



10 pages

# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## City Council to collect on Embark loans

By Andy Heintz

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The City Council agreed Tuesday to have city attorney John Gatz begin proceedings to collect loans the state and city made to Embark Health during the council's regular meeting at City Hall.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said the company has not been making its payments. Embark got a \$485,000 state loan through the city to buy and remodel a former furniture store downtown for a call center. The firm hoped to sell end-of-life services from the center, but ran out of money just as operations were getting started.

Chief Executive Officer Michael Brouthers said the company is dormant and all 13 of its employees here have been laid off while he tries to get enough money to get

the business going again. He said his former employees were welcome to come back if he is able to get the business revived.

The city got a \$485,000 Community Development Block Grant from the Kansas Department of Commerce and Housing and loaned the money to Embark. It made two economic development loans for a total of \$485,815, for a total debt to the city of \$970,815. The city money came from a 1/4-cent sales tax for economic development approved in 2004. The tax went into effect on April 1, 2005, and it will end in 2012.

In other business, the council:

- Listened to accountant Brian Staats of Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball, the city's auditors, give an overview of the 2009 audit. Staats said the city started with

See "LOANS," Page 3

## Small 'gustnado' forms over Colby

By Kevin Bottrell

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A storm moving from the south produced a quick, thin twister just a mile south of Colby on Sunday.

The spindly funnel, reported by a Colby police officer, formed where cold air from several thunderstorms collided, said Dave Floyd, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Goodland. Thunderstorms can push out cold air from their leading edges, he said, creating instability in the atmosphere when they meet.

He said the funnel may have been a "gustnado," Floyd said. Gustnados, a term coined by storm chasers, can form where

the turbulent air in front of a big storm picks up dust and swirls it around. Floyd said there is a fine line between a gustnado and a tornado, and in some cases, storms can even grab onto a gustnado and turn it into a tornado.

Whatever it was, he added, the service issued a tornado warning for Thomas County after the report came in.

The same storm moved over Colby and produced another funnel cloud near Shalz Field, but dropped only trace amounts of rain.

The real action happened south and east of Thomas County. A large line of slow-moving storms

See "TORNADO," Page 3

## Group gets money for walking trails

By Vera Sloan

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The walking trail committee of the Thomas County Coalition has won one of 43 "recognition grants" from the Kansas Health Foundation to start a system of walking trails in Colby.

The \$24,145 grant bumped right up against the maximum of \$25,000, said coalition member Sue Evans. She said the regional prevention organization's goal is to work with the coalition in a program geared toward healthy kids, healthy families and a healthy community. And instead of kids always hearing "don't use" over and over, they will have a walk-

ing trail they can use to stay physically fit and will continue to live a healthy life style.

"This kind of grant money came as a huge and wonderful surprise," said Ashley Mosier, vice president of the proposed Multi-purpose Activity Center to be built on South Franklin Avenue, near the high school.

"We will use this grant along with a \$20,000 grant from the Thomas County Wellness Committee to fund a walking trail even before the Mac building is up," Mosier said. "The distance will cover a minimum of a half mile, with more planned for the future."

See "TRAILS," Page 3



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

## Eagles party at reunion events

The Eagles Alumni Cheerleaders (above) spelled out the Colby High School mascot to begin their routine at the reunion assembly on Saturday. Michael Schwanke and Jamelle Holopirek (left) served as masters of ceremony, introducing each of the acts. Duane Roech (below left) and Mark Miller with the Bald Eagle alumni band got the crowd on their feet with the school fight song. Reunion activities took place throughout the weekend. Golf and tennis players squared off in tournaments on Thursday. The various classes partied down around town Friday and bikers raced around the county while walkers and runners did laps of Fike Park on Saturday.



## Briefly

### Church plans Bible School

The Colby Wesleyan Church will hold a "Sonquest Rainforest" vacation Bible school from 9 to 11:30 a.m. today through Friday at the church, 320 W. Pine St. The school is for kids in preschool through fifth grade. No registration is required. For information, call Kylee Philipp at 460-8215.

### Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a female mix-breed dog 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.

### Picnic, music Wednesday

Colby's Picnic in the Park lunch-and-concert series continues at noon Wednesday at Fike Park with en-

tertainment by Scott Cameron. For information, call the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at 460-7643.

### Hospital plans childbirth classes

Citizens Medical Center will offer a four-week series of childbirth education classes from 7 to 10 p.m. Thursdays July 1, 8, 15 and 22. Women who are due to deliver before October should attend with their labor support partner. The next classes will begin Oct. 7. For information or to register, call Jeanene Brown at the hospital Education Department at (785) 460-4850.

### Crews fogging for mosquitoes

Colby city crews are fogging for mosquitoes, south of Webster on Mondays or Tuesdays and north of Webster on Thursdays. You can help, officials say:

check your yard and empty anything holding stagnant water, such as cans, swimming pools or tires. For information, call the Public Works office at 460-4420.

### Foundation has money to give

The Thomas County Community Foundation is accepting applications for its second quarter cycle. Nonprofit, government or school agencies in Thomas County are eligible for small grants of about \$500. Applications are due by Wednesday, June 30. For information, call 460-9152.

### College pool open weekdays

The Colby Community College indoor swimming pool is open to the public for lap swimming from 5 to 7 a.m. Monday through Friday this summer. Open swimming is from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Cost for general admission is \$3, but monthly and yearly passes are available. Call manager Kipp Nelson at 460-5476 for information.

### Garden needs gardeners

Colby's community garden is looking for volunteers. The plot, at the K-State Experiment Station on the west side of town, needs volunteers to help grow fruit and vegetables. Food produced by the farm will go to the Genesis-Thomas County food bank and the Extension Kids A Cookin' program, as well as to the volunteers. For information, call Orvella Romine at 460-8177 or Extension agent Clint Milliman at 460-4582.

