



# COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Thursday

August 18, 2011

Volume 122, Number 129

Serving Thomas County since 1888

8 pages

## Commissioners approve 2012 budget

By Christina Beringer  
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Thomas County Commissioners unanimously approved the 2012 county-wide budget at Monday morning's budget hearing.

The hearing was publicized in the *Colby Free Press* to take place at 9 a.m. Chairman Ken Christiansen said he had not received any feedback about the proposed budget before the meeting so as a

courtesy to constituents who may have been running late, a motion was delayed a few minutes to ensure the opportunity to speak on the matter.

No one attended to comment. The commissioners approved a budget of \$8,497,883 with \$3,154,004 in ad valorem taxes needed along with other revenue to reach the intended budget.

An estimated 35.021 percent mill levy was approved as well. It was explained that the state and county appraiser may have to actualize the adjustment before

January, so this number may be altered slightly in the coming months to compensate for fluctuations.

In other business, Sheriff Rod Taylor was present to clarify janitorial responsibilities at the Law Enforcement Center.

Taylor inquired to see if the new janitorial employee, Gayla Davis, would be cleaning public areas of the center.

It was decided that since Davis is on staff as a full time, 40-hour-per-week employee, she would start her duties on Friday, Aug. 19, getting familiar with court-

house responsibilities. She will then take on Taylor's request if time allows during her work week.

Sheriff Taylor and the commissioners also discussed the plumbing problem at the Law Enforcement Center. Taylor said he hasn't found anyone in the area willing to service the backed-up drains and speculated that there are cast iron pipes that have rusted.

The issue was also discussed at last week's meeting.

Attending the meeting for other busi-

ness, city wastewater supervisor Chad Applebury said that he has access to camera capabilities that could help determine why the drains are backing up. He said he would need access to a cell or a drain inside the building, and in the company of a plumber, they could find the root of the problem by taking a look down the main sewer line.

Applebury was thanked by the commissioners for his input and was asked if he

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## High school gym ready despite December flood

By Tomi Miller  
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After a flood warped the wood floor last December, the Colby High School gym is back in commission for the first day of school next week.

The gym floor sustained heavy water damage over the Christmas break when a pipe near the ceiling froze and burst due to the extreme cold.

"When the pipe broke, it was just like a huge waterfall," said Larry Gabel, activities director and high school principal.

Gabel said he was not the one who initially discovered the large leak. Chris Gardner, high school football coach, stumbled upon it when he was at the high school over the winter holiday.

"Coach Gardner called me and told me that there was a leak in the gym," Gabel said. "I didn't expect it to be as bad as it was when I saw



CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press  
Coach Lesley Wagoner had her volleyball team stretching on the new gym floor during practice this morning.

it." The gym has had leaks and minor water damage in the past, but none were as bad as this one, Gabel said. See "GYM," Page 2

## Newspaper planning section to honor military veterans

The *Colby Free Press* is introducing a new special section for this year's Veterans Day.

The "Defending our Freedoms" section will feature photos of soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and Coast Guard members in local families.

"We want to honor all those who have served our country," said Publisher Sharon Friedlander. "We want people to share their military history with us."

The *Free Press* is asking the public to submit photos of anyone in their family who has served. The paper will be running a quarter-page ad several days each week from now until Oct. 15. The ad will have "dog tags" with space for families to fill in the name, branch of service, theater of operation and years of service.

Families can send in the photos and accompanying information several ways. They can hand deliver them to the *Free Press* office, 155 W. Fifth St., mail

them to that address or e-mail to khunter@nwkansas.com.

Friedlander said any service member from any year is welcome, from the Revolutionary War to current active-duty personnel. The section isn't just for those who have served in war, she said, but for peacetime service members as well.

Families are welcome to submit any number of service members. Pictures can be submitted in black and white or color, and the person depicted does not have to be in uniform.

"We're going to run all the photos we get," Friedlander said.

The section will also have space for any names and information submitted without photos.

The deadline for submission is Saturday, Oct. 15. The section will be inserted in the *Colby Free Press* on Friday, Nov. 11.



DEBBIE SCHWANKE/Colby Community College



## College guys ride in style

Colby Community College students Lucas Baumfalk (above) and Colin Rous (left) drove their "reclining scooters" to classes Wednesday. The scooters are custom built and the students say they are street legal. The armrests swing out for easy access.

## Petitions out to save Bonny Lake

By Tom Betz  
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Petitions are being circulated in Goodland, St. Francis and around eastern Colorado to try to save Bonny Lake in Yuma County, Colo., and supporters feel they have a good way to save the water and the state park.

Time is running out as the Colorado Division of Natural Resources has announced the lake will be drained sometime after Labor Day - Monday, Sept. 5 - unless an agreement with Kansas can be worked out.

The latest effort is to get people in northwestern Kansas and northeastern Colorado to show their support for saving Bonny by sign-

ing petitions scattered around or by signing an online petition asking Colorado and Kansas to seek a joint way to save and operate the lake and state park.

In Goodland the petitions can be found at Dan Brenner Ford and Yost Farm Supply. This petition asks Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska to save Bonny State Park. The petitions are a part of the effort to show officials in Denver and Topeka that people out here do care about saving the lake, said Don Stewart of Burlington.

Stewart is president of Flatlanders Campground Club from Burlington, and the club has volunteered to maintain the 56 acres (visitor center and campground) for three years as long as Colorado will keep it a state park.

Audrey Hase of Kirk, Colo., took up the challenge to save Bonny, and wrote to Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback. Brownback wrote back saying the decision to drain the reservoir has been made by Colorado, and Kansas has not requested this action.

Hase said people in eastern Colorado have formed a grassroots group of around 1,100 members, in the last two months, trying to save the reservoir.

Hase said the main issues are to get Colorado into compact compliance with Kansas on the South Fork of the Republican River. She said the bottom line is Colorado has to deliver the water to Kansas.

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## Governor touts renewable energy

HUTCHINSON (AP) - Renewable energy development in Kansas could help lure businesses to the state, Gov. Sam Brownback said.

"I want Kansas to be known as the Renewable State," Brownback said. "To get there, we have to balance the three E's: Energy, Economy and the Environment."

Brownback spoke Tuesday in Hutchinson to about 100 people attending the Heartland Transmission Conference at Hutchinson Community College. *The Hutchinson News* reported Wednesday (<http://bit.ly/pJLaEc>).

He said business leaders on recruitment visits in Kansas are often interested in how much renewable energy they can use. When candy maker Mars was considering locating a new factory in Kansas, the company indicated it was "very interested in developing a zero carbon footprint," Brownback said.

"And we can get them a long way to that," he said.

Mars announced in late June it would build the plant in Topeka, employing some 200 people.

Brownback also touted the potential of wind energy in Kansas and expressed strong support for de-

velopment of an electric transmission infrastructure that will help deliver Kansas wind to other parts of the state and other regions of the country.

"But we can't reach our potential if we outlive our transmission capacity," Brownback said. "We must invest in the grid."

He said half the energy that could be generated in Kansas could be consumed in-state and the remainder exported, which would generate thousands of jobs and billions of dollars of investment in the state.

"Experts believe wind can provide 90 times the state's current electricity needs," Brownback said. "Everyone realizes how much Kansas wind blows."

Other speakers during the daylong conference included a Federal Regulatory Commissioner, a Kan-

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## Gift of love



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Grace Hankin had her braid cut off Wednesday afternoon to donate it to Locks of Love, which uses donated hair to create wigs for cancer patients. Hankin chose to donate her hair on the same day her cousin, who has ovarian cancer, had her first chemotherapy treatment.



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