Vera Sloan
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A family tradition that began in 1891 continues today with Richard and Kathy Calliham, who farm four miles west and a couple of miles south of Colby.

The Callihams will be honored Saturday when they receive the Kansas Master Farmer and Master Farm Homemaker awards for 2009 at the annual banquet in Junction City along with five other Kansas couples.

The program is sponsored by Kansas State University Research and Extension and *Kansas Farmer* magazine.

The Calliham tradition started in 1891 when Richard's grandfather, Joseph Dawes, was born on a homestead southwest of Levant in Thomas County.

The Calliham farm now comprises 2,700 acres of mostly wheat and grain sorghum, with some dryland corn and sunflowers. Richard said. He and Kathy continue to make improvements to the



Kathy and Richard Calliham

land. The family has family planted two windbreaks with 1,100 trees. They have worked with the agricultural and food center at Texas A&M University for several years to help project farm economic viability by region and commodity.

The Callihams started out in their career in 1964 by renting 640 acres.

"I feel really fortunate to have been able to work with my grandparents," Richard said, "and that the land has stayed in the family."

"I remember when my grandmother, Gladys Dawes, received the Master Homemaker award in the early 1940s, which was called the Homemakers Guild, and it wasn't until 1962 that my grandfather received the Master Farmer Award."

Callihams grandmother went on to become a national winner and served as president of the national group. She went overseas to an international convention, which was a pretty big thing for those days, he said.

Calliham said he helped his son, Rich, who is the fifth generation to farm in Thomas County, to get a started. Although they do not farm together, they do share machinery and trade work sometimes.

"He gets to be the boss when we work at his farm," Calliham joked, "but he's easy to get along with."

Kathy said she has been a Master Gardener for four years, and it shows in the

Six couples win state farm awards

Along with Richard and Kathy Calliham of rural Colby, this year's lineup to receive Master Farmer and Master Homemaker awards from Kansas State University and *Kansas Farmer* magazine includes:

- Rice County farmers Bill and Mona Ball from Sterling, who also run around 300 head of livestock.
- Rooks County farmers Thomas and Ruth Ann Bigge of Stockton, who have added a few buffalo and longhorn stock to their cow-calf operation.
- Mineola residents Don and Bonnie Irons from Ford County.

• Bourbon County farmers Kenneth and Beth Snyder from Fulton.
• Coldwater farmers Arlie and Patricia Lohrding in Comanche County, whose farm includes nearly 600 head of beef cows, 1,000 calves, breeding heifers and yearling bulls. They also provide hunting opportunities and lodging for a lease.

Together, K-State says, the six families farm nearly 30,000 acres. The Calliham farm dates back 119 years, the longest tradition to be represented at this year's awards.

beautiful landscaping around the farm house. She said she enjoys helping the Master Gardeners in the county when they jointly help with the planting trial plots at the Kansas State University Research

Center west of Colby and the educational plot by the Extension office.

She spent 30 years as a volunteer with

See "FARMERS," Page 3

Briefly

County offices close for lunch

Because employees will be training for a yearlong conversion to new computer software, the County Treasurer, County Clerk and Road and Bridge offices will close for the noon hour. County Clerk Shelly Harms said these departments will continue to do business during normal hours. For information, call the clerk's office at 460-4500

Series highlights Lent season

The Thomas County Ministerial Association will sponsor another *Lenten Brown Bags and Bibles* program at noon each Wednesday throughout Lent with the theme, "The Prodigal Son." Speakers will be Larry Booth Wednesday and Jarrod Spencer, Church of Christ, March 31. Come to the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 545 W. Fourth St. Bring your own lunch; beverage and dessert will be provided. Call 462-6342 for information.

Pizza sales to help Red Cross

Hungry for pizza? Order any regularly priced menu item at Pizza Hut on Tuesday and 20 percent of the proceeds will be donated to the Northwest Kansas Red Cross. For information, call Sherry White at 462-7161.

Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has one 4-month-old male chocolate-colored Chesapeake Bay retriever available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

Grant deadline March 31

The Thomas County Community Foundation is taking grant applications for the first quarter. Public

Relations Coordinator Christina Schmid said proposals can be for any type of project, as long as it is not to benefit an individual, political activity or operating expenses. Nonprofit organizations, public agencies and religious institutions may apply. The deadline is next Wednesday. For information or applications, call (785) 460-9152.

Barbershop event March 27

The Colby Tumbleweed Barbershop Chorus will perform two shows at 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 27, in the Frahm Theater at Colby Community College. The show will include the Acoustix quartet and the Prairie Rose Harmony ladies' chorus. For information, call Tom McNutt at 462-2936.

Swim Club plans April event

The Colby Swim Club will hold a parent meeting and fun swim at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 11, in room

809 of the Health Science Building at Colby Community College. The fun swim will follow at the college pool. For information, call Sondra Finley at 460-2955.

Head Start taking applications

Thomas County Head Start preschool is accepting applications for 3- and 4-year-old children. The program takes applications all year, but children must be 3 by Sept. 1 to start class in the fall. Tuition is free. To apply, call 460-6067.

