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City manager Mark Hall insists "The city has an easement to operate a shooting range, which affords the city the sole responsibility and authority to do so," in Letter to the Editor.

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Range still closed

Auditions set for Jan. 14, 15 for musical **'Into the Woods'**

Page 3A

Housing unit plans at Village Plaza moving ahead

by GREG LAMBERGINO
Leader & Times

Thursday's special city commission meeting called for a public hearing and a first and final reading of a zoning ordinance for 4818 and 5[illegible] 4818 regarding Village Plaza and Edwards Street.

Housing and community development director Karen LaFontaine then recapped the previous weeks' issue with the ordinance. In 2012, the Housing Unit at Village Plaza was to adopt a plan to establish an RHED. The next step would be to adopt a plan, which includes a fifty-year-long-term plan.

◆ See HOUSING Page 3A

Governor's plan aligns with Liberal's needs

Fully-funded, all-day kindergarten in five years?

by ANDRE COLEMAN
Leader & Times

Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback's announcement Dec. 30, 2013, that he plans to promote — and fund — all-day kindergarten statewide was met with a sigh of relief in Liberal. If Governor Brownback's plan becomes reality, Kansas would become the 12th state nationwide to provide full-day kindergarten at no charge. Such a scheduling change would be a boon to Liberal, which currently leads the state in education dollars, thousands over the past five years. Between 2000 and 2010, Kansas cut its education spending by 18.3 percent, a decrease greater than almost three other states.

"It's a time when states and the nation are being challenged to provide more for their citizens with technologies and adapt to the complexities of a

Chamber president Paul Lyons said "It is vital that you get children in school all day, as soon as you can. If you ever want to have an achievement where you want it to be."

◆ See PLANS Page 5A

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Justice delays health law's birth control mandate

by JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court has thrown a hitch into President Barack Obama's new health-care law, ordering a temporary exemption for religious-affiliated organizations provide health insurance that includes birth control.

The high court late Tuesday night decided to delay implementation of the contraceptive coverage requirement only hours before the law's insurance mandate was set to take effect for millions.

The decision, which come after federal court filings by Catholic-affiliated groups from around the nation in recent weeks, was a surprise given the court's rejection of prominent requests for emergency relief in the past. At least one federal appeals court signed with Sotomayor on a similar request for relief from part of the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare.

The White House on Wednesday issued a statement saying the Obama administration is confident it will win in the end, but is disappointed by a ruling with how certain religious coverage while preventing non-profit religious organizations with religious objections to contraceptive coverage from having to contract, arrange, pay or refer for such coverage.

Sotomayor acted on a request from an organization of Catholic nuns in Denver the Little Sisters of the Poor and a lower court had ruled against the organization and had been denied earlier in the day by a federal appeals court.

The government is "temporarily enjoined from enforcing against applicants the contraceptive coverage requirements imposed by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and related regulations," she said.

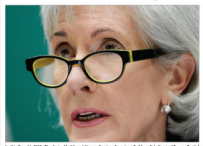
Sotomayor who was in New York Sunday night to hand the final 50-second countdown and push the button to drop the ball in Times Square, ordered the Angus New York Era hold, gave government officials until 11 a.m. EST Friday to respond to her order. A ruling from the full court could come sometime after the government or church it finds won't be made before then.

"The government has lots of ways to defuse contraceptive for people," said Mark Rienzi, a lawyer for the

◆ See MANDATE Page 5A

State attorneys general claim ObamaCare changes are illegal

• AarBee.com



In this Dec. 11, 2013, file photo, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington. There's another quirk in the Obama administration's new health insurance system: It helps people who have been mistreated by insurance companies in the past, but it hurts people who have made changes. It's a reminder that the new coverage for many uninsured Americans comes with a third party in the mix: the feds. And the system's wiring for some vital federal functions isn't yet fully connected. AP photo/Susan Walsh

Eleven state attorneys general are slamming the Obama administration for making reported changes to ObamaCare without the approval of congressional lawmakers, which they say is illegal.

In a Thursday letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius the group specifically criticized the administration's decision to allow insurance companies to continue selling coverage that would otherwise be out of compliance with the Affordable Care Act for another year.

The attorneys general said the move violates the law of both federal and state jurisdiction if "compounds illegal executive action."

"We support allowing citizens to keep their health insurance coverage, but the President's unilateral decision to change the law — change it twice — violates the Constitution," the letter states.

The attorneys general also expressed concerns about the rollout of the ObamaCare enrollment exchanges, and accuse the administration of ignoring the potential vulnerability of consumer information.

"As attorneys general, we take the privacy of our states' consumers very seriously. We are very concerned that the Administration's decisions met to

◆ See ILLEGAL Page 5A

ObamaCare brings new taxes, fees for 2014

For those who don't buy coverage, the IRS plans to slap them with a fine

• AarBee.com

With the launch of coverage under the health care law on Wednesday, a new tax is also kicking in for millions — or, most of the hundreds of billions of dollars the government intends to raise over the next decade to help pay for the program.

The tax, or shared responsibility payment in the form of fees on health insurance companies which could transfer into higher premiums, is for those who don't buy coverage. The IRS plans to slap them with a fine — some call it a tax — for not buying it.

This is only the beginning, the conservative Heritage Foundation warns in a report.

The largest revenue raiser for long is that year is an annual fee on health insurance, meant to help fund premium subsidies and other provisions.

The fee is expected to amount to $8 billion this year and roughly $100 billion over the next decade. The fee is based on a company's share of 2013 Obam-brendaise — an attempt to repeal it, warning that those costs will be passed on to consumers, which in some will get Affordable Care Act subsidies).

A Congressional Budget Office-commissioned study by consultant Oliver Wyman estimated that rates will rise in 2014 by up to 2.5 percent for that reason alone. BC/ACO, the study said, rates could be rising by as much as up to 5.7 percent because of the law.

The other major fee to watch out for is the "individual responsibility" fee. Under the law, those who do not get insurance by the end of March and do not qualify for an exemption will be charged for tax. This year that penalty will be $95, or 1 percent of household income, whichever is higher.

The penalty will increase, considerably

◆ See TAXES Page 5A

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