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ROAD ARTIST

Hugoton teacher brings rideable sculpture to Baker Arts

Page 3A

Gov. prepares to give State of State address

TOPEKA (AP) — Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback is preparing to deliver his annual State of the State address and outline his legislative agenda.

The speech that evening will be to a joint House-Senate session in the House chamber. It also will be broadcast live on public television.

Brownback has already proposed planning to fill state funding holes that could be left by the expiration of a half-cent sales tax rate. This also outlined a $9 million initiative aimed at boosting fourth-graders' scores on standardized reading tests.

The Republican governor is expected to tout the massive personal income tax cuts that Kansas enacted at his urging.

He's facing Democratic challenger Paul Davis in November. Libertarian Macerich Post Orena, of Lawrence, who is challenging Brownback in re-election this year.

City hears update on school expansion plans

By ISABELLA MIRELFARO
• Inside A Note

USD No. 480 Board President Debbie Kinney presented an update on the district's school expansion plans at Tuesday night's city commission meeting. Kinney, who is also on the Steering Committee, since the summer, had 10 meetings brainstorming ideas, looking at the district's current facilities and overcrowding issues and solicitations of surveys.

They came up with various scenarios of building projects. Through the months of meetings, they received feedback from many community meetings of McDonald's and the coffee shop as well as other locations to try and implement.

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Volunteer drivers are needed for veterans VA transportation from Liberal to Amarillo Tuesdays and Thursdays. Drivers must have a clear driving record, auto insurance and pass a physical provided by Amarillo VA. Contact Carolyn Kingham at 806-354-7811 for information.

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Topeka 17-year-old accused of planning school shooting

TOPEKA (AP) — A Topeka teenager has been charged with five counts of aggravated assault for allegedly planning to shoot students at a Topeka high school.

Shawnee County District Attorney Chad Taylor says he filed the charges against the 17-year-old Thursday after the investigation is ongoing.

Taylor was expected to give further details at a news conference Wednesday morning.

Guymon Relay For Life announces scheduled events

• Special to the Leader & Times

GUYMON, Okla. – Oklahoma Panhandle cancer fighters are urged to save the date for American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Texas County to kickoff and [illegible] event committee members [illegible] 6 p.m. Feb. 6 at the Adobe for events to [illegible] up to the 24th annual Relay For Life of Texas County at the Texas County Activity Center in Guymon.

Relay fuels the fight against cancer by uniting us to take bold steps for research and patient support, and to celebrate, honor and remember those we've lost. Learn more about Relay and the ways you can get involved that patient support, information and services are available by making cancerscu and calling 800-227-

See RELAY Page 3A

Kansas board recommends individual study plans

TOPEKA (AP) — The Kansas State Board of Education is recommending — but not requiring — that the state's high school graduation requirements be ready for every high school student.

The board on Tuesday approved a motion "strongly recommending" the state's 286 school districts that Kansas high school students at their chronic career. Board members said the recommendation is a way to ensure that issues schools do not have enough guidance counselors to develop IEPs for every student. The Lawrence Journal-World reported.

"I think every school district should have it, but I'm hesitant to mandate it," board member Jim McNiece, a Wichita Republican. "There's more to it than just money."

Currently, IEPs are used mostly for students in career and technical education programs. The students take a series of courses in a particular field and then work with counselors to choose appropriate high school classes for their career.

In 2012, Kansas lawmakers passed a law expanding career and technical education, which included adding the requirement for IEPs. The law is requiring IEPs for all students and to report the decisions at the start of the last years session.

The Kansas Board of Education agreed broad that about 60 percent of school districts offer students a chance to [illegible] IEPs, but only about 40 percent prepare them for all high school students. Most districts that don't offer IEPs said they didn't have enough

Okla. gay marriage ban struck down; ruling on hold

The decision drew criticism from the governor, attorney general and other elected officials in this state, known as the buckle of the Bible Belt.

By JUSTIN JACKSONMACCUS
• Associated Press

TULSA, Okla. — For the second time in a month, a federal judge has set aside a deeply conservative state's same-sex marriage ban, this time in Oklahoma.

U.S. District Judge Terence Kern on Tuesday struck down Oklahoma's voter-approved ban, hearted the same-sex couples in the state. He stayed the effects of his ruling on hold while state and local officials complete an appeal.

Kern's ruling came during a hearing in Tulsa on gay marriage ban in Oklahoma. Kern determined that Oklahoma's constitutional amendment violates the U.S. Constitution's equal protection clause. His ruling was blocked with [illegible] pending the appeal. Those are those issued by the U.S. Supreme Court last summer.

Kern's decision [illegible] Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage at "an arbitrary, irrational exclusion of just one class of citizens from receiving a government-created benefit."

"Equal protection is at the very heart of the United States Constitution," Kern wrote in his [illegible]. "Each time a court is asked to [illegible] a law, it must [illegible] the law's purpose. It is not a naive commodity to be [illegible] and begrudgingly or to short [illegible] when it is out of favor. [illegible] Oklahoma must give way to individual constitutional rights."

Kern's ruling is the second in a month to overturn a state ban on same-sex marriage, attorneys general and other elected officials in the state, known as the buckle of the Bible Belt. Kern, a Clinton appointee who was once gay people "It is not a naive commodity to be than vacation. Harold rulings from [illegible] Oklahoma's ban on same-sex marriage in the Gard to be struck down [illegible] Utah. State courts also struck down bans on same-sex marriage in New Mexico in [illegible] and New Jersey in [illegible]. Camilla Taylor, marriage project director at civil-rights organization Lambda Legal, said conversations [illegible] Oklahoma's ban are expected to [illegible] hearings cases. She said there are [illegible] in the state challenging the couple, and a new one is brought [illegible] every week.

The Tulsa ruling came in a lawsuit filed nearly a decade ago. Tri

See JUDGE SEEN Page 3A

Gay Phillips, left, her partner Sue Burton, and Mary Bishop and her partner Sharon Baldwin have a champagne toast during a celebration at the Sharon R. Nesbitt Equality Center Tuesday in Tulsa, Okla. A federal judge struck down Oklahoma's gay marriage ban Tuesday, but handed off any rush to the altar by setting aside his order while state and local officials [illegible] an appeal. (AP Photo/Tulsa World, Matt Barnard)

Plains United Methodist Men announce Ground Hog Supper date

• Special to the Leader & Times

It's Ground Hog Supper time of the year when people [illegible] and enjoy a delicious meal and fellowship. The Men of the Plains United Methodist Church will host their annual Ground Hog Supper Wednesday Feb. 5 at the Plains Church. The supper [illegible] Fellowship Hall, and everyone is invited.

Serving of a tasty meal featuring sausage with biscuits and gravy, beans and a dessert starts at 5:30 p.m. Cook-o-

See SUPPER Page 3A

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