

Weather

County approves money for jail

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"It's just not safe after 5 p.m. when we lock the front door," said Taylor. "We've tested it out and it's possible that people in the lobby can duck down, crawl on the floor and hide in the restrooms and no one would ever know. They could potentially hide in there and stay there until most of the people left at night."

No approval is necessary for the purchase of equipment, said Thomas County Commissioner Paul Steele, but out of consideration, Taylor gave notice that he needs to replace five radar units that are outdated and can no longer be repaired.

\$10,062 will be spent with Applied Concepts of Plano, Texas. Taylor said former sheriff Mike Baughn received a grant in 2006 or 2007 for the current radar units, but he wasn't able to find

any money available today.

Taylor also gave notice that he plans to buy a printer that will cost about \$170 and bins for the storage of inmates' personal belongings. He said they don't have enough lockers or storage space for all of their prisoners, so the weather-proof, secure bins will be stored in the exercise yard.

He said he plans to buy the bins from Rasure Lumber, but did not give a cost estimate.

"Now that that's taken care of," said Steele, "I'd like to talk about what we need to do about this jail for a minute. We've gotten some pushback from deputies and both sides have valid concerns. With that in mind, I've been struggling to decide what to do (about expanding or building a new law enforcement center)."

"Deputies have pointed out that we are landlocked (in the

current location), and combined with all of the maintenance problems, we need to decide how much longer we want to continue pouring money into the building. And, I've also just learned that you can go into the attic and scrape mortar out with your finger.

"I've been fishing around to find a suitable alternative. The deputies prefer to go somewhere else, but the problem with that is putting inmates in a car and bringing them to court. It'd be more convenient to have it all in one judicial center with court services officers, county attorney, offices for judges, secretaries, court reporters and other people, because it is a separate, but equal, arm of government."

"This has been on my front burner for quite awhile, now. We all need to meet with the deputies so that when we are all done, we are all singing from the

same song sheet. We need to be in agreement on what is needed and what can be done."

"We are convinced nothing will be done overnight," said Taylor, "but we are getting positive feedback from the public, now that they know where our money is going - out of county."

"Well, this year our sales tax collection exceeded what was budgeted," Steele said, "so there might be more money to set aside for the project. It'd be better to move forward with more cash in hand, because as it is, with \$2 million in bonds, we'll be paying \$936,000 in interest. You don't have to pay interest with cash, so that'd be better for the people."

"So, at the end of the month, I'll probably be asking my colleagues to transfer more money for the project."

Extension may join with another county

From "EXTENSION," Page 1

Colby.

"Our goal is to do what's best for us and the people of Thomas County," said Standage. "We've looked to see if the options are relevant, if there's value in it and how to maintain a sustainable program."

"We've had conversations with Golden Prairie to evaluate that alternative, and we've sized each other up to see what's in common. We feel like what's currently being done at the Golden Prairie District is more in line with Thomas County, compared to Rawlins County."

"Based on information we have at this time, we feel like that would be a better decision. Now, I'm not saying that making a partnership work with Rawlins County would be impossible, but it would be more of a challenge."

"Your reasons are understandable," said Cox. "We need to do what's best for us, too, which is why we want to partner with Thomas County. It makes sense for us."

Later on, Commissioner Paul Steele said that when he drives around town, he sees a lot of Rawlins County cars here with people supporting our businesses and he'd like to see an alliance work with our northern neighbors.

Conversations led to determining what the property tax levy would be if a merge took place, since the tax is a major revenue source for Extension offices. Thomas County has appropriated \$136,000, with a levy of 1.254 mills, for next year.

According to the law, said Chris Onstad, K-State Research and Extension northwest area director, an agreement to form a district can specify a levy limit as high as 2.5 mills. Onstad speculated that K-State would not agree to anything less.

Commissioners agreed they were not comfortable with allowing a 2.5 mill cap, nearly double the current tax.

"By agreeing to this cap, the district would have the option of going to 2.5 mills if needed," Onstad said, "but likely would stay lower. These people are not out to raise

money.

"I want to practice the existing law to what the state Legislature put into place and I don't think K-State will agree to anything less."

Standage agreed: "It's important to remember that board members are also property owners in the community. They'd have to take responsibility to not waste tax dollars," he said.

"But when you need 2.5 mills, our people won't be able to pay it because it'll come in tough times," said Steele. "We'd be better sold if the cap was set at 1.5 mills and a partnership with Rawlins County was considered at the same time. We are sympathetic to our colleagues in Rawlins and we don't want to leave them high and dry."

No one made a motion on forming a district or joining one. Commissioners directed the Extension staff to propose their suggestions of setting a 1.5 mill cap and partnering with Rawlins to K-State. No date was set to continue the discussion.

Crash leaves hole in empty building

From "CRASH," Page 1

Janet Wessel, had heard about her grandson's condition.

"He's not well yet, he's still in a coma, he hasn't woken up yet," Janet Wessel said.

Janet Wessel said that her grandson has two broken vertebrae which doctors cannot work on until he wakes up, and she does not know when that will

be. She said the hospital upgraded his condition from critical last night to a stage between critical and stable.

The second crash happened at 11:40 a.m. Saturday when a Colorado Springs, Colo., woman rear-ended a van on the mile 70 exit of I-70.

Alexandra E Hutchens, 19, was westbound on I-70, taking the exit ramp at mile marker 70,

about six miles north of Oakley, when she rear-ended a 1999 Mercury Van, apparently with a family inside. Emily Dowling, 18, of Oak Ridge, Tenn. was driving the van. She was taken by ambulance to Logan County Hospital along with Dale B. Dowling, 50, Andrew B. Dowling, 16 and Sarah E. Dowling, 14.

Hutchens then veered off the

north side of the exit ramp in her 2001 Toyota 4Runner and got back on the ramp, then overcorrected, left the ramp again, crossed Highway 83 and hit a building. She was uninjured after the crash. All five people in the accident were wearing seat belts.

Brewster man arrested for making threats Friday

From "BREWSTER," Page 1

or three troopers looked everywhere else Mayer might be before finding him in his house.

For three or four minutes, they just banged on the windows," the sheriff said, "and he finally came out and we placed him under arrest."

At the S&T Telephone office on Main

Street, workers said they locked their doors during the incident as a precaution. Taylor said a trooper gave a bus leaving the school for a basketball game an escort out of town.

Briefly

Santa City now open every weeknight

Santa City, in the Scout Hut at Fike Park, is open weeknights from 6 to 8 p.m. and from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Next Monday, Christmas Eve, the winter wonderland will be open from 1 to 3 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are welcome.

Museum offers lunch, lecture on wildlife

The Prairie Museum of Art and History's second Food for Thought program of the season at noon Thursday will feature retired wildlife biologist Leonard Hopper, talking about "People and Wildlife on the Plains: Prehistory to Present Day." Everyone is invited to this free program, including a light lunch, at the museum, 1905 S. Franklin Ave. Call Ann Miner at 460-4590 for information.

Sanitation Department won't pick up on holiday

The Colby Sanitation Department will not pick up trash next Monday or Tuesday for the Christmas holidays. Monday's residential trash route will be picked up after 8 a.m. Friday. People who normally have their trash picked up Tuesday should plan to have tipper cans by the curb by 8 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 26.

The department will not pick up trash on Tuesday, Jan. 1, for New Year's Day. People on Tuesday routes should put trash out on Wednesday, Jan. 2. For questions, call Public Works Director Omar Weber at 460-4420.

Church women are selling holiday nuts

The Colby Episcopal Churchwomen are selling fresh-crop pecans, walnuts and cashews for the holiday season. Almonds, pralines, chocolate-covered pecans and mixed nuts are also available. Call Martha Hullett at 462-2505 for delivery or you can make a purchase at Colby Canvas, 285 E. Third St.

Free adult classes to begin in January

The Adult Education Department at Colby Community College is offering free General Educational Development classes for anyone who needs to finish a high-school degree beginning Monday, Jan. 7, in the lower level of the library on campus. The department also will provide an "academic bridge" to prepare those who want to enroll in health-care programs. For information or to enroll, call Director Nance Munderloh at 460-4663.

Volunteers needed to deliver meals to seniors

The Colby Nutrition Site at the Senior Progress Center needs volunteers to deliver meals to homes from 10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays or Thursdays. Call Kaila DeBoer at 460-2901 for information.

Weather forecast table with columns for Day, High/Low, and Precipitation.

LOCAL TV Listings Sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS



Wednesday Evening December 19, 2012

Table of TV listings for Wednesday Evening, December 19, 2012, including channels like KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, KSNK/NBC, and Cable Channels.

American Profile advertisement: We Celebrate Hometown Life. Stories from hometowns just like yours. Look for us each week in this paper.

Tuesday Evening December 18, 2012

Table of TV listings for Tuesday Evening, December 18, 2012, including channels like KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, KSNK/NBC, and Cable Channels.