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## Water board needs help

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
Colby Free Press

The Kansas Water Office invited Thomas County Commissioners to suggest someone to sit on one of its basin advisory committees.

Wayne Bossert, manager of Groundwater Management District No. 4 in Colby, told Thomas County Commissioners Ron Evans, Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen they can nominate someone for the committee.

Bossert said the Kansas Water Office has made recent changes opening up a seat on the Upper Republican Basin Advisory Committee. "We have five base representative groups and they are domestic; irrigation; fish, wildlife and recreation; industrial and municipal," he said. "Everybody sitting on a BAC has to reapply to the Kansas Water Office to sit on the (committee)."

Kansas has 12 Basin Advisory Committees based on the 12 principal river basins in the state. Each committee provides oversight and advice on water issues and serves as a forum for community involvement on both short and long-term water policy in Kansas.

Bossert said Upper Republican Basin Advisory Committee candidate must reside in either Cheyenne County, Rawlins County, all but the far southeast corner of Decatur County, the northern two-thirds of Sherman County, the northern one-half of Thomas County or the northwest corner of Sheridan County.

Basin Advisory Committee members serve four-year term with no term limits. Applications are being accepted through Oct. 15. During November and December current committee members will review applications and nominate new members. The Kansas Water Office will consider nominations in January.

Applications and a list of current basin member category openings in online at [www.kwo.org](http://www.kwo.org) or can be requested from the Kansas Water Office, 901 S. Kansas Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612-1249 or by calling (888) 526-9283.

The advisory committees meet three or four times a year and they look at all things happening on the water plan and they get to put their two cents in, Bossert said. "Not always does the BAC's input get picked up, but we feel we get a fair hearing."

## On a mission



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Joyce Hansen, left, and Gerry Anschutz, both of Colby, recently returned from a trip to Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Jericho, Hebron and other holy sites in the Middle East. The two were members of a Volunteer in Mission Holy Land Tour and are planning to talk about their experiences at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, at the Pres-

byterian Church, 515 W. Fourth St., Colby. The women are also selling olive wood carvings (above) of crosses, nativity scenes, and more. One-hundred percent of the olive wood carving proceeds will go to a variety of Christian organizations and other charities.

## Colby School District gets helping hand

By Tisha Cox  
Colby Free Press

The Colby School District was assisted by Colby Community College after two of its buses broke down while at the state fair.

Colby School District Transportation Director Alan Wade told the school board Monday a hydraulic cooling shaft broke on each bus, and the total repair bill was almost \$5,000. He said the buses would be back in Colby Wednesday.

The high school band and vo-ag students were at the fair — the band to perform and the ag students to go to judging contests.

### Students violate policy

The Colby School Board was informed Monday of an investigation by high school administration of students suspected of violating school policy.

Activities Director Larry Gabel said, over the weekend several students violated the school's alcohol and drug policy.

"So far, some kids have self-reported," he said.

Students and athletes both vio-

lated the policy, but it is unknown as yet how many. The school is investigating the allegations, but don't know if there was one party or several different instances.

No students have been suspended from school, but there have been suspensions from activities.

"We're trying to get to the bottom of it and we're handling it on an individual basis," Gabel said.

The district received help getting the kids back to Colby from the Ellsworth school district and Colby Community College. Colby Super-

intendent Kirk Nielsen said Ellsworth sent a bus, picked up the students and took them to Lyons. Colby Community College sent its bus to Lyons and brought the students back to Colby.

"I was grateful for the help and would gladly return the favor if it was ever needed," Wade said.

Another transportation issue was also on the agenda.

Nielsen said he would like to replace one of the cars in the district's fleet. He recommended a replacement for a Crown Victoria with 196,000 miles. Wade said the district could get a used vehicle to be used by staff.

## High prices spur farmers to plant wheat

WICHITA (AP) — From inside his combine, Beloit farmer Michael Jordan worked methodically to cut his drought-stressed field of sunflowers.

He's been harvesting his sunflowers for 10 days now, and was anxious to get this season's crops cut, so he could begin planting his 2007 winter wheat — something he

figures he will do in the first part of October.

Jordan had already calculated he would put 883 acres into winter wheat this season, about 10 percent more wheat acres than he has planted of the crop in the last two years.

Not only does the wheat work better with his crop rotation, but

futures prices are good, he said.

Other Kansas farmers will also be sowing more acres of winter wheat this planting season.

Driven by a short 2006 winter wheat crop in the United States and other major wheat-producing nations, wheat prices have hovered at high levels not seen for years. And if futures prices on the commodity

exchanges are any indication, they are expected to remain high.

"Overall we are going to see the state of Kansas plant a little more wheat than we did last year," said Dusti Fritz, chief executive officer for the Kansas Wheat Growers Association.

"How much more is anybody's guess."

## County revises vehicle policy

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
Colby Free Press

Vehicles owned by Thomas County came under new guidelines set by county commissioners Monday.

Questions about when vehicles can leave Thomas County and who can drive them surfaced in August when a 2003 Trail Blazer was purchased to replace an aging Jeep Wagoneer. Talk about emergency service personnel taking the Trail Blazer out of town for meetings, sparked the commissioners' decision.

"The first responder vehicle should stay in the shed to be used as a first responder vehicle," Commissioner Ken Christiansen said.

Christiansen said when the commissioners purchased the new vehicle for the emergency medical service they were not aware the older first responder vehicle was being taken out of the county. That vehicle is designated to reach areas of the county not accessible by ambulances when roads are muddy, snow packed or icy.

After considering different options for use of county owned vehicles, the commissions formulated new guidelines.

County employees will have available to them a Dodge Intrepid, Mazda van, Dodge pickup or Ford Ranger pickup to drive to meetings held out of town. Should all these vehicles be in use, and one more is needed, the Trail Blazer registered to the county appraiser's office can be checked out through the county clerk's office.

Commissioner Ron Evans said if all county vehicles are in use, an employee will need to drive his or her own vehicle and will be reimbursed at the state rate of 45 cents per mile.

"And if two or more department heads go to a meeting, they need to go together," Commissioner Paul Steele said.

"The first responder vehicle is available to assist the emergency medical service as it was purchased for," Christiansen said.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved purchase of an all-terrain vehicle Swisher Postmaster Trimmer costing \$600 to be used at the landfill to mow under fences. The trimmer can be used by other departments as needed.
- Steele was appointed to the convention of the Kansas Association of County meeting in Topeka.

## City council cracks down on front yard parking violations

By Patty Decker  
Free Press Editor

Colby City Council took a no-nonsense approach at its meeting Tuesday to enforce an ordinance prohibiting vehicles, motorhomes, boats, trailers and other related equipment being parked in front yards.

Following approval to amend the residential parking requirements, City Manager Carolyn Armstrong asked council how they would like to see this enforced.

The council agreed it would like to first allow residents the opportunity to correct any problems by reading about it in the local newspaper.



C. Armstrong

Within a reasonable length of time, should violators continue to ignore the ordinance, the city will then start ticketing offenders.

The ordinance requires no motor vehicle, trailer, recreational vehicles, boats or other equipment can be parked on a lot that is not a legitimate parking space.

Armstrong explained a parking space means a permanent surfaced area either enclosed and sufficient, like a driveway or carport.

In the ordinance, it states a parking area must have at least four inches of hard surface material such as concrete, asphalt, gravel, or rock and that a parking space cannot take up more than 60 percent of the front yard on any lot.

The only exception is temporary parking of emergency motor vehicles, delivery vehicles and public and private utility trucks.

For questions, call any of the council members or city hall, 460-4410.



LEFT: A camper parked in a yard is in violation of a city ordinance because it isn't parked on a hard surface. RIGHT: A car in a yard



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

also violates the ordinance because it is sitting in grass. The city council directed the police department to ticket violators.