

## Rehearsing a scene



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

April Gee, left, and Tess Brown, right, members of the Colby High School forensics team, rehearsed while waiting their turn to perform Thursday during a home forensics meet. The two were doing improvised duet acting, where students draw characters and situations and make up a skit.

## Kansas National Resource Council to follow office restructuring plan

By Andy Burr  
National Resources Conservation Service

In response to a news release issued by the Kansas Farm Service Agency Feb. 15, State Conservationist Harold L. Klaege of Salina, said that the Natural Resources Conservation Service would follow the plan proposed by the Farm Service Agency in consolidating offices across the state.

The National Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Centers affected are in Cottonwood Falls, Coldwater, Olathe, Junction City, Howard, Yates Center, Medicine Lodge, Elkhart, Alma, Leavenworth, and Gove.

"With budgets becoming tight for federal agencies," Klaege said, "USDA partners are trying to find ways to effectively and efficiently serve their clients and in NRCS's case, get more conservation on the land."

"As a USDA partner, it makes sense that Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency locate together to serve their clients."

As part of the process, the Farm Service Agencies will hold public meetings in the counties where offices are proposed being closed.

"It is our intent that office consolidation be a smooth transition," said Klaege, "and that farmers and ranchers records be available in the county where the USDA Service Center is located or if the client desires, a neighboring county."

"Regardless of the office location," he said, "farmers and ranch-

ers should be assured that the National Resources Conservation Service will be there to serve them and to provide the conservation technical assistance they want and to deliver the voluntary programs that Congress has authorized and funded."

Some programs are the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, Wetlands Reserve Program, and others.

"Today, with the latest portable technology at their fingertips, such as laptop computers, geographic information system technology, printers, cell phones, and more, the conservation service field staff can meet with a farmer or rancher on the land and develop a conservation plan on site," said Klaege.

"This is how Hugh Hammond Bennett, the father of the soil conservation movement during the Dust Bowl days in the 1930s, envisioned conservation planning, by walking the land with the farmer or rancher."

In Kansas, the National Resources Conservation Service has an office in 103 counties. In December, the Sedan Field Office consolidated with the Howard Field Office.

The national conservation service office and local conservation districts have shared office space and equipment and office staff since the passage of the Conservation District Law in the late 1930s.

A steering committee made up of representatives from the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts, the State Conservation Com-

“Regardless of the office location, farmers and ranchers should be assured that the National Resources Conservation will be there.”

Harold Klaege,  
state conservationist

mission, the KACD Employees' Organization, and NRCS are working together to determine how local conservation districts will maintain a presence in their county when the national conservation service offices consolidate.

As new information becomes available, the National Resources Conservation Service will make those details available or in Thomas County, call 462-7671 or stop by their office, 915 E. Walnut in Colby.

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## Pastors push case

WICHITA (AP) — A coalition of pastors Thursday called on the Legislature to use a little-known statute to order the new attorney general to prosecute a Wichita abortion provider.

Former Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline told reporters separately before the pastors' news conference that he was invited by the group to attend the event, but that the legislative effort comes from them. Kline, now district attorney in Johnson County, said his role was to help the pastors understand the issues and to provide a general overview of the law.

"I don't think it is right to be let go," Kline said of the case against Dr. George Tiller, noting that two judges had found there was probable cause that a crime has been committed.

While still attorney general,

Kline filed 30 misdemeanor charges in December alleging illegal late-term abortions had been conducted at Tiller's clinic. Those charges were dismissed after Sedgwick County District Attorney Nola Foulston objected on jurisdictional grounds. Incoming Attorney General Paul Morrison declined to pursue the charges.

"We have an investigation going in regards to Dr. Tiller and if we find evidence of a crime, we will file new charges," Ashley Anstaett, spokeswoman for Morrison's office, said Thursday. "Those 30 charges are not really applicable anymore."

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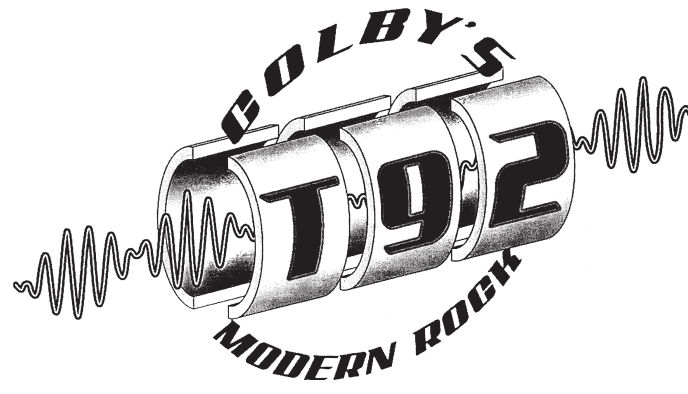
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