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House member talks Congress here

By Sam Dieter

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At the start of a town-hall meeting Wednesday at the Thomas County Office Complex, Tim Huelskamp opened with a joke about a not-so-funny subject.

"Things have been going very well in this county because Congress is not in session," he said.

Huelskamp, a freshman member of the

U.S. House, represents the 1st District of central and western Kansas. He stopped at noon Wednesday in Colby to talk with a group of about 15 citizens, community leaders and aides before taking questions. Huelskamp gave an update of what was going on in Congress, which, he said, is not good. He showed charts which projected that the country's debt will grow exponentially in future years.

Another disturbing report he gave was that 46 percent of the country's debt is

owed to foreign countries.

The congressman described meeting with an angry Chinese official.

"Basically, he was there on a banker's call," because of the money his country was owed, Huelskamp said. "He was right."

Mike Schultz of Brewster, a regional director for the Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, asked about a lawsuit brought by his group against the World Trade Organization. Schultz said he felt

the international agency was discriminating against foreign companies.

"I know you've not been too supportive lately on that, and I want to know why," Schultz said.

Schultz said he felt a lot of jobs had left the country, not because of higher taxes in the U.S., but because of cheaper labor overseas.

His recommendation: "If we're going to sell it here, we need to build it here, or I'm going to tax it here."

Schultz said that money would go a long way toward fixing the deficit.

When asked about the lawsuit later, Huelskamp did not seem to know a lot about it, but he did agree that a lot of rulings from the trade organization went against the U.S.

"I think we have some of the toughest regulations in the world," he said.

He told several stories to prove that

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Charlotte Shoup-Olsen (above) used a spiral flag as an example to show how the "circle of communication" works at the Third Annual Women in Denim event in Rexford. She explained that the circular patterns made by the flag when waving are similar to the patterns and effects our words can have on others. Sandy Rodgers (right) of Goodland, president of the Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance, looked over the schedule for event.

CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press

Women join in Rexford for Women in Denim

By Christina Beringer

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About 50 women from around northwest Kansas, and one from eastern Oklahoma, found their true colors at the third annual Women in Denim seminar, put on by the Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance on Oct. 3 at the Shepherd's Staff in Rexford.

Half of the women were first-timers, said Debbie Potter of the Thomas County Conservation District, a member of the alliance.

The day-long, women-only workshop called "Finding Your True Colors" featured speakers on "building a generational dynasty," identifying "personality colors" and effective communication to better manage a farm and family.

"Today, we want all of the women to have a good time," said Sandy Rodgers of Goodland, president of the alliance, "and to learn skills to cope with women's agricultural issues."

"There's a great line-up of presenters," said Jen Schoenfeld, an extension agent from Oakley, who said this was her first time at the event. "I'm most looking forward to the True Colors session, where we will learn to better understand ourselves to work with others."

The morning began with a session called "Let's Talk About It" by Extension Specialist Charlotte Shoup-Olsen, a professor at the School of Family Studies and Human Services at Kansas State

University.

"Communication is vital," said Potter, "whether it concerns your family, business and employees or your final wishes concerning your estate."

"Are there words left unspoken at home?" asked Shoup-Olsen. "Do you feel like your opinion is not always heard?"

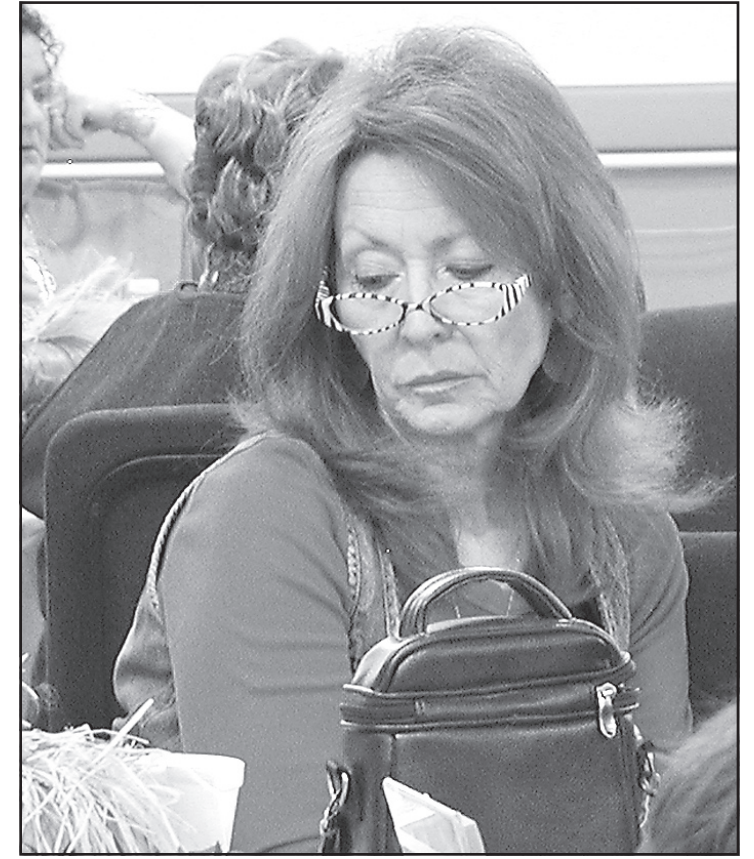
She said that by changing patterns in communication, a woman can manage a farm more effectively and enhance relationships with her family.

To become an expert communicator, she suggested making

changes in posture, eliminating terms that put others on the defensive and listening with "two eyes and two ears."

She encouraged an audience member to demonstrate an appropriate posture of someone who is interested and invested in a conversation. The woman leaned forward and locked eyes with the speaker. Then, to demonstrate an ineffective way to engage in conversation, the volunteer sat back in her seat and pretended to ignore the speaker.

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County told about issues with revitalization plan

By Christina Beringer

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Minor logistical issues are surfacing after six Neighborhood Revitalization Plan applications have been received by the county, Melanie Rowilson of Studley said during Monday's Thomas County Commission meeting.

Rowilson, a Kansas Property Valuation Division-approved appraiser, has been lending her services in Thomas County.

She, along with another state-approved appraiser, Shirley Soellner of Goodland, and Kathy Cunningham of the county appraiser's office here, presented several concerns to the commissioners and helped develop recommendations for an addendum to clarify

interpretations of the plan. A public hearing was scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 31.

The property-tax rebate program, which has been researched and discussed by the county since mid-March, was approved during a public hearing on May 31.

It reimburses property taxes to the owners for new construction and improvements on their home or commercial building for projects valued for at least \$25,000.

The rebates are spread over the course of 10 years, beginning with a 100-percent rebate the first year the eligible project is complete. For the second year following completion, a 90-percent rebate is given back. Finally, by the 11th year, the property owner

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Search continues for young girl

WESTMINSTER, Colo. (AP) — Colorado police looking for a 10-year-old girl who disappeared on her walk to school have found a body in a park, but are not saying whether it is linked to the case and noted today that officers are still searching for her.

The discovery of the body is the

latest turn in the disappearance of Jessica Ridgeway that has seen police look for clues in an abduction of an 11-year-old girl in Wyoming and a reported sighting in a car with Colorado plates in Maine.

At a pre-dawn news conference, police refused to release any details about the body found late Wednesday at a park in the suburban Denver city of Arvada, about seven miles from where Jessica

disappeared Friday. They also declined to say whether the body was that of a child.

Police spokesman Trevor Matherasso said investigators were processing evidence from Patridge Park and that no additional information was available.

In tweets, Westminster police said investigators had worked

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Amazing acts



Peter Davison performed an "amazing act" by balancing a flower pot on his head Sunday during "Up in the Air" at the Cultural Arts Center on the Colby Community College campus. Davison balanced other items on his head as well as showing off his juggling skills.

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

