



COLBY FREE PRESS

Wednesday

June 15, 2011

Volume 122, Number 93

Serving Thomas County since 1888

10 pages



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Classic cars, trucks shown in Oakley

This restored Ford F-100 (above) was a highlight of the Tri-County Cruisers Show in Oakley on Friday and Saturday. The show included dozens of cars, including this Chevrolet El Camino (right) owned by Bob Gittinger of Bob's Meat Locker that had a dinosaur riding in back. In conjunction with the show, the Oakley Chamber of Commerce held the Hillbilly Backyard Barbecue contest at the Annie Oakley Park.



SUV drives into lake late Tuesday

Late Tuesday night a sport utility vehicle drove into Villa High Lake in what may have been a suicide attempt by a Colby girl.

Police Chief Randy Jones said the vehicle and driven into the park from Range Avenue at 10:56 p.m. Several witnesses saw it accelerate and go airborne into the middle of the lake.

When Colby Police officers Kyle Askren and Sam Steele and Sheriff's Deputy Tom Graham arrived on the scene, they found the vehicle partially submerged. Askren swam out to the vehicle and found a 16-year-old girl in the driver's seat, but no one else. The girl did not respond to the officer at first. He attempted to break the window with the handle of a knife, but couldn't and swam back to shore.

Steele gave Askren a telescoping baton. He and Graham swam

back out to the vehicle and broke the passenger side window. The vehicle sank deeper once the window was broken and water poured inside. Jones said the girl regained consciousness and resisted the officers' assistance, but they were able to get her out of the vehicle and back to shore.

The girl, a Colby resident whose name has not been released, was treated by Emergency Medical Services and Colby Fire Department personnel and then taken to Citizens Medical Center for observation.

Askren was injured during the rescue and required some minor medical attention. The vehicle has been hoisted out of the lake.

Jones said the incident is still under investigation. The police log for Tuesday lists the incident as an attempted suicide.

Interstate project to begin Monday

Interstate 70 drivers have more construction to look forward to starting on Monday.

Workers from Venture Corp. of Great Bend — who is also handling the resurfacing of U.S. 24 — will mill and patch spots on I-70 from the intersection with K-25 east to Exit 62, and then place an ultra-thin bonded overlay on the driving lanes. The shoulders will get an asphalt seal.

While the roadway is being repaved, traffic will be reduced to

one lane during the day.

The project will cost about \$1.5 million, paid for by the T-WORKS program, which is also paying for the U.S. 24 work and for bridge repair on I-70 east of Colby. Weather permitting, construction work should be completed by mid-July.

Travelers heading west out of Thomas County on I-70 should also expect road construction near Goodland starting Thursday.

See "PROJECT," Page 3

State education board examines budget cuts

By John Milburn

The Associated Press

TOPEKA (AP) — Kansas State Board of Education members received new budget numbers Tuesday, along with the prospect of making tough decisions next month.

Legislators approved a \$232 per-student cut in state aid, effective with the budget year that begins July 1. It was a move designed to help the state close a one-time hole in the 2012 Kansas budget that approached \$500 million.

"I hope that if revenues start going up that they start funding education at the same percentage that revenues go up," said Board Chairman Dave Dennis.

He said he wasn't advocating a tax increase to return education spending to previous levels, though he believes there are parents who are willing to pay more to give their students a better edu-

cation.

The \$13.8 billion budget cuts overall spending 6.1 percent to close the projected shortfall. The spending plan reduces general aid to public schools by 5.6 percent, a move that's likely to force school districts to consider laying off teachers and other employees in the coming weeks.

General state aid to schools would see the largest decline in at least two decades, dropping from \$4,012 to \$3,780.

Last year, board members recommended a funding increase of nearly \$500 million to fund state statutes for education. However, the decline in state revenues and end to federal stimulus dollars forced Gov. Sam Brownback and legislators to reduce spending to balance the budget.

Dennis said it was likely that some of the items that have not been funded by legislators for

See "BUDGET," Page 3



DEBBIE SCHWANKE/Colby Community College

Dr. Keegan Nichols, vice president of student services, listened to EduKan Executive Director Dr. Mark Sarver's presentation at the college board's special meeting Monday.

College sees growth in online students

The Colby Community College Board were told that Colby and five other community colleges experienced a significant increase in online enrollment last year during a special meeting Monday.

"EduKan passed the 13,000 credit hour mark," said EduKan Executive Director Dr. Mark Sarver. "Our online enrollments from out-of-state students have increased by over 36 percent with students in 43 states."

EduKan is an online consortium consisting of Colby, Garden City, Dodge City, Seward County, Pratt and Barton County Community Colleges. It provides students the opportunity to get an associate degree online. Debbie Schwanke, public information director at Colby Community College, said students do not have to be in a degree program to take

online classes. Many students who come to school in Colby also take online courses because they are easier to schedule.

Schwanke said EduKan figures a full time equivalency based on 15 credit hours per student, giving EduKan an estimated 866 students. Students who enroll in EduKan classes select one of the six community colleges as their "home" institution. About 18 percent choose Colby.

Profits are divided equally among the six schools. Dr. Sarver presented a check for \$50,000 to the Trustees at the meeting.

"We will be reviewing the financial situation this fall and hope to provide an additional \$30,000 to each school at that time," Sarver said.

Tuition for an EduKan class will be increased by \$5 to \$130 per credit hour for 2011-12.

Briefly

College offers exercise class

Colby Community College is offering two sessions of a Water Exercise Class through Thursday, July 28, in the college pool. The first session will be from 7 to 7:55 a.m. and the second session will follow from 8 to 8:55 a.m. The classes are taught by Leslie Wagoner. For information, contact Penny Cline at 460-5404 or penny.cline@colbycc.edu.

Kiwanis needs help for fireworks

The Colby Kiwanis Club is accepting donations to help pay for their Fourth of July fireworks display. Kiwanis member Rick Dickman said contributions are appreciated since costs go up each year. To donate, send a check to Kiwanis Club, Box 501, Colby, Kan., 67701.

Learn about miracles in Brewster

The Brewster Community Church will have Va-

cation Bible School from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday for children from kindergarten to sixth grade. This year's theme is "The Miracles of Jesus." For information or to register, call (785) 694-2720 or (785) 694-3353.

Mingo church plans Bible school

Mingo Bible Church will hold Vacation Bible School from 6 to 8:45 p.m. Friday and from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday at the church. With this year's theme, "Rev It Up: Full Throttle for God," kids aged 4 to fifth grade will learn what the Bible says about being a member of God's team. Lunch will be provided Saturday. For information, call the church at 460-7530.

RC club open for dads and kids

The First Baptist Church's RC Car Racing Club will have a "Dads and Kids" open racing time fol-

lowed by pizza and drinks from 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday at the church, on the corner of Grant and Webster. The club, which is active throughout the school year, is open to all area children. For information, call Pastor Craig Crossman at 462-2336 or 443-5154.

Swedish Singers to perform here

The Young Swedish Singers will hold a free concert at 7 p.m. Monday at the Frahm Theatre at Colby Community College. The 34-member gospel singing group from Sweden performs gospel, hymns and Swedish folk music, though most of their program is in English. For information, contact the Trinity Lutheran Church at 462-3497.

Wesleyan Church plans school

Colby Wesleyan Church will hold Vacation Bible School from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Monday to Friday, June 20-24. The theme is "Inside Out and Upside Down

on Main Street," focusing on the parables Jesus told. Crafts, snacks, music, Bible stories and lots more fun will be available. For information, call the church office at 462-8391.

Church plans social on June 25

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints will have a branch social at 6 p.m. Saturday, June 25, at Andy Rose's house on 11 Cottonwood Drive. Hamburgers and hot-dogs will be provided. Bring a salad or a dessert to share and a lawn chair. For information, call 460-6807.



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 8 9 8 3