



City agrees to help build pool storage

By Kayla Cornett
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The Colby City Council looked Tuesday at the design for a proposed storage building at the Colby Aquatic Center...

Swim Club Co-presidents Shari Oren and Laura Rush and Vice President Selena Catlin, attended, along with Todd Zurcher...

Councilman Tim Hutfles asked how this building would affect the planned walking trails around the new pool and water park...

Hutfles then asked if the city would be doing the dirt work and concrete for the building...

Councilman Mark Beringer asked if they were planning on completing the project this season...

Armstrong said that was the original plan, but the club proposed doing it this year and the city still has \$6,000 in the capital improvement fund...

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Tulsa bail set at \$9 million

TULSA (AP) - Two Oklahoma men suspected in a shooting rampage that left three people dead and terrorized Tulsa's African-American community appeared in court today...

Jake England, 19, and Alvin Watts, 32, appeared via closed-circuit television from jail. Both are being held on suspicion of three counts of first-degree murder...

Neither man had an attorney present. The judge set bond at \$9.16 million apiece and scheduled their next appearance for April 16.

Police have identified both as white, while all five victims in the early Friday shootings were black. Police and the FBI cautioned that it was too early to say whether the attacks in Tulsa's predominantly

Florida case held

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) - Special prosecutor Angela Corey said today she will not take the Trayvon Martin shooting death before a grand jury.

Corey said she continues to investigate the case and will not involve a grand jury that had been set to meet Tuesday in Sanford, Fla.

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black north side were racially motivated. Police spokesman Jason Willingham said that based on Facebook postings attributed to Eng-

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Colby mom gets \$400 'Immunize, Win' prize

Kim Gordon of Colby has won \$400 in utility bill credits from the "Immunize Win a Prize" program sponsored by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and Envision Digital Print.



Kim Gordon with Peyton

winner was selected from each clinic or provider.

The department's website says all children should receive immunizations by age 2 to prevent serious illnesses. "We want to thank you, Kim, for taking an active roll in helping to promote a healthy start for your child," said Leslie Focke...



STEVE HAYNES/Colby Free Press

Principal Larry Gabel (above) introduced the Colby High senior honored by the KU Alumni Association on Wednesday at a dinner in Oakley. Show with him are four of the 10 (from left), Morgan Bell, Emilea Finley and Katera Harter. Madison

Gawith stood behind Finley. Superintendent Janci Mills (below) talked about Brewster High's lone representative, Kasey Hoyt.

KU honors seniors at dinner

By Steve Haynes
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Ten Colby High seniors were among 59 students honored by the Kansas Honors Program at a dinner Wednesday in Oakley. Also on the list were one Brewster High senior and two from Golden Plains High School in Rexford.

The program, sponsored by the University of Kansas Alumni Association, honors students across Kansas who make up the top 10 percent of their graduating classes. The dinner in Oakley, held at the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center across from the courthouse, was one of 41 put on by the association.

The program, begun in 1971, honors top students regardless of their plans for higher education or family ties. Many of the students said they would be attending Kansas State University or another school, though several said their plans included KU.

Students get a certificate and a copy of Webster's New College dictionary. Several of the su-

perintendents and principals accompanying the senior recalled getting their dictionaries in the early years of the program.

Alumni volunteers had to take over the program after KU officials called to say the university's plane was fogbound in Lawrence and probably couldn't land in Colby or Oakley anyway.

Sherrie Wiedeman of Colby was the regional chair for the dinner and the designated master of ceremonies. She asked Jeff Mason, a Goodland lawyer and KU law grad, to fill in for the scheduled speaker, Dr. Don Steeples, a professor of geophysics and former deputy provost of the university, who grew up in western Kansas.

Melissa Stramel of Colby, a pharmacy graduate, took over for Danny Lewis, director of alumni programs for the association, who was to have presented the gifts.

The crowd, including principals and students, parents and area KU alums, filled the dining room at the service center.

Mason gave the students a lit-

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Courts offices here to close Friday

The Thomas County District Court and court offices here will be closed Friday along with others across the state as the Kansas court system begins the first of five "furlough" days set to close a \$1.4 million budget gap.

Clerk of the District Court Kim Schwarz said employees here really haven't heard much beyond the announcement sent from Topeka on Wednesday.

"You probably know as much as we do," she said.

Court offices will be closed Friday and on April 27, May 11 and

25 and June 8 unless the Legislature comes up with more money to pay court workers.

Schwarz said judges will be available for emergency hearings and other actions. Under the state Constitution, their pay normally cannot be reduced, unlike other court workers.

While the courts are closed, cases will be put off and lawyers, while they may work, cannot file anything.

The courts had hoped to avoid furlough days by asking the Legislature to pass a supplemental

appropriation for this year, Chief Justice Lawton Nuss wrote in a letter. House and Senate negotiators agreed to that.

However, the \$1.4 million got tied up in wrangling over the regular budget for next year. It still could be passed when the Legislature convenes again later this month, but Nuss said the court system couldn't wait to start saving money on payroll.

If the supplemental appropriation doesn't pass, he said, then the furloughs would have to come out of employee's checks two days at

a time to make up the gap.

"As of today, we have no assurance that we will have that appropriation to operate through the end of the fiscal year," he said Wednesday, adding: "We will rescind the remaining furlough days if the appropriation is approved."

His letter said the shortfall was caused by a drop in case filings which left court revenue from fees less than expected. Nuss said payroll cuts were necessary because salaries make up the bulk of the court system's state budget.

Pinwheels spin message of preventing child abuse

By Christina Beringer

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The Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign created by Prevent Child Abuse America is putting a new spin on the prevention of child abuse and neglect this month.

Paige Campbell with the Northwest Kansas Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect office in Colby said she's encouraging everyone

to support the group's mission during Child Abuse Prevention Month by displaying a pinwheel in your front yard.

She said she hopes people will wear blue on Friday to make people aware of the issue, saying that all children should be raised in healthy, nurturing homes, free from abuse and neglect.

"As important as it is to be aware of the child abuse and neglect statistics in our community," she said, "it is even more crucial that we know how to prevent it."

Campbell said she hopes that when people see a pinwheel spinning in the wind this month, and throughout the year, that they think about the role they can play in protecting children and preventing child abuse and neglect.

"They are a reminder for adults to practice

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