



# COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

## Wildlife, Parks has new biologist

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

There's a new face in town at the Kansas Division of Wildlife and Parks.

Matt Bain has been with the division since mid-March working as the district wildlife biologist.

He replaced Leonard Hopper.

Bain is originally from Ness City and received both his bachelors and master's degree

in biology from Fort Hays State University.

His farming background and love of the outdoors led to his career in biology.

"I like to hunt and fish," Bain said. "That's what triggered it."

He is responsible for nine counties in northwest Kansas. His coverage area includes Gove, Logan, Wallace, Sherman, Thomas, Rawlins, Decatur, Sheridan and Cheyenne counties.

Bain said his job is hard to describe when people ask because it has so many facets.

However, he said his responsibilities include anything that benefits wildlife on private land. His job is to be a resource for people regarding wildlife.

Bain gave an example of one of his areas of expertise. He said if a

farmer called wanting to improve the pheasant population on his land, Bain would make recommendations on how to do it and help come up with a management plan.

"I provide information and I also help coordinate programs," he said.

Habitat work with game birds like pheasants is one component and helping find ways to increase their numbers is an important task.

Bain said the species' numbers have dropped off because of changes in agriculture. He said "clean farming," or not leaving any cover has helped contribute to it.

Less wheat in the state has meant less wheat stubble for cover and is another factor that has led to the drop in population.

His responsibilities also include helping manage many projects including walk-in hunting and wetland reserve programs to protect wetland habitat.

He's also helped with testing for chronic wasting disease in the area's mule deer population. Bain said it's a problem in Colorado and Nebraska but isn't a problem in Kansas.

It is similar to mad cow disease but isn't transmissible to humans.

He enjoys what he does and hopes people will see him as a resource to utilize when they need help. "I like it a lot," Bain said.

"This my favorite part of the country. I like the prairie."



Matt Bain

## Auctioneer taking talent to top event

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Mike Bailey's auctioneering skills have earned him a bid to the International Auctioneer Championship in San Antonio on July 9.



Mike Bailey

Bailey, of Jennings, is the

champion Kansas State Auctioneer. He works for Farm and Ranch Realty in Colby.

He said he's been to the state competition before but always managed to finish second or third before getting the top prize for the first time this year.

"It paid off I guess," Bailey said.

He's worked as an auctioneer for 15 years. "I've always been involved in livestock and it (auctioneering) always interested

me," he said. "I picked it up on my own and started doing it."

A trip to the World Livestock Contest a year ago earned him a top 15 finish.

The format for a contest is just like a regular sale except it has judges rating the performance of the auctioneer, including the clarity of his voice. Then they pick a winner.

He said he's not nervous because he's a seasoned competitor and is looking forward to the competition.

"It's fun to go to," Bailey said. "You're familiar with a lot of the people, old friends you don't see very often."

He'll be competing against competitors from around the country and possibly Canada.

"It'll be a good time," he said. "It'll be fun to go and see how the other part of the world does it."

Cheering on their son-in-law from back here in Colby will be Ed and Joyce Dean.

## Corvettes invade Colby



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Rod and Barbara Stelter of El Dorado Hills, Calif., left, and Patty Vassilopoulos of Sacramento, Calif. gassed up in Colby on Tuesday. Members of River City Corvettes of Sacramento, they were traveling as part of a group of Corvette enthusiasts on their way

to Bowling Green, Ky. to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Corvette. More than 10,000 Corvettes are expected in Bowling Green for the anniversary. After the celebration, they are traveling on to Nashville, Tenn.

## State's credit outlook in negative column

TOPEKA (AP) — Continued reliance upon one-time sources of revenue and declining cash reserves have prompted analysts to reduce the state's credit outlook from stable to negative.

Moody's, one of the nation's major credit rating services, issued a new report on the state Wednesday, citing the state's ongoing budget problems as a concern.

"Moody's expects the state of Kansas will continue to experience budgetary stress in the near future, and we will continue to monitor economic and financial developments over the upcoming months," Moody's said.

It was the second time in 10 months that the state's outlook was downgraded. Moody's still gives Kansas a rating of Aa2, while Standard & Poor's rates Kansas at AA+.

"It's a reflection of the time we're

in," said Caroline Cruise, analyst for Moody's.

Downgrading the outlook indicates that investors see more risk in purchasing state debt. Cutting the credit rating would increase the cost of borrowing money by boosting the interest rate the state would have to pay.

Cruise said the next step would be to place Kansas on Moody's watch list, meaning the bond rating is in danger of being cut in the short term. States currently on Moody's watch list are Connecticut and Michigan.

Legislators approved two major bond issues during the 2003 session. The first authorizes \$500 million in bonds to be issued to cover liabilities of the Kansas Public Employee Retirement System. The second, also worth \$500 million, would be issued to help Boeing.

## Hundreds attend Marine's service

ELLE PLAINE (AP) — Pfc. Ryan Cox was remembered at his funeral Wednesday as a polite, selfless man who had many friends.

"This is a tough one — we will try to get through it together," the Rev. Steven Lee, pastor of First Baptist Church in Belle Plaine, told the more than 400 mourners gathered at the high school auditorium. The 19-year-old Marine died near Najaf, Iraq. Officials have told the family that an accidental discharge of another soldier's weapon struck Cox.

## Colby is one of Chautauqua hosts

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The Colby area will be one of only four towns in Kansas to host the June 2004 Tour of Chautauqua entitled "Bleeding Kansas: Where the Civil War Began."

For those unfamiliar with what Chautauqua is, Marion Cott, executive director of the Kansas Humanities Council, described it as a popular form of community learning in the late 1800s and early 1900s in America.

The event combines informal education and entertainment often presented under a large tent in the out of doors. Theodore Roosevelt once described Chautauqua as "the most American thing in America."

"Each summer," Cott said, "the Kansas Humanities Council returns this American tradition to Kansas communities."

Next year, in addition to the Colby-area Chautauqua on June 11-15, the other locations include Junction City from June 4-8; Fort Scott from June 18-22; and Lawrence

from June 25-29.

Even though the event is nearly a year away, Leilani Thomas, director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau and on the Chautauqua committee, said help is needed for many different aspects of the event.

"This is just not for Thomas County," Thomas said, "but rather an area-wide project to include Sherman, Sheridan and Logan Counties as well."

Volunteers will be needed to help raise the tent, assist with many youth activities and workshops, concessions, and local entertainment.

Thomas said that an area person is also needed nightly as a master of ceremonies during the evening programs.

"Each evening under an old-fashioned tent," Cott said, "hear these famous historical figures tell us in their own words how their lives and actions affected the Kansas Territory and the future of America."

As history comes alive in the pe-

riod known as "Bleeding Kansas" the actors will commemorate the turbulent years of the Kansas territory when the eyes of the nation turned to Kansas during the period of 1854 through 1861.

President Abraham Lincoln was quoted during that time as having said, "Your territory has had a marked history — no territory has had such a history."

Some of the highlights of the 2004 Chautauqua will encompass the struggle for human freedom and national identity that shaped the country's history and destiny, Cott said.

There were two visions of America during the period for next year's Chautauqua which included one free and one slave, both competing for the nation's future on the Kansas prairies.

Some of the historic figures who will visit Colby include Abraham Lincoln, John Brown, Frederick Douglass, David Atchison, Clarina Nichols and Stephen F. Douglas.

Along with these historic figures,

there will also be music from the time, a film series, book fair, re-enactments, historical tours and more, Thomas said.

Committee members are all from Colby, unless otherwise indicated. Those include: Leilani Thomas, Sue Taylor, Phil DeYoung, Gerry Fulwider, D'Ette Scholtz, Chandler Wieland, Mike Baughn (Brewster), Nancy Saddler, Cindy Mullin (Oakley), Sally Toth, Judy Kleinsorge, Diana Wieland, Deb Bickner, Ron Davis, Carol Sweat (Wallace), Carolyn Armstrong, Margie Broeckelman (Oakley), Donna Price (Goodland), JoAnne Sunderman, Warren Hixson, Patty Decker, Joe Munsell, Laura Withington, Vanessa Eicher, Sharee Fromholtz, Fred Jones (Oakley) and Bert Mosier (Hoxie).

As the event continues to draw closer, more information about Chautauqua and ways people can help will appear in future publications. For questions or to learn more about volunteering, call Thomas at 462-3401.



### Nice outlook

**Thomas, Logan Counties**  
Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 50s. Light northwest wind becoming southwest late this evening.  
Friday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 80s. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph. Friday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 50s.

**By the numbers**  
Wednesday's high, 76  
Low this morning, 54  
Year ago today, 98 and 61  
Records for the date, 108 in 1936, 42 in 1958  
24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
June's precipitation to date, 2.65  
Year's precipitation to date, 9.00  
2002's precipitation to date, 4.18

**Water Usage/Colby**  
June 25 = 3.035 million gallons

## Briefly

### Senior Center closed July 4

The Senior Progress Center will be closed for the Fourth of July holiday. No meals will be served or delivered and the van will not run.

### Share distribution Saturday

Heartland Share delivery is Saturday at 10:30 a.m. at the Sacred Heart School gymnasium. There are a few shares available for those interested. For questions, call Gene Griffin, 460-3579.

### Youth football sign up noted

Any 5th or 6th grader interested in playing in the Northwest Kansas Youth Football League can call Gordon Rasmussen at 462-6524 to sign up. A meeting of parents and players will be held at a later date.

### College board meets today

A special meeting of the Colby Community College board

of trustees will be held at 5 p.m. today in the board room of Thomas Hall. Items on the agenda include software license, along with service and maintenance agreement, lease financing considerations and payment of claims. The meeting is open to the public.

### Swim lessons continue

The Colby Recreation Department is offering swim lessons. The third and final session begins on Monday, June 30 and ends Thursday, July 10. Lesson times are 8:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., or 10:30 a.m. For questions or to register, call the Colby Recreation Department at (785) 462-4440.

### City adjusts trash schedule

The City of Colby Sanitation Department will not be operating on Friday, July 4, in observance of the Independence holiday, said Gerry Bieker, public works director. Friday's residential grass and trash will be picked up on Thursday, July 3 along with the regular residential solid waste route.

### Queen, princess contestants wanted

The Thomas County Rodeo Queen and Princess Contest is taking entries for the event on Friday, July 25. Queens ages 17-23 and princesses 10-16 years old by Jan. 1, 2003 are eligible. Contestants must also be a resident of northwest Kansas, said Marie Skolout, one of the coordinators. Contestants will be judged in horsemanship, interview, speech and modeling. A trophy saddle will be awarded to the queen, along with belt buckles for the queen and princess. Prizes will be awarded for horsemanship, ticket sales and people's choice award. The 2003 Thomas County Rodeo Queen and Princess will be crowned on Tuesday, July 29, at the PRCA Rodeo. For information or entry form, call Skolout at (785) 586-2228.

### Trophy sponsors wanted

The Thomas County Extension Office is looking for individuals to sponsor 4-H trophies for this year's fair, said D'Ette Sholtz, county extension agent. call 462-4582.

