



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

Sheriff wants door improvements at jail

By Christina Beringer
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The Thomas County Commissioners and Sheriff Rod Taylor spent most of their Monday meeting huddled around the south windows of the board room looking out across the parking lot and contemplating plans for the county jail.

"I'm concerned about safety," Taylor said as he explained the jail's many prob-

lems.

Plumbing issues and overcrowding are not new, but Taylor is also dealing with faulty sprinkler systems, moldy cell walls and a leaky roof and has cause for concern when getting prisoners in and out of the building.

Taylor explained that right now prisoners have to make a long trip from the jail cells through the kitchen, around the law enforcement center offices and finally through the public lobby to exit the build-

ing. He said that every time they make a turn or go through a doorway, there is a greater potential for danger.

"So you need limited public exposure and a straight shot out of the building?" asked County Clerk Shelly Harms.

Taylor said a door east of the main entrance could be used if some improvements are made. He also thinks a glassed-in enclosure should be erected for additional security.

Using a map showing the building's

layout, he explained how many safety precautions can be alleviated with that entrance since it would lead directly to the area of the building where prison cells are.

"I'm still being surprised with safety issues; we had our first issue of a prison fight the other day and it got me thinking that we need to make changes before we have a lawsuit on our hands," Taylor said. "Thank goodness we were watching the camera when it happened. It didn't take

more than 20 seconds or so for them to pick the fight. And, before we knew it the guy grabbed the other's head and threw him into the bars and we just can't have these types of guys in the LEC, it's too dangerous. I think a foyer-type enclosure at this other door would be a good, preventative strategy."

For many months, different options about improving the current law enforce-

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

A martial arts instructor helped a Colby Community College student learn one technique for getting out of a choke hold while Dr. Keegan Nichols, vice president of student affairs, waited for her turn.

Faculty, students learn self defense

By Kevin Bottrell
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Military and law enforcement martial arts instructor Kenton Russell gave a crash course in self defense to a group of Colby Community College students and faculty Wednesday afternoon.

Russell is a criminal justice instructor at Fort Hays State University. He teaches self defense classes there and runs the Tactical Defense Club. He is a former U.S. Army officer and has studied self defense for 28 years, learning styles from Karate to kick boxing.

Russell mainly teaches techniques from Krav Maga, Muay Thai, Jiu Jitsu and American wrestling because they are based on natural reactions and are easy to learn and remember. He also teaches simple principals such as what to do if someone tries to force you into a car.

He brought along several of his coaches to help with the session, and began by using them to demonstrate several techniques for breaking holds. He then had the students and faculty pair off with instructors to try some of the techniques for themselves.

Colby Police Officer Sage Hemmert, a former student of Russell's, gave a presentation about self defense techniques and took questions.



Martial arts instructor Kenton Russell demonstrated how to trap an attacker's arm using one of his instructors.

County, banks to close Friday

Several offices and businesses will close Friday for Veterans Day.

Banks will close for the holiday, except for the Farmers and Merchants branch at Dillon's, which will open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

All Thomas County offices will be closed as well as St. Francis

Community Services. All agencies in the Thomas County Office Complex, including Emergency Management, the Chamber of Commerce and Thomas County Extension will be closed.

City of Colby offices will remain open and there will be regular Friday trash pickup.



DEBBIE SCHWANKE/Colby Community College

History instructor Tom Moorhous adds decorations to his office door in the Bedker Memorial Complex.

College celebrates homecoming 2011

Faculty and staff have already decked the halls at Colby Community College, but instead of an early Christmas, they are celebrating Homecoming/Family Weekend.

Many office doors and bulletin boards are covered in Trojan memorabilia, photos and other blue and white decorations to mark the homecoming weekend, something the college hasn't put on in several years.

The three-day celebration begins today with Retro Day. The college is encouraging everyone to wear outfits from previous decades. The Ambassador Classic basketball tournament begins tonight, with the women's team playing at 5 p.m. and the men at 7 p.m.

Friday is Pride Day. Everyone is encouraged to wear Trojan apparel. The College Farm will hold an open house from 4 to 6 p.m. and a barbecue at 6 p.m. sponsored by the Collegiate Farm Bureau Block and Bridle Clubs.

That evening the Ambassador

Classic continues with the Lady Trojans playing at 5 p.m. and the men's team at 7 p.m. The college will celebrate Veterans Day during the game, giving out mini flags to everyone and flag pins to veterans. Local veterans will be recognized at halftime in both the men's and women's games and there will be a donation box set up to collect care package items for military personnel.

Homecoming royalty will be announced between the two games.

Saturday events will begin with an alumni pheasant hunt at 6 a.m. led by Endowment Foundation Director Nick Wells.

The campus will have an open house from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with a free soup and sandwich lunch in the cafeteria for students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Colby basketball teams will play at 5 and 7 p.m. in the final night of the Ambassador Classic. During halftimes the college will recognize athletes from 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and current teams.

Governor unveils plan to overhaul state health care agencies

By John Milburn
The Associated Press

TOPEKA — Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback on Tuesday outlined his plan to reorganize several agencies that handle Medicaid clients with the aim of saving the state hundreds of millions of dollars in mounting health care costs.

Under the new system, which would be called KanCare, private firms would be asked to tender bids for contracts to manage care for some Medicaid recipients. The

system is expected to begin operating at the start of the state's fiscal year on July 1, 2012.

Lt. Gov. Jeff Colyer, a surgeon and former state senator, said there would be financial incentives written into the contracts to encourage the providers to reduce costs and improve the health of Medicaid recipients.

"We want results and we are willing to put money on the line to achieve results," Colyer said.

Medicaid is the state's health care program for disabled, elderly

and low-income residents. It's one of the largest and fastest-growing expenditures in state government, accounting for nearly \$2.8 billion in overall spending. About 350,000 Kansas residents are on Medicaid.

The administration projects that the changes will save Kansas more than \$850 million over five years, including nearly \$370 million in state tax dollars and \$12.5 million in the next budget year. The administration said the savings will not result in lower reimbursement

payments health care providers, tougher eligibility requirements for services or a reduction in benefits to recipients.

Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley said Brownback left more questions unanswered, including specifics on where the savings will come from and how bidders will be selected to manage the programs.

"Today's announcement is another example of the political grandstanding that's become all too familiar during Gov. Brown-

back's first year in office," said Hensley, a Topeka Democrat. "All of the rhetoric in the world won't lead to sustainable results without substance."

Brownback, a Republican, said Kansas had to get its budget in order and control spending in anticipation of reduced federal spending for Medicaid and other programs. Kansas had to borrow \$200 million from its transportation program to fund its Medicaid programs this year due to a slump in state revenues.

"I stated at that time we don't have another \$200 million in this next year to do that, so we really need to look at the organizational structure and how we deliver this," Brownback said.

The state does not need federal approval to implement the changes.

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