



State offers grant instead of paving Range

By Andy Heintz Colby Free Press aheintz@nwkansas.com

The Colby City Council found out Tuesday that the state will no longer cover the costs of fixing the stretch of Range Avenue that starts north of Interstate 70 and ends at the city limits south of Horton Avenue.

City Manager Armstrong said the state usually has taken care of this patch

of road, but the Kansas Department of Transportation says it is now the city's responsibility. She said the department eventually agreed to process a grant application for 2012 "K-link" money for the stretch.

Under the program, the state would pay 75 percent of the inspection and construction costs, Armstrong said. She said the city will cover all the design costs, plus 25 percent of the inspection construction. Range Avenue carries K-25 highway through the city.

The manager advised the council to consider giving highway maintenance responsibility back to the state. She said the city receives \$57,578 a year to maintain state highways, both K-25 and U.S. 24, but it usually costs more.

Repaving Range from I-70 to north of College Drive this summer will cost \$140,711, while fixing the stretch from north of College Drive to Fourth Street is estimated at \$120,000; and repaving the patch from north of I-70 south to the city limits is estimated at \$87,500. Armstrong

said these three projects will use over six years worth of highway payments.

In other news, the council:

• Heard Armstrong report that the owners of the Meadow Lake Golf Course and Lounge have not signed a lease with the city. The lease requires the stockholders who run the course to pay the city \$150 a year, she said. Armstrong said 70 percent of the course is on city land.

• Approved a bid of \$30,625 from Mayer Specialty Services of Goddard, a sanitation, water and sewer company; for

a manhole rehabilitation project. Public Works Director Chris Bieker said later that the firm will use a cement sealer, which will be sprayed inside the manholes around town to keep them from deteriorating.

Johnson Service Co. of Kearney, Neb., bid \$35,525 on the project, and Utility Maintenance Contractors of Wichita, \$32,725.

• Learned the city counted \$21,458 in

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A first time for everything



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

After celebrating her 100th birthday June 16 with a barbeque and a chuck wagon dance, Myra Miller of McDonald made her way to Colby last Saturday to experience her first pedicure. She reminisced about her wedding day, the morning of Feb 2, 1935, in Goodland. She said after she and her husband were married, they drove to Atwood in the afternoon to buy

her a ring. They raised registered Hereford cattle and farmed in the McDonald area, and she says one of the best changes she saw through the years was when farms got electricity. She says she's in pretty good health, has a quilt in the frame right now, and would sure recommend getting a pedicure.

Veteran picked for Honor Flight

By Vera Sloan Colby Free Press vsloan@nwkansas.com

A former Colby resident and World War II veteran has been chosen by the Honor Flight Network to fly to Washington and tour sites honoring veterans in the nation's capital.

Virgil "Rusty" Hamill, now living in Fort Collins, Colo., said it was an honor to be one of five brothers to serve in World War II. As a Navy welder, he said, he helped to keep the country's battleship fleet in running shape.

He said his brother Matt, former owner of a Colby tire and battery store, also served in the Navy, and was stationed mostly in the States. His brother Dick was in the Army Air Corps. He was shot down over Truk Island in the South Pacific. Dick was listed as killed in action, Hamill said, but he was actually captured by the Japanese and tortured until he died, Rusty said, information the family managed to keep from their mother.

His brother Wayne also served overseas. His only living brother,

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Final results given for 2010 primary

The votes have been canvassed, the provisional ballots counted and the final results tabulated in the 2010 Primary Election.

The Thomas County Commissioners met Friday to check the election results and verify the provisional ballots. Commissioner Byron Sowers sat in on the meeting, but couldn't participate in the canvass since he was on the ballot.

County Clerk Shelly Harms said there are several standard reasons why someone would be

issued a provisional ballot. A person might get married and change their name, change addresses or move out of the county and back in. All of these require a person to re-register, Harms said, but many don't and so are issued a provisional ballot on election day.

Most of these ballots are confirmed without any problem, Harms said, but for a semi-closed primary, if a person registered to a third party, such as Libertarian

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Colby area, college play host to flocks of European starlings

By Vera Sloan Colby Free Press vsloan@nwkansas.com

Early morning walkers around town who have been greeted by flocks of hundreds, maybe thousands of black birds are probably wondering what they are and what their story is.

Matt Bain of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, identified the birds Wednesday morning as European starlings.

"They have an interesting background," Bain said, "in that they were a favorite of some European Shakespeare enthusiasts who introduced them to North America."

Starlings are adept at mimicking other birds, which Shakespeare contemplated in "Henry IV, Part 1," as a way of driving King Henry mad, said Steve Mirsky of Scientific American.

The National Geographic bird book describes the starling as the continent's most numerous songbird.

Its call notes include squeaks, warbles, chirps and twittering, sometimes imitating songs of other species. They birds are stocky, with short tails, triangular wings and long, pointed bills.

According to printed information, they were introduced in New York between 1890 and 1891, and it didn't take long for them to spread across the continent. Their habitat is mostly in towns, suburbs and countryside near human settlements. They feed on lawns, fields and whatever they can scrounge from parking lots.

Today, the starlings live throughout the United States, southern Canada and northern Mexico, according to Cornell University's Ornithology Lab. Some migrate to Cuba and central Mexico during the winter but many stay in one area year-round.

Early walkers in Colby who see massive flocks flitting from treetop to treetop, and mobbing lawns are encouraged to enjoy their walks, but to step lightly on the sidewalks near tall trees.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Hundreds of European starlings take flight over Living Center North at the Colby Community College and other areas with tall trees at the slightest disturbance.

Briefly

Seniors plan potluck Tuesday

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck dinner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share. Table service and beverage will be provided. For information, call 462-6342.

Football meeting set for Tuesday

A meeting for Colby Middle School football parents and equipment checkout will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Middle School cafeteria.

Soccer parents to meet

The American Youth Soccer Organization will have a parent meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Little Theater at the Colby Community Building.

Registration is open through Friday for anyone ages 4 1/2 to 19. Games begin Saturday, Aug. 21. For information, call Emily Griffin at 460-0647.

Colby High yearbooks available

Graduates may pick up their 2010 yearbooks from 10 a.m. to noon, Friday at the Colby High School office. Students and others may pick them up during enrollment, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. next Monday in the high school commons. Extra yearbooks will be available for \$50. For information, call sponsor Donna Henry at 460-5300.

Heartland seeks young students

Heartland Christian School is accepting enrollment applications for preschool and kindergarten classes. Call (785) 460-6419 for information on the 2010-11 school year. The school is at 1995 W. Fourth Street in Colby.

Sacred Heart enrollment Aug. 17

Sacred Heart School enrollment will be from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 17, at the school for all students in preschool through fifth grade. New students need to bring a copy of their birth certificate, Social Security number, immunization records and physical. For information, call Principal David Evert at 462-2813

Volunteers needed for Relay

Relay for Life, an annual fund raiser for the American Cancer Society, needs teams and team captains for the relay, which is on for 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 27, at Fike Park. For information or to sign up, call Denise Stupka at 462-2122. The event has not been cancelled, she said.

Catholic youth ordering fruit

The Sacred Heart Catholic Youth Organization

is taking orders for peaches, pears and apples until Monday, Aug. 23. Pickup will be Wednesday, Sept. 1, at the 4-H Building. To order, call Megan Augustine at the rectory, 462-2179. Some fruit may be available for those who do not order ahead of time.

Museum plans '125' quilt show

A special quilt show celebrating Thomas County's 125th Birthday will be held at the Prairie Museum of History and Art from Oct. 7 to 31. Quilts of any size, pattern or age with a Thomas County connection should be entered at the museum from Sept. 1 to 24. Call (785) 460-4590 for information.



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