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City hears request for more funds

By Kayla Cornett

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The Colby City Council heard a budget request Tuesday from Thomas County Economic Development Alliance Director Christy Rocca, who asked the city to continue its support and also give money for a special projects fund.

Rocca's first request was for the city and the county to match each other's annual donation again; currently, the county gives the agency \$56,556 and the city \$54,325 a year.

She then talked about a special projects fund she'd like to have, which would be used to pursue projects such as the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. She said she has spent \$455 so far on that project and it's not done.

"I've enjoyed doing it," Rocca said. "I'm out in the community, I'm meeting people, I'm hearing requests from people in the community ... but I can take all of that

back to my office and put that on my to-do list, things that I would like to do or things I would like to address."

Some of the other things she would like to use this fund for, she said, would be to host a regional meeting of KREDA, (western) Kansas Rural Economic Development Association. She said the economic development organization meets quarterly; holding a meeting here would bring 40 to 50 economic development directors and others to town, bringing money into the community with them.

Rocca said she's also been approached to hold a roundtable meeting for northwest Kansas, also a quarterly meeting. The meeting would be in September, she said, and would be a smaller group of 10 to 20.

Another project she's been working on is putting together a recruitment packet for Thomas

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Agora comes to Colby



Debbie Applebaugh, independent consultant of Scentsy and Velata, gave change to a customer Saturday at "Agora: The Marketplace" at the Colby United Methodist Church. Other

booths included a bake sale and rummage sale inside the church.

KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Judges' voting maps don't protect incumbents

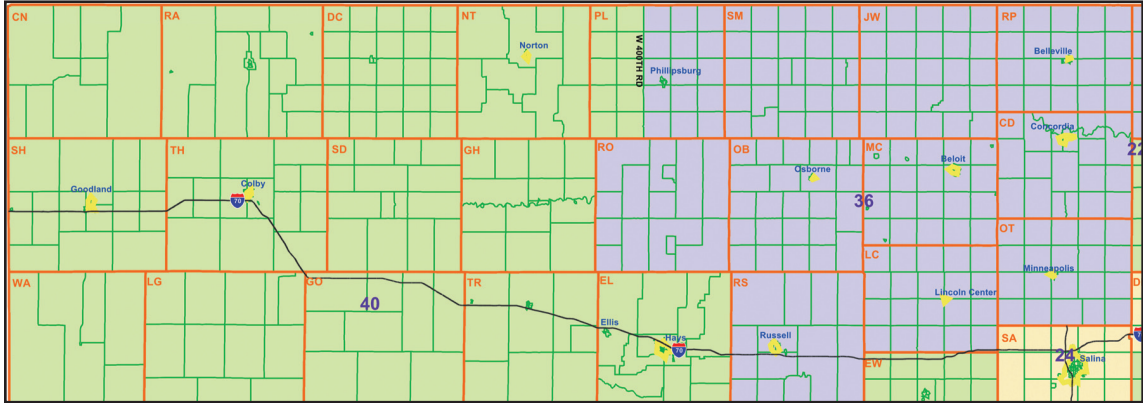
By John Hanna

AP Political Writer

TOPEKA – This year's contentious stalemate over redistricting will likely provide future Kansas lawmakers with a memorable lesson in why it doesn't benefit them to leave redrawing the state's political boundaries to federal judges.

After legislators failed to pass any legislation to adjust congressional, legislative or State Board of Education districts to account for population shifts over the past decade, three judges imposed new voting-district lines last week.

When legislators handle redistricting, protecting incumbents is a key issue, but it was a low pri-



The new Senate map for western Kansas, shown here in part, and the whole state can be found at redistricting.ks.gov/_Plans/district_court.html.

ority for the federal judges. Their maps for legislative districts, particularly for the state House, were

jaw-droppers that reset the state's political landscape, pairing dozens of legislators for potential incum-

bent-versus-incumbent contests and making a swarm of new faces likely at the Statehouse next year.

The judges administered an old-fashioned birching to incumbent legislators as a group.

Even if lawmakers had passed plans to adjust the state's four congressional districts, 125 state House districts, 40 Senate districts and 10 Board of Education districts, the courts would have gotten involved. Federal judges would have reviewed the congressional map, the Kansas Supreme Court and the others.

But the courts would have shown some deference to lawmakers in considering whether to OK the maps.

The three judges hearing the lawsuit filed by Robyn Renee Essex, a GOP precinct commit-

tee woman from the conservative stronghold of Olathe, felt free, as one of them put it during a hearing, to "write on blank sheets of paper."

And, as the judges wrote in their unsigned, 206-page opinion, "we owe no deference to any proposed plan, as none has successfully navigated the legislative process to the point of enactment."

House leaders were especially frustrated because their chamber had approved by wide margins two versions of a bipartisan plan for redrawing representatives' districts. The Senate even approved one version, but House districts nevertheless became tangled in the fight over Senate lines.

Foundation awards five area scholarships

By Christina Beringer

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Five Thomas County high school graduates have been selected to receive scholarships from the Thomas County Community Foundation for the coming school year.

Foundation Executive Director Melinda Olson said the scholarship winners are Rachel Juenemann, Konnor Kriss and Julia Hutfles, all of Colby, Chase Berg of Gem and Whitney Schultz of Brewster.

• Juenemann has an extensive service record in Colby, said Ol-

son. Her extracurricular activities include helping with Meals on Wheels, making baby blankets for Emergency Pregnancy Services and volunteering as a 4-H camp counselor and at American Red Cross blood drives, in addition to school-sponsored activities.

Juenemann was selected for the \$500 Chuck Dempewolf Community Service Scholarship, which is primarily based on community service merit. The scholarship is sponsored by Kansas Quick Lube.

Juenemann says she plans to pursue a nutritional sciences de-

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Brownback to speak at anti-abortion event

TOPEKA (AP) – Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback is scheduled to address the closing banquet of a national anti-abortion group's convention later this month.

The National Right to Life Committee says Brownback will speak June 30, the final day of the three-day gathering in Arlington, Va.

Brownback had a strong anti-abortion voting record in the U.S. Senate.

As governor, he has signed measures tightening limits on late-

term abortions, restricting private insurance coverage for elective abortions and imposing health and safety regulations specifically for abortion providers.

He has also signed bills to impose tougher parental consent rules when minors seek abortions and to deny funds to Planned Parenthood.

Beads galore



Bette Palmer (left) and her son, Billy Palmer, looked at beads Friday at the Bead Show at the Colby Community Building. "I could spend so much money here," Bette Palmer said. "They

have such a large variety of beading items that you can't find." The show ran Friday and Saturday.

KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

