



12 pages

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## Wheat harvest dismal

By TISHA COX  
*Colby Free Press*

Wheat harvest is underway in the Thomas County area but the yields are anything but promising.

Brian Olson, a multi-county agronomist with the Northwest Research-Extension Center in Colby, said the quality and quantity of the harvest has been “variable.”

He said pound per bushel yields are wavering from the low 50s to low 60s depending on the ground it came from. Yields per acre also have a wide range. Olson said fields are yielding between 3 to 30-35 bushels an acre on dryland.

“The average is in the high teens,” he said, adding the white wheat varieties in southern Thomas County and further south are



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Crews worked to harvest wheat at Rich Calliham’s farm Thursday afternoon southwest of Colby. Wheat yields around the county are ranging from 3-30 bushels an acre, said Brian Olson, an agronomist with the Northwest Research-Extension Center.

“That decreases quality significantly,” Leibbrandt said. “The high humidity and moisture we’ve had will cause that.”

Olson did say the harvest in Thomas County is in “full-swing” but there isn’t much wheat to cut be-

## Barn fire possibly electrical

By TISHA COX  
*Colby Free Press*

The suspected cause of a fire that destroyed a barn at Larry Maxwell’s farm southwest of Colby on Wednesday night was probably due to an electrical problem of some sort, said Colby Fire Chief Bob McLemore.

“It could have been electrical,” he said. “That’s our best guess. Sometimes you don’t know.”

He said reports indicated the fire started on the side of the building which housed a stable area and the only sources there would have been light bulbs and an electric fence charger.

McLemore said the department got the call at 9:23 p.m. Wednesday. When they arrived, the barn was already in flames. He said they had to get a loader to pull down the walls to try to contain the fire, which was accelerated by hay inside the barn.

“It took a long time to get the fire knocked down,” McLemore said, adding once they got the walls down, they had to get the hay out of the barn and spread it to try to extinguish it.

By 1:30 a.m., the hay was spread and the fire contained, although members of the department stayed all night to put out hot spots, which were still smoldering late Thursday morning.

He said the investigation was completed by noon Thursday and the state fire marshal came out to help.

McLemore said he wasn’t sure of the estimated value of the loss yet but the Maxwells lost a tractor and baler, as well as a horse in the barn.

The firefighters also received a little help during the fire. Betty Ryan, the office assistant at the Thomas County chapter of the American Red Cross, said the chapter’s emergency response vehicle was used during the fire to serve coffee and to offer support to the firefighters and the family affected by the fire.

## Alleged shooter has Colby arrest on his record

By PATTY DECKER  
*Free Press Editor*

Colby police are helping authorities in Riley County look for a man alleged to have fatally shot a 19-year-old in Manhattan earlier this week.

The suspect, Lamarques Atez Channel, 20, of Manhattan, is sought by Riley County in the death of Anthony K. Bingham, who was shot inside the Blue Valley Trailer Court at Manhattan.

Colby’s involvement in this case, said Gary Shull, police investigator, initially started when Channel was arrested in Colby about three weeks ago for stealing money from a resident’s home.

Shull said that Channel, along with Kim Throckmorton, 18, of

“We consider (Channel) armed and dangerous,” adding that the suspect is believed to be either in the Manhattan or Wichita area.

Riley County Police Department  
Capt. Gary Grubbs

Colby, spent the night at a friend of Throckmorton’s.

When the victim woke up the next morning, she discovered that a large amount of money had been stolen from her place and that both Channel and Throckmorton had left.

After the victim reported the theft, authorities in Colby put the information over the teletype and within hours the Kansas Highway Patrol saw the couple in Hays at a gas station on Vine Street.

Shull said both Channel and Throckmorton were taken into cus-

tody at Hays and later brought back to Colby to face charges of theft.

Channel was released on Thursday, June 10, after posting a \$20,000 bond. Throckmorton was also released, but no details were available today.

Once Riley County became aware of Channel’s recent arrest in Colby and following the fatal shooting in Manhattan, a widespread manhunt ensued.

“We consider (Channel) armed and dangerous, said Riley County Police Capt. Gary Grubbs, adding that the suspect is believed to be either in the Manhattan or Wichita area.

Bingham, who had no known address at the time of the shooting, died shortly after being shot in the

lower abdomen.

Grubbs said Channel was identified as the shooter after an investigation and many interviews by witnesses said that there was a confrontation ending in Bingham’s death.

Channel is described as a black male, 5’9” tall, 160 lbs., with black hair and brown eyes. His last known address was in Manhattan and he has been arrested at least four times in the past three months for battery, obstruction of the legal process, distribution of marijuana and cocaine. The most recent arrest was in Colby.

Although Shull said he believes Channel will not return to Colby, he did advise that anyone who might see someone who matches the description to call authorities immediately at 462-4460.

## Severe drought prompts federal government to allow emergency grazing

WASHINGTON (AP) — Responding to severe drought conditions across much of the West, the Agriculture Department on Thursday authorized emergency livestock grazing on some lands set aside for conservation and environmental protection.

The expanded grazing “will allow producers to provide additional feed and forage for their livestock,” Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said.

The department said that in areas of severe drought, ranchers and farmers will be allowed to graze livestock on land that is part of the Conservation Reserve Program. These are environmentally sensitive croplands that producers voluntarily retire in return for rent payment from the federal government.

Veneman said much of the western half of the country has been affected by severe drought conditions, jeopardizing livestock.

A new area of severe drought was reported along a stretch from southeastern Montana to western Nebraska in mid-June.

There are 34.6 million acres set aside for the CRP program nationwide.

It’s not known how much acreage will be used for emergency grazing because eligibility will be determined on a county-by-county basis, depending on drought conditions.

To be eligible for grazing on CRP land, a county must have suffered at least a 40 percent decline from normal precipitation levels, or be declared within the two most severe drought condition levels cited by U.S. Drought Monitor, the department said.

The Kansas Farm Service Agency recommended 21 counties in the state receive the designation. Along with Thomas County, other counties involved in the recommendation were: Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Greeley, Hamilton, Stanton, Rawlins, Logan, Wichita, Kearny, Grant, Decatur, Sheridan, Gove, Scott, Finney, Norton, Graham, Trego and Lane.

## Foiled robbery



CRYSTAL RUCKER/Colby Free Press

A woman attempted to rob Donelan Jewelry in downtown Colby this morning, but was caught within minutes after an escape attempt. Unofficial reports indicated the woman allegedly took two rings; however co-owner Bonnie Dinkel became suspicious and tried to keep her from leaving the store. Law enforcement personnel swarmed the location after an alert was issued.

Colby  
Levant  
Atwood



## Clouds and thunderstorms

**Tonight...**Mostly cloudy. A 40 percent chance of thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the mid 50s. Southeast winds 5 to 15 mph.

**Saturday...**Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 70s. Southeast winds 5 to 15 mph.

**Saturday night...**Mostly cloudy with a 50 percent chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the mid 50s. Northeast winds around 10 mph.

**Sunday...**Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 70s. Southeast winds around 10 mph increasing to 10 to 15 mph in the afternoon.

**Sunday night...**Partly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the mid 50s.

**Monday...**Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the lower 80s.

**The numbers**  
Thursday’s high, 81  
Low this morning, 48  
Records for June 25, 110 in 1971 (June’s hottest ever for Colby) and 44 in 1958  
Year ago today, 76 and 53  
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
June’s total, 3.20  
Soil temperature, 72

**The sources:**  
The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

**Water use**  
• June 24 = 1,769 million gallons.

**Water advisories**  
• Water **Watch** is 3.5 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.  
• Water **Warning** is 4.0 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.  
• Water **Emergency** is 4.5 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.

## Briefly

### Program signup deadline looming

The cutoff date for applications to be considered for funding in this year’s Grassland Reserve Program is July 16. Stop by the local United States Department of Agriculture Service Center and visit with the staff at the center or local conservation district to determine if the Grassland Reserve Program will help in your farming operation. The Colby office is at 915 E. Walnut. For information, call (785) 462-7482 or visit on the Internet at [www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov).

### Heartland SHARE delivery Saturday

Heartland SHARE delivery is at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the Sacred Heart

School gym. A share is \$17.50 plus two hours of volunteer community service. The menu for this delivery is ham and cheese Hot Pockets, mesquite chicken breasts, ground beef patties, corn dogs, deli sliced cooked ham, potatoes, carrots, lettuce, red peppers, peaches, nectarines, cantaloupe, fruit cups and spaghetti. There are few shares left. If anyone is interested in ordering, they should call Gene Griffin at 460-3579.

### Class reunion scheduled

The Colby High School Class of 1984 has scheduled its 20th reunion for July 2, 3, and 4, coordinators of the event said. In an effort to communicate with others in that class, a website has been set up for registration and other information. The address is: [www.colbyhigh-1984.com](http://www.colbyhigh-1984.com)

