Colby celebrates nation's birthday

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...and the rockets' blue glare



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

The Colby Kiwanis Club put on its annual Fourth of July fireworks display Monday night from the Thomas County Fairgrounds arena. The club closes the arena and stands for the show, but allows parking in the field to the east.

Documentary crew to film downtown

By Kevin Bottrell

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The city of Colby will shut down a portion of downtown this weekend to allow a film crew to shoot several scenes for documentary about harvesting in the 1930s and 40s.

On Saturday, portions of East Third, Fifth and Eighth Streets and North Franklin Avenue will be shut down to allow the crew of "Harvesting the High Plains" to film in front of Colby's historic downtown buildings. The film's director, Jay Kriss, has been lining up old cars and period costumes for the scenes.

The film tells the story of Thomas County farmer John Kriss and his business partner Ray Garvey,

them become successful during likes to see cities have enough the Dust Bowl in the 1930s and the subsequent decade.

The City Council approved the request to shut down the streets at its meeting Tuesday. Three police officers will be on duty to direct traffic. Filming will take about three to four hours, some in the morning and some in the after-

Once completed, there will be a grand opening in Colby. The film will appear at the Sundance Film Festival and air on Public Televi-

 Accepted an audit report from Brian Stats and Kalyn Ritter of Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball. Staats said the audit looks at the overall financial situation of the city. One good sign, he said, is who developed harvesting and that the amount of unencumbered See "FILM," Page 2

business techniques that helped cash increased this year. The firm reserve money to cover three to six months of expenses, he said, and Colby can cover about three months. The city also has less debt than it has unencumbered cash.

There were several deficiencies on this year's audit, Staats said. One was \$73,602 in Federal Emergency Management Agency money that should have been reported in 2009 and a failure to follow procurement procedures on the Ace Services Soil Cap project. The police department also had an outstanding check that was several years old. Staats said the city has already prepared a plan to fix those deficiencies and prevent them in the future.

Council President Dave Voss

Bad weather may disrupt Friday's final shuttle launch

By Marcia Dunn

shuttle countdown is under way, but lousy weather may delay Friday's launch attempt.

There's a 60 percent chance that rain or thunderstorms will postpone the liftoff of Atlantis, shuttle weather officer Kathy Winters said Tuesday. The weather improves with each passing day, as the launch time gets slightly earlier.

Friday's launch time is 10:26 a.m. (Central Time). The countdown clocks started ticking Tuesday afternoon. The four astronauts assigned to the 12-day flight arrived at Kennedy Space Center on Monday.

Atlantis is making one final supply run to the International Space Station before retiring. As many See "SHUTTLE," Page 2

as 1 million spectators are expected to jam the Cape AP Aerospace Writer Canaveral area for the historic send-off. NASA test director Jeremy Graeber said the launch

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. - NASA's last space team is doing its best to put off any emotions associated with the end of the 30-year shuttle era, until Atlantis flies. 'The team gets into the mode of this-is-launch-

> countdown, and that's really the focus that everybody has," Graeber told journalists. "The rest of the emotion that really comes with the end of the space shuttle program, I think will really kind of roll in as launch is completed."

> Graeber, for one, can't wait to take his seat in Launch Control. "It's a really cool job... and to get to do it one more time is a great feeling," he said.

Typo may have saved social services office

By Tom Betz

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Goodland was losing a state government office, but apparently a last minute reprieve reversed the decision to keep the office open.

A tip to the Goodland Star-News said the city's Social and Rehabilitation Services office was on the list of 10 being closed, with the staffs let in on the news that morning.

Pat Baalman said – in a somber mood – she could not comment, but said she was still trying to digest what was happening. Baalman said she had been directed to give callers the phone number of Rachel Whitten in the Topeka office.

Whitten said she would send out a statement about the clo-

wide, a process which will infour, and a reduction of 10 fice. service centers: Coffeyville, Fort Scott, Garnett, Goodland, Lawrence, Lyndon, Marysville, See "TYPO," Page 2

McPherson, Pratt and Welling-

The statement went on to de-Friday morning it appeared tail why the changes are being made and gives the information on each of the offices being closed

Whitten called back within a minute or two to say there had been an "error" and Goodland should not have been on the list. She said it had been a typographical error and the Goodland office was not being closed. When asked what region Goodland would be in when the regions are merged, Whitten said that has not been decided.

Another call to Baalman found her in better spirits, and glad to report the office was remaining open. The Goodland office employs eight people.

Whitten would not say why Goodland had been in the original list, but was pleased to be The statement, received a few able to correct the information moments later, said, "(SRS) is and say the office was remainrestructuring its offices state- ing open. Had it been closed, Sherman County citizens would clude merging six regions into have had to use the Colby of-

The person who had been the

County donates \$1,000 for prevention

By Christina Beringer

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Thomas County Attorney Kevin Berens presented domestic violence prevention group Options with a \$1,000 donation from the county's diversion fund last Wednesday.

The fund houses money that is received when people pay to divert criminal charges.

Options is a non-profit organization that provides intervention services to victims of domestic and sexual violence in Thomas County. The organization used to be named Northwest Kansas Domestic & Sexual Violence Services and only recently changed to

"Since March, I have referred three victims of violence to Options," Berens said. "I was given approval from the Thomas County commissioners to show appreciation for the great work Options does for people in need."

Present to receive the donation was the organization's executive director, Charlotte Lisner, who oversees offices in 18 northwest Kansas counties. Daniel Blake and Shauna Heath were also present to represent the office in Colby which provides service to Thomas

Blake and Heath work full-time at Options giving financial as-



Daniel Blake (from left) and Shauna Heath of the prevention agency Options accepted a \$1,000 donation from Thomas County Attorney Kevin Berens last week. Charlotte Lisner (right), who oversees 18 Options offices also attended the presentation.

sistance, emergency shelter, peer January 2011. counseling, education and a number of other free services to victims in need.

'Our first priority is safety," Blake said. "We do what we can to make the victim safe and to let them know that they have options to get help if they want it."

After a needs assessment is conducted, further assistance is given to the individual if necessary.

The organization's 18 offices have helped 290 victims of domestic and sexual violence since

In 2010, 429 victims received assistance, 373 of those were domestic and 56 were sexual assault cases. That was a drastic increase from 2009, where they helped 277 victims throughout northwest

"We are continuing to help more and more victims of violence and appreciate the donation from the Thomas County Attorney's office," said Lisner. "It will go into the General Fund and will be used for direct service to victims in

need."

Donations to the organization are appreciated and should be sent to 475 1/2 North Chickamauga in Colby. A toll free hotline is also available by calling (800) 794-4624 for those needing anonymous help. For information about the organization visit www.help4abuse.org.



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