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Sheriff says county needs a better jail

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A question about the sheriff breaking a man's finger turned into a plea for a better jail Monday at a county commissioners' meeting.

Sheriff Rod Taylor told the Thomas County commissioners that the county needs a better and safer jail, pointing to a prisoner with a broken finger and the resulting \$40,000 medical bill.

The impromptu discussion at Monday's meeting started when County Clerk Shelly Harms said several people had asked her about an incident Sept. 23 when officers broke a man's finger trying to arrest him after a traffic stop.

Sheriff Taylor, who had an appointment with the commission-

ers about buying an antenna for the cameras in deputies' patrol cars, said the broken-finger incident happened after he stopped a car on the Interstate. A deputy's drug dog "hit" on the car, indicating drugs on board, and a search turned up some marijuana.

Taylor said he asked the driver, a man, to step out of the car. Taylor said he took the man to his patrol car and took him to the Law Enforcement Center. When they arrived at the center, and had stopped, Taylor said, he saw the man observed working with an object in his hands that was hidden by the cuff of his coat.

When he asked what he had, the sheriff said, the man wouldn't say and tried to hide the object.

Taylor said he reached for the

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Reward offered in farm theft case

By Kevin Bottrell
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A Rawlins County farmer is offering a \$5,000 reward for information about thieves who all but cleaned out his quonset huts last week.

The equipment, including a pickup, bike, four-wheeler and a trailer to haul the loot on, was

stolen off Leitner Farms, about 13 miles southwest of Atwood, the night of Sunday, April 25. Owner Dave Leitner said someone broke into two quonset huts and stole farm equipment, vehicles and tools.

Undersheriff Jim Schroeder of the Rawlins County Sheriff's Office said items stolen include a

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Former Colby publisher gets lifetime achievement award

By Tom Betz
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Tom Dreiling, former publisher of the Colby Free Press and The Norton Telegram, and long-time editor of the old Goodland Daily News, has been honored by the Kansas Press Association with the Clyde M. Reed Jr. Master Editor Award.

He becomes the 15th recipient of the award, named for the longtime editor and publisher of The Parsons Sun. It is the highest given by the association, recognizing career contributions to the industry and the state.

Dreiling was recognized for his 44 years in the newspaper business, beginning with his work at the Hays Daily News, where he was photographer, sports editor and city editor in the early 1960s before moving to Goodland to become editor of the Daily News.

Richard Gannon, a former Goodland resident and state senator, and Steve Haynes, president of Haynes Publishing Co., presented the award at the association's convention April 23 in Topeka.

Haynes said he enjoyed working with Dreiling after he had hired him as publisher of the Colby Free Press in 1998, and later as the publisher of The Norton Telegram.



Tom Dreiling (right), former publisher of the Colby Free Press, talked with current Publisher Steve Haynes and Dreiling's son Todd at the Kansas Press Association convention in Topeka, where he received the Clyde M. Reed

"He turned both those papers around," Haynes said. "I couldn't say enough good things about how he handled those jobs.

He got his team together and got things done. He was the boss, and people knew where they stood."

Dreiling was born in Hays, the second youngest of nine children, and attended high school at St. Joseph's Military Acad-

emy, now Thomas More Prep-Marian, graduating in 1953. He continued his studies at Fort Hays State University, opting out to join the Air Force in 1955. He was released from active duty in 1959 after service in Japan.

Returning to civilian life, he worked for a year and a half at The Ellis County Star, a Hays-based weekly newspaper owned by his family, before he was hired by the Hays Daily in 1962.

When Dreiling moved to Goodland in 1965, he recalled, he arrived at the newspaper and asked where the other reporters were. He said he was shown a desk in the corner of the front office and was told, "you're it!"

He continued to work in Goodland for nearly 24 years. He raised two sons, Lance and Todd, who were 5 and 3 when their mother Jean died of leukemia at age 37 in 1975.

When the newspaper was sold in January 1989, the new owners encouraged him to remain, but told him he would have to take a hefty cut in pay. He said he advised them to expect his keys the following morning. For several months after, KLOE radio owner Kay Melia put him to work. He later accepted a job at Thomas More Prep as director of the alumni association

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

This tank, which was on a flatbed trailer along with two others, struck the I-70 overpass Tuesday evening, spilling about 25 gallons of crude oil mixture onto the road. A crew from the Kan-

sas Department of Transportation spread sand on the road to soak up the mixture.

Semi hits overpass, spills oil on road

By Kevin Bottrell
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Crews were nearly done cleaning up some glue spilled on the west exit from Interstate 70 on Tuesday when, bam, a truck hauling tanks of an oil-water mixture ran under the freeway, shearing off the top of one tank and creating an even bigger spill.

The truck, from Raymond Oil Co. out of Wichita, was hauling a flatbed trailer with three upright tanks south on K-25, said Sean Hankin, Colby assistant fire chief. The first two tanks cleared the overpass but the third was too tall. The tank broke almost in

half and slid off the back of the trailer, spilling about 25 gallons onto the road.

The bridge has a clearance of exactly 15 feet. Hankin said there was no damage to the structure, other than a few scratches on the clearance sign. Trucks with taller loads are supposed to reroute.

The fiberglass tank contained a mixture of residual crude oil and brine from batteries, which spilled on the road under the bridge and pooled in the ditch on the side of the pavement.

Firefighter Ross Carney said the fire department and a crew from the Kansas Department of Transportation would have to pour sand and gravel on the spill



The oil mixture pooled on the side of the road under the overpass. The oil company will be cleaning it up under the supervision of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

to try and soak it up. Emergency Management Director Susan McMahan said a geologist was coming to assess the danger to underground water.

McMahan said the oil firm is responsible for the clean up, but a team from the state Department

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Briefly

Clean up yards all week

Colby's 2010 Spring Cleanup is this week. The city urges everyone to use the week to clean and spruce up their yards and have the city remove debris placed at the curb. To schedule a day for your items to be picked up or to volunteer to help others, call Jo Strange at the city office, 460-4410.

Pay property taxes by Monday

The second half of 2009 property taxes is due to the county treasurer's office by next Monday. The office is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays. Mailed taxes must be postmarked by Monday. For information, call Treasurer Donita Applebury at 460-4520.

Visit planned at kindergarten

Colby Grade School will have open visitation for next year's kindergartners from 9 to 11 a.m. Friday. Parents who did not receive an invitation should call

the school office at 460-5100.

Food signup open until Friday

Prairie Land Food sign up is open until Friday at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth St. Delivery will be at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, May 22, in the Sacred Heart School gym. For information, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579.

Treasurer to close at 3:30

The Thomas County treasurer's office will close at 3:30 p.m. until Monday, May 31, for software conversion. Treasurer Donita Applebury said the office will go back to the regular 4 p.m. closing time earlier if possible. For information, call the office at 460-4520.

Pray at the flag pole Thursday

A National Day of Prayer observance sponsored

by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance will be from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. Thursday at the Thomas County Courthouse. For information, call Jarrod Spencer, minister of the Colby Church of Christ, at 460-6322

Prayer Rally planned this week

There will be a multi-denominational Praise and Prayer Rally for the National Day of Prayer at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Little Theater at the Colby Community Building. The evening will include singing worship songs as well as prayers led by pastors and lay persons from several area towns. For information, call Karen Merryman at 443-3715.

Brewster offers garden training

The Brewster Recreation Department and the K-State Extension Master Gardeners will offer the last of four landscape training sessions at 7 p.m. Thurs-

day at Hunter Hall in Brewster. The topic is Trees for Northwest Kansas by Jim Strine, state forester. For information, call the Sherman County Extension office at (785) 890-4880.

Beef program to hold clinic

The Colby Community College beef program will hold a cattle-handling demonstration with National Cattlemen's Beef Association clinician Curt Pate at 6:30 p.m. Friday at the Oakley Arena. The beef-program students will provide dinner. For information, call Marcy Ward at 462-5060.

