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## Board votes to keep pool amid outcry

By Andy Heintz  
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Faced with opposition from regular swimmers, elderly exercisers and a physical therapist, the Colby Community College board decided Monday not to close the college pool, said to be the only indoor pool between Denver and Hays.

Closing and draining the pool was included in the proposed budget for this year as a cost cutting measure. It would have saved the college \$90,000, said Alan Waites, vice president of business affairs. He said the college has

\$10,440,260 left in its 2010-2011 budget.

However, if the pool stays open, it needs repairs, and the college will have to find some money for that. Officials suggested lowering the water level and the water temperature to save money, and charging higher fees to pay some of the costs.

About 40 people attended the meeting to oppose closing the pool. The group included a physical therapist, people affiliated with the Colby Swim Club and several elderly citizens who use the pool.

Faye Goeken of Colby, who

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## Sign-ups open for fair parade

It's time once again for the Thomas County Fair Parade.

The Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce is accepting parade entries, with applications available at their office, 350 S. Range Ave. Entries must be into the chamber by 5 p.m. Friday.

The theme this year is "The Spirit of the Prairie Lives On," in

keeping with the 125th Anniversary celebration.

The parade will begin at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 27. Check-in for entries and floats will begin at 4 p.m. under a tent at the corner of Franklin Avenue and Eighth Street. Farm implements will line

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## Strutting their stuff



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Colby High junior Ariel Severson showed off her boxer, Annie, for the judges during the senior showmanship category at the 4-H Dog Show Saturday at Heartland Christian School.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Senior Design Engineer Jeremy Bridgeman (left), (engine division); Bob Honas (center), field test engineer and Tom Sloan (right) took time out for a photo op with the prototype Gleaner Super 7 combine, which was on its final engineering tests and data collection before being introduced to the public in August. It made a stop in Sloan's wheat field on Saturday and Sunday to cut a few rounds.

## Company tests prototype combine

By Vera Sloan

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There's just something about a black combine that spells mystery.

The unusual-looking prototype machine, observed chewing its way across a field of Tom Sloan's wheat north of Gem on Sunday, is the newest in the AgCo Gleaner Series 7 line. It has not even been given a designation yet, except for "Super7 Stealth." It has all the mystery of the stealth bomber and engineers are keeping a tight lip on what's different about the behemoth black grain-eating monster.

Some of the specs can be seen just by looking, such as a header that takes a 40 foot swath across the field while traveling about 6 mph in heavy wheat. And it's no secret that the grain tank has more than the 330 bushel capacity of the latest model, the R76.

Following along behind the phantom ma-

chine, there was little evidence of straw, because it chops the straw before spreading it over a 40-foot span, leaving behind less material to interfere with no till farming.

The motor is quiet, and to stand next to this mystery machine while its running is eerie. It seems much too quiet for such a monster.

Teams of engineers spent 30 months making significant improvements in the class 7 series of combines, according to the company's web site, also saying that the company expects the combine to offer a significant boost in productivity over the R76.

"We're testing the machine as the harvest moves north," said Bob Honas, field test engineer for AgCo. "We had two stops in Texas, two in Oklahoma and two in Kansas.

"One reason we picked up on testing with Tom is because of his former engineering experience with the company, the size of his farm and the optimum testing facilities. We've gotten positive feedback wherever we've stopped with the machine."

"It's no accident that I got to use the new prototype to cut some of my wheat," Sloan said. "I've known Honas for a long time, and we worked together before I left the company to come back home to farm."

Senior Design Engineer, Jeremy Bridgeman of Newton was on hand to check out the new machine. He happened to be in town visiting his wife's parents, Jon and Ann Friesen, when the machine rolled into Thomas County. He said he has worked on the engine team for this particular combine for the last year.

"Awesome," said Bridgeman, when asked how he would describe the combine, still keeping a tight lip on information.

Full specs for the machine will be released in August, Bridgeman said, and it will be in full production by January.

The men said the combine will be on display at Husker Harvest Days, Sept. 14, 15 and 16 in Grand Island, Neb.

## Agencies told to expect status-quo budget

By John Hanna

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — Kansas Gov. Mark Parkinson's budget staff is telling state agencies to prepare status quo spending proposals for the next budget, anticipating that revenues from a sales tax increase will keep programs largely intact.

But a key legislator said Tuesday that the state's finances remain fragile and could force a new round of cuts, despite the tax increase, which took effect July 1.

"They probably need to have a Plan B in place," Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jay Emler, a Lindsborg Republican, said of the administration.

The state Budget Division issued guidelines this week for agencies to use in drafting spending proposals for the state's 2012

fiscal year, which begins in July 2011. The division provided an outline of those guidelines to The Associated Press upon request.

The guidelines presume as a starting point that revenues from the sales tax increase will help offset the loss of up to \$438 million in one-time federal stimulus funds built into the current budget. The tax rose from 5.3 percent to 6.3.

"Kansas is in a strong position compared to other states that are still facing overwhelming budget gaps," said Parkinson spokeswoman Amy Jordan Wooden. "Assuming normal economic growth, the budget will remain in balance and Kansas will continue its economic recovery."

But the Budget Division isn't completely ruling out spending cuts during the next fiscal year. It also asked agencies to propose

ways to trim their spending of state tax dollars by up to 5 percent, if necessary.

That's in keeping with the division's long-standing practice of asking agencies to prepare alternatives in case revenues don't meet projections. Agencies also can propose new spending.

"We have to recognize the fragility of the budget," Emler said. "All agency heads should look at their budgets as closely as possible and try to determine whether they can reach new efficiencies and cost savings."

Agencies will submit their proposals to the Budget Division, which will then help the governor prepare a 2012 plan to submit to legislators in January. Because Parkinson is stepping down in January, the final version will be submitted by his successor.

In November, state officials and university economists will issue the state's first official revenue forecast for fiscal 2012.

But during the past two years, monthly revenues often have fallen short of expectations — a point driven home by the Legislative Research Department's final report on collections for the 2010 fiscal year, which ended June 30.

State revenues for fiscal 2010 fell \$99 million, or 2 percent, short of expectations. Kansas expected to collect about \$5.3 billion and took in \$5.2 billion.

The state avoided a budget deficit on June 30 by delaying \$79 million in aid payments to its public schools from June into July, and by making a \$53 million contribution to teachers' pensions late. It has since caught up, the budget division said Tuesday.

## Briefly

### Fair board to hold meeting

The Thomas County Fair Board will have a special meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the 4-H building on the Thomas County Fairgrounds to discuss the motorcycle races.

### Walkers needed for Relay

Relay for Life, an annual fund raiser for the American Cancer Society, needs teams and team captains for the walking relay at 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 27, at Fike Park. For information or to sign up, call Denise Stupka at 462-2122.

### Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a 7-week-old white male kitten; a male yellow mixed puppy, 5-6 months old; and a female yellow Lab mix, 2-3 years available for adoption. Lost or strayed

animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

### Volunteers needed for carnival

The Thomas County Amusement Association is looking for volunteers for the home-owned carnival at the Thomas County Free Fair from Tuesday through Saturday, July 31. Shifts are from 6:45 to 9 p.m. and 9 to 11 p.m. Volunteers are needed for the prize booth, ring toss, baseball throw and ball of chance. For information or to volunteer, call Holly Whitaker at the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or Angie Gaede at 443-3853.

### Army has fans to beat heat

The Salvation Army has fans available for anyone

who needs them. Call Kathy Ryan at the Thomas County Health Department, 460-4596.

### Signups open for kids' football

Signups are open for Colby Little League Football at the Sports Shoppe. The league is for kids in third to sixth grades. A \$100 fee covers equipment rent and other materials. Space is limited. The Shoppe is open from 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday to Thursday and from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday to Saturday. For information, call Travis Branum at 462-8342.

### Sign up for soccer this month

The American Youth Soccer Organization fall season will start in September. The organization will have early registration from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Pioneer Memorial Library. Registration is \$45 until Saturday, July 31, and \$50 after. For informa-

### Church plans Bible school

College View Baptist Church will hold a Vacation Bible School for kids from preschool to sixth grade from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Friday and 6 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday at the church. Registration starts Friday at 5:30 p.m. There will be a special service for families at 10:45 a.m. Sunday. For information, call Pastor Wes Barnett at (361) 459-9348.

