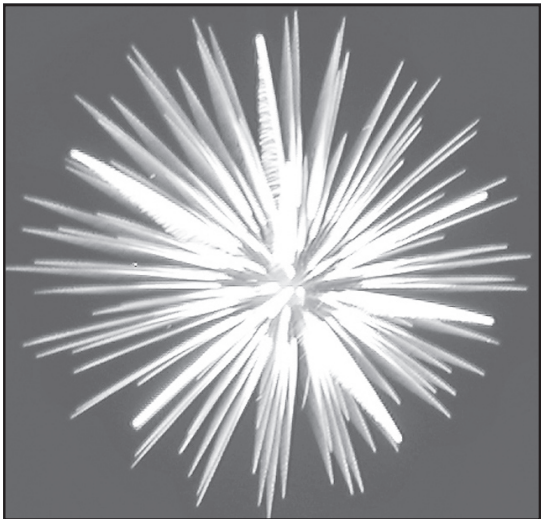




KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

## Colby honors nation's birth

Colby celebrated the Fourth of July in style with a fireworks display (above, right) provided by the Kiwanis Club of Colby/Thomas County and set off by the Colby Fire Department. The High Plains Lions Club held a hotdog feed earlier in the evening. Several area acts provided entertainment, including the Bugbee Sisters (below), who did several songs, including the "Star Spangled Banner." The Lions estimated that about 300 people attended the feed.



EVAN BARNUM/Colby Free Press



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

## Briefly

### Pick some food for Genesis

Remember to bring your nonperishable food donations for the Genesis-Thomas County Food Bank to the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass Festival next weekend. Boxes will be placed near the entrance. The schedule kicks off with a potluck supper at 6:30 p.m. next Thursday in the 4-H Building at the Thomas County Fairgrounds, and continues Friday to Sunday, July 17-19. For information, call the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at 460-7643 or (800) 611-8835.

### Church offers free baby stuff

The Colby Wesleyan Church plans a free "Baby Day" from noon to 2 p.m. Tuesday. Parents may come and "shop" for used and new baby items, including toddler and infant clothes, baby food and diapers. Donations of used items are needed. The

church is at 320 W. Pine St. in Colby. For information, call Joy Rothfuss at the church, 462-8391.

### KU alums to welcome freshmen

Incoming University of Kansas freshmen and their parents from northwest Kansas will be welcomed into the KU family at a Jayhawk Generations Welcome Picnic at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at Fike Park in Colby. Area alumni, new students, students interested in KU and parents are invited. Each new Jayhawk will receive a free T-shirt. For information or to make reservations, go to [www.kualumni.org](http://www.kualumni.org), call the Alumni Association at (800) 584-2957 or e-mail [kualumni@kualumni.org](mailto:kualumni@kualumni.org).

### College bus will haul vets

Colby Community College is making its bus available to veterans who're not able to walk in the Fair

# Three swine flu cases confirmed in county

By Kevin Bottrell

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Three cases of the "H1N1" flu virus — commonly known as swine flu — have been confirmed in adults in Thomas County, state officials said Wednesday.

The cases were diagnosed by area physicians and confirmed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

Until now, the closest confirmed case was an adult in Gove County. Beyond that, the virus has not yet affected much of northwest Kansas. Many of the cases have been in counties near Kansas City, but the disease seems to be spreading.

County Health Administrator Connie Walden urged people to take what steps they can to reduce the spread of the virus: wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, stay home if you have flu symptoms, cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue and stay healthy by eating a balanced diet and drinking plenty of water.

It's OK to have pork chops or grill some ribs, though. The state Department of Health and Environment says the flu can't be passed through properly handled and cooked pork products.

Walden said people should treat

the swine flu just as they would any seasonal flu virus.

"It's not time to panic," Walden said. "It's just time to be extra careful."

Hospital Administrator Janice McCart said Citizens Medical Center is asking anyone showing flu symptoms to stay away from the hospital. She said the precaution is being taken for the safety of the doctors, staff and patients.

Symptoms include a fever of more than 100 degrees, body aches, coughing, sore throat and respiratory congestion. In some cases, diarrhea and vomiting may

See "SWINE FLU," Page 3

# Group proposes tax for new swimming pool

By Andy Heintz

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About 10 members of a working group attended the City Council meeting on Tuesday to voice their support for a sales tax to build a new swimming pool and water park for Colby.

The group included C.W. Cheney, Colby Swim Club Coach Sondra Finley, Kammy Booi, Kris Lemman, Jennifer Burr, Kathy Kersenbrock Ostmeyer, Holly Lyn, Mandy Lanning and Sherrie Wiedeman.

Wiedeman said they would like to see an additional half-cent sales tax to generate money to build the pool.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said the group would need to bring the council a petition supporting the project with the signatures of at least 10 percent of the registered voters in Colby. The city currently

has 1,751 registered voters, so the group will need to get about 175 valid signatures.

If the group is able to get enough signatures, Armstrong said, the proposal could be voted on at in a special election or in the state primary election in August, said Assistant Deputy Clerk Kristi Mann.

If a majority of voters supports the idea, it would raise the sales tax rate in the city from 6.55 percent to 7.05 percent. This would cause an increase in what people pay for just about everything, said Armstrong. For example if a person bought a \$25,000 car today, the tax would be 1,637.50, but if sales tax is increase, the tax would go to \$1,762.50.

Wiedeman said she was confident the group could gather enough signatures to get the sales tax proposal on the ballot.

See "COUNCIL," Page 3

# County to keep budgets tight

By Vera Sloan

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The Thomas County commissioners scrambled to hear a few budget proposals before adjourning their meeting Monday so they could get back to the wheat harvest, but they sent a message to county department heads and programs to hold the budget down.

"We have dropped about 3 percent in estimated valuation this year," Commissioner Paul Steele said, "and we'd like to see all the departments come to us with a

proposed budget that doesn't exceed the 2009 budgets."

Trying to hold all the departments' budgets at the same level as 2009 may equate to pulling a rabbit out of the hat for the commissioners, however.

Regional Recycling Director Lynette Koon appeared again at the commissioners' suggestion to clarify the reason for last week's request for extra money to take the program to the end of the year. The program has lost at least \$20,000 in income so far this year as prices for recycled material plunged with

the recession.

Koon said her board would meet with the Colby City Council on Tuesday night. Members planned to ask the city for the same \$1.50 per resident they asked of the county, along with all the government entities belong to the agency.

She said they hope to keep the recycling center's head above water until new budgets are in effect and the price of recyclable materials has made a recovery.

See "COUNTY," Page 3

# Colby man keeps 'Victory Garden' tradition growing north of town

By Vera Sloan

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Some say Victory Gardens are making a comeback because Michelle Obama has re-introduced one on the grounds of the White House this year.

However, that is not why long-time gardener Marvin Chloe plants a big garden at his place four miles north of Colby, on the east side of K-25.

"When I was a kid growing up near Blakeman, west of Atwood, my mother always had a garden," he said, "and I guess that's the reason I've always had one."

"The perfectly manicured garden is a delight to his neighbors," said Sharee Fromholtz, Chloe's neigh-

bor to the northeast, "and I get a lot of the goodies from it, because he always shares."

Chloe was a Colby police officer from 1970 to 1981, then went to work for Central Star Pipe Line, with time off in 1991 for service overseas in the first Gulf War. He recently retired from Central Star.

"My garden suffered some during the years I was with the pipeline," he said, "but now I have the time to take care of it."

Chloe recently

"I don't plant to save money, because of the cost of fertilizer, plants and seeds. It's something I grew up with and I like to do it."

See "GARDEN," Page 3

