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# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## City chooses contractor for Willow

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The Colby City Council awarded a \$930,000 contract to APAC-Kansas for the Willow Street improvement project at their meeting Tuesday.

The project includes widening and repaving the intersection of Willow and Country Club Drive and widening Willow as it goes around the curves to the east towards the Bosselman Travel Center.

Mayor Ken Bieber, Council President Jim Brown and Councilman Tim Huffles were absent from the meeting, but enough members were present for a quorum. Councilwoman Bev Eicher chaired the meeting, one of her last as a council member since she is not running for re-election.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said there were six bid-

ders, ranging from the low bid of \$936,580 from APAC to \$1,134,807. Three bids were above \$1 million and three below. The engineer's estimate for the project was \$1,335,000.

Armstrong recommended the APAC bid, saying it is a good company and the city has been pleased with their work in the past. APAC did the recent resurfacing work on U.S. 24, U.S. 83 and Range Avenue in town.

In other business, the council:

- Heard agent Cindy Cersovsky present the renewal for the city's insurance coverage, including property, vehicle, worker's compensation and other coverage. Armstrong asked the council to discuss insuring the engines at the power plant, which she said are not covered against natural disasters. Armstrong said the coverage would be expensive.

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

## Army jazz band wows crowd at high school

The U.S. Army Jazz Ambassadors' saxophone section (above) wailed on Duke Ellington's "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" on Monday at Colby High School. The Ambassadors, brought in by the Western Plains Arts Association, are a component of the Army Field Band based in Washington. They performed tunes from Ellington, Benny Carter, Stevie Wonder and the Beatles. Master Sgt. Marva Lewis (right) sang the Beatles' "Can't Buy Me Love."



## Speech, debate national qualifier here this weekend

While most students are enjoying their spring break, the Colby High forensics team is gearing up for the Kansas Catholic Forensics League - Salina Diocese national qualifier tournament Friday and Saturday at the high school.

The league is the state chapter of the National Catholic Forensics League, which is made up of schools from all over the nation. Schools do not have to be associated with a church in order to participate. In Kansas, generally Class 1A to 4A schools participate in the league, said forensics coach Nancy Rundel, and the organization offers those students an opportunity to qualify for a national tournament.

"We are the farthest west school in our league, so to have them agree to travel to Colby was a real honor," she said. "I'm also very proud of how members in our community have agreed to help judge the tournament."

Over the years, Colby High School has had several students

qualify for the national tournament, she said. Their expenses are paid by the students and fund raising by the debate and forensics teams.

Rundel said forensics coaches from around western Kansas and one from Nebraska have agreed to come to Colby to help judge.

Colby High School will field a full squad in this year's tournament. The events offered are slightly different than those offered at regular Kansas High School Activities Association tournaments, she said. These events are:

- Original oratory, including both persuasive and informative speeches written and delivered by students.

- Oral declamation, where students must choose a speech written by someone else, deliver an introduction that explains why the speech is important and then deliver the speech. Usually, the speech has historical importance, Rundel

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## Dealership to serve pancakes

Colby Dodge will serve free pancakes and sausage from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday at the dealership, just south of Interstate 70 and west of Range Av-

enue at 1000 Taylor Ave.

The dealership will have some redesigned 2011 Dodge models on the lot for visitors to check out.

## Governor drops rights commission plan

TOPEKA (AP) - Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback has dropped his proposal to move the state Human Rights Commission into the attorney general's office.

Brownback spokeswoman Sherriene Jones-Sontag said Wednesday that the governor will ask legislators to keep the commission as a

stand-alone agency but trim its budget by about \$231,000 for the next fiscal year.

She said commission officials agreed to the reductions to keep the agency independent.

The commission's executive director and chief legal counsel couldn't be reached immediately for comment.

The governor had said the move was both designed to save the state money and make the commission stronger by backing it up with the resources of the attorney general's office.

But critics, including the commission, feared the move would make the agency more partisan and less effective.

## Lawmaker not giving up on immigration bill

TOPEKA (AP) - The chairman of the Kansas House Judiciary Committee said Tuesday he is not giving up on his immigration bill, despite the panel's refusal to endorse the measure, which would require police to check the status of people they suspect of being in the U.S. illegally.

The committee voted Monday to table the bill, which would require governments and their contractors to run citizenship checks on new hires and require proof of citizenship for anyone seeking public as-

sistance. The provision on checking the status of suspected illegal immigrants mirrors an Arizona law enacted last year.

Critics of the bill said the measure is too broad. A coalition of business groups opposes it, saying it's likely to be burdensome both for companies and local governments.

But committee Chairman Lance Kinzer, an Olathe Republican, said he believes some members of the panel wanted to avoid a debate on a contentious issue.

"My sense is that there may have been some folks who just would prefer to not have the discussion," Kinzer told the Associated Press. "There's still opportunities to potentially bring it up again, and we'll just see how things progress. I certainly haven't given up."

The panel's move doesn't kill the measure, but a majority of the committee must agree to bring it up for it to be considered again. It's also possible for Kinzer and other supporters to try to amend its provisions into another bill be-

fore the House.

"Those of us who are supportive of moving forward will just have to look for opportunities to continue the discussion," Kinzer said.

The debate Monday had centered on police running citizenship checks based on "reasonable suspicion" and how the law might affect charities that receive state grants.

State Rep. Pat Colloton, a

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## Briefly

### Churches offer Lenten series

Soup and Scripture, sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, will be held at noon each Wednesday through Easter at Smoffee's in downtown Colby. Speaker for next week on "Who is This Jesus?" will be W.G. Romine II, pastor of Redeeming Love Ministries of Colby. Cost is \$5, including tax. For information, call Jarrod Spencer at (785) 443-2403 or your pastor.

### Museum exhibits rural photos

Roxie Yonkey of Goodland will exhibit a selection of her photographs at the Prairie Museum of Art and History through April, touching on both rural and urban themes with subjects such as barns, sunflowers and windmills. Come meet the artist at an informal reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 16. For information, call the museum at 460-4590.

### Meeting to discuss agritourism

Jan Janzten, owner of Kansas Flint Hills Adven-

tures, will speak at a meeting on agritourism from 10 a.m. to noon Thursday at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave. The meeting is free and open to everyone, especially farmers, business owners and entrepreneurs. For information, call the Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development office at (785) 462-7671, extension 5.

### Discussion tackles Civil War

"Kansas Women in the Civil War," a presentation and discussion by historian Diane Eickhoff, will be next in the *Food for Thought* series at noon Thursday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History, 1905 S. Franklin. For information, call 460-4590.

### Bluegrass benefit is March 19

A benefit dance and concert for the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass Festival from 7 to 11 p.m. Saturday at City Limits will feature Marshal Bailey and the Silver Bullets. Cost is \$10 for adults, free for children under 12. Tickets are available at the Dillon's

branch of Farmers and Merchants Bank or the Colby Convention and Visitor's Bureau. For information, call 460-7643.

### Brewster church to serve beef

The Brewster Community Church will have a canned-beef dinner from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday. Donations will go to the Water for Life Project, which provides clean water wells in third-world countries. For information, call (785) 694-2720 or 694-3353.

### Red Cross looking for blood

The American Red Cross will hold blood drives from noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday and 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. next Wednesday at the Colby Community Building. Vegetable soup will be served both days. The Colby High School National Honor Society will be helping. For information, contact coordinator Bev Vaughn at 462-3861.

### Second-grade musical changed

The Colby Grade School second-grade musi-

cal, postponed from March 8 due to weather, will be shown at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 22. For information, call music teacher Jennifer Koel at 460-5100.

### School to hold open house

Heartland Christian School will have a preschool and kindergarten open house from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Friday, March 25. All parents of children who will be kindergartners next year - or age 3 or 4 and ready for preschool - are invited, along with their children. Hands-on activities in the classroom will be followed by a parent information meeting in the Heartland library. For information, call the school at 460-6419.



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