



8 pages

COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Monday

June 6, 2011
Volume 122, Number 88
Serving Thomas County since 1888

State begins road work in two places

Weather permitting, the Kansas Department of Transportation will begin two road projects in Thomas County today.

The first is a repaving project on U.S. 24 from the Interstate 70 exit to Colby.

The project extends from the Levant exit east eight miles to the concrete pavement in Colby. Workers will mill off an inch of old asphalt, then apply two inches of new pavement.

Flaggers and a pilot car will guide one-lane traffic through the work zone during daylight hours. Delays of 15 minutes or less can be expected.

A contract for \$985,532 was awarded to Venture Corp of Great Bend. The paving is part of T-WORKS, the transportation program passed by the Kansas Legislature last year. The job should be finished by the end of June.

Area Engineer Eric Oelschlager asked drivers to please use caution, pay attention to the work-zone signs and watch out for workers when driving through the project.

The other project is a new surface on three I-70 bridges near the Mingo interchange (Exit 62), about eight miles southeast of Colby.

Contractors will apply a polymer overlay across the driving surface of each bridge.

"The polymer overlay is a cost-effective way of sealing a bridge deck and existing cracks, extending the life of the bridge," said Mathew Withington, construction engineer with the department's Atwood office.

I-70 traffic will be reduced to one lane in each direction while the bridge work is underway. The job should be done in about two weeks.

Wildcat Concrete Services of Topeka is the contractor. The project, which will cost \$96,205, is another T-WORKS program.

For information, contact Oelschlager at (785) 626-3185 or erico@ksdot.org in Atwood, or Kristen Brands, northwest Kansas public affairs manager, at (785) 877-3315 or kristenb@ksdot.org in Norton.

Kansas a test case for conservatives

By John Hanna

The Associated Press

TOPEKA — For decades in Kansas, a delicate political balance kept the state on a moderate path even as other states in the region turned to the right. Conservatives could cut taxes in flush times. But Democrats and centrist Republicans still freed up money for highways and schools, and a loose coalition worked out compromises.

Those days, it seems, have passed.

And the change has come more

swiftly than in other places that were part of last fall's conservative electoral wave that put new Republican governors or stronger Republican legislatures in charge in half of the nation's statehouses.

In a mere five months, new Republican Gov. Sam Brownback and likeminded lawmakers have recast the social and fiscal landscape of Kansas and made the state a laboratory for conservative ideas.

Kansas will soon become one

See "TEST," Page 3

Colby Visitor Center a gateway to the town

By Tomi Miller

Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkansas.com

Since 2004, the Colby Visitor Center has rolled out the welcome mat for new arrivals and passers-by. With 14 volunteers and one paid employee, the center works to promote the city's landmarks and recreation centers.

"We have something special here," said manager Ralph Fischer "I always tell people that not only do we have a Walmart and a McDonald's, but we have a Starbucks too."

Fischer is the only paid employee at the center. He greets guests, cleans and maintains the building,

However, Fischer still puts in five-hours a week of volunteer work at the visitor center. Along with the other volunteers, Fischer's main priority is to greet people in an upbeat manner and to make sure he answers any of their questions.

Fischer is not a Colby native; he grew up in Missouri. He used to be a traveling salesman who sold veterinary supplies. Fischer said he has seen a lot of geography outside of and around the northwest. He has worked at the center almost since its opening day and said the toughest part about his job is finding volunteers.

"Volunteerism is becoming en-

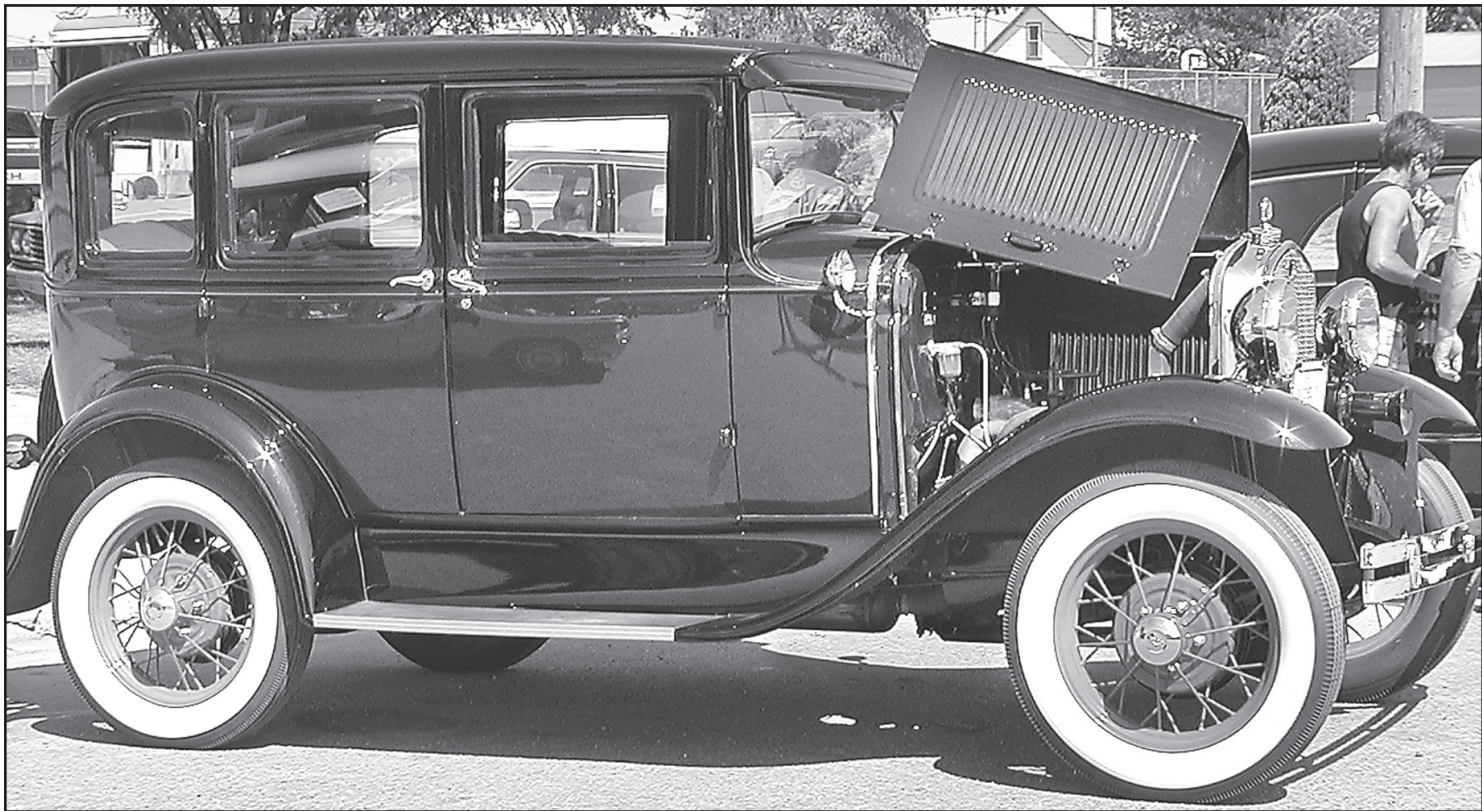
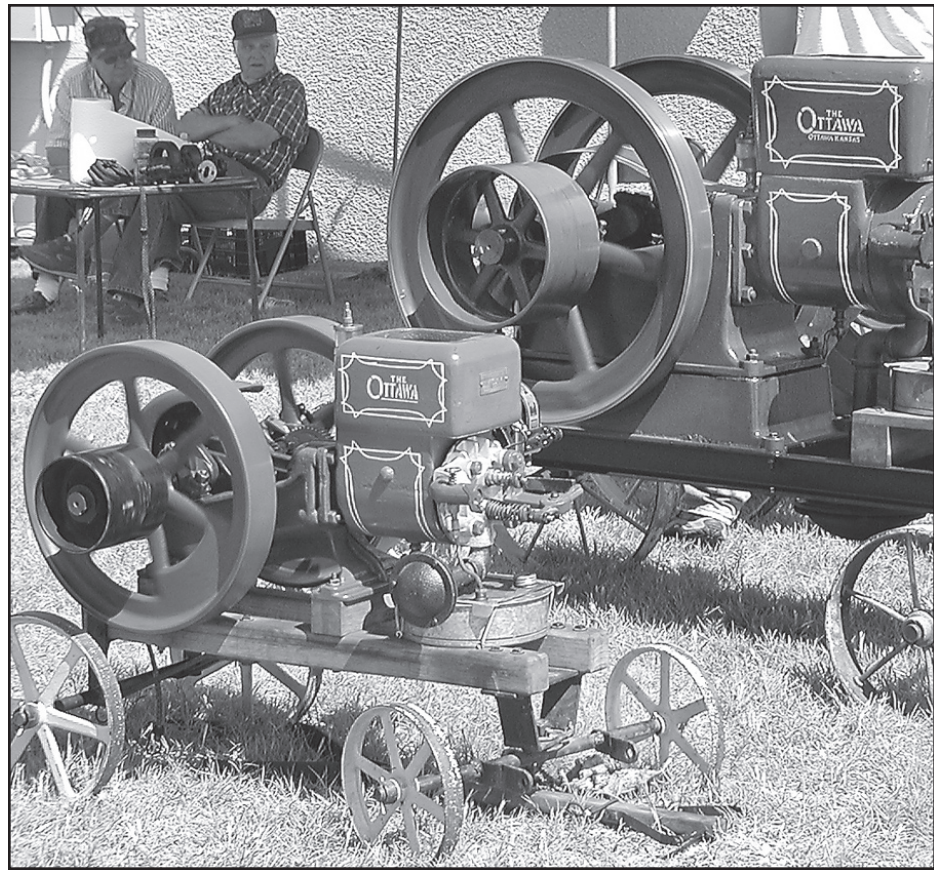
See "CENTER," Page 3



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Fun in the sun at the Selden tractor show

The corn bin (above) always proves to be one of the biggest attractions each year at Selden Antique Tractor and Classic Car Show, and Sunday was no exception. In addition to activities for kids and adults, the show included classic tractors, motorcycles and small engines (right) many of which still run. Classic car owners from miles around brought their antiques to the show (below).



College offers exercise class

Colby Community College will offer two sessions of a water exercise class from today through Thursday, July 28, in the college pool. The first session will be from 7 to 7:55 a.m. and the second session will follow from 8 to 8:55 a.m. The classes are taught by Leslie Wagoner. For information, contact Penny Cline at 460-5404 or penny.cline@colbycc.edu.

Lutherans plan Bible school

Trinity Lutheran Church will hold a Vacation Bible School from 9:15 a.m. to noon Tuesday to Friday at the church. The school is open to kids age 3 to fifth grade. This year's theme is "Big Jungle Adventure: a Faith Journey With Jesus." For information, call the church at 462-3497.

Picnic in the Park on Wednesday

Picnic in the Park will be at 12 p.m. on Wednes-

days at Fike Park. The entertainment for this Wednesday will be Pieces of Pieces of 8. The event is sponsored by the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Colby Free Press. For information, call the chamber office at 460-3401.

RC Flyers to have fun fly

The Colby RC Flyers will have a remote control plane fun fly from daylight to dusk on Saturday and Sunday at the club's field seven miles north of Colby on K-25 and 1/8th mile east. There will be open flying and contests, along with a club trainer to fly. Admission is free for the public. For information, call Nick Nichols at (785) 460-6357 or Marvin Farmer at (785) 443-3593.

Mingo church offers concert

The Echoes of Hope quartet from Rio Grande

Bible Institute in Edinburg, Texas, will perform a gospel concert at 10:45 a.m. Sunday at Mingo Bible Church. The four women accompany themselves with guitar and violin. Bob Kracht, their sponsor, will present a Bible message. The concert is open to the public. For information contact Pastor Tom Peyton at 462-2930.

Learn about miracles in Brewster

The Brewster Community Church will have Vacation Bible School from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, June 17, for children from kindergarten to sixth grade. This year's theme is "The Miracles of Jesus." For information or to register, call (785) 694-2720 or (785) 694-3353.

Swedish Singers to perform here

The Young Swedish Singers will hold a free concert at 7 p.m. Monday, June 20, at the Frahm The-

atre at Colby Community College. The 34-member gospel singing group from Sweden performs gospel, hymns and Swedish folk music, though most of their program is in English. For information, contact the Trinity Lutheran Church at 462-3497.

Mingo church plans Bible school

Mingo Bible Church will hold Vacation Bible School from 6 to 8:45 p.m. Friday, June 17, and from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Saturday, June 18, at the church. With this year's theme, "Rev It Up: Full Throttle for God," kids aged 4 to fifth grade will learn what the Bible says about being a member of God's team. For information, call the church at 460-7530.



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 8 9 8 3