



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Mental health budget same

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
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Funding for mental health care in Thomas County was one item that crossed the desk of county commissioners on Monday.

"It's very humbling to stick your hand out and ask for money," said Jerry Mischawd, president of Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, Inc.

Mischawd met with Commissioners Ken Christiansen, Paul Steele and Byron Sowers by telephone conference for the services' 2009 budget request. Mischawd said before the start of the agency some 40 years ago, the only option for families with children with disabilities was state or private institutions. He said today, families can have their loved ones in community-based centers at Colby, Hays, Atwood, Norton, Hill City, Hoxie, Stockton, Oakley and Russell.

Mischawd said the cost of servicing someone in a community-based center averages \$35,663 per year. He compared that costs at the two state facilities, Parsons which costs an average of \$116,000 per year per person, and

Topeka which costs \$163,000 per year per person.

"Community based treatment, and to live and work in your community is the preferred option," Mischawd said. "I look at values, and it certainly is one of my opinion, that if you can work you should work and I'm pleased to say individuals with disabilities are working."

The agency serves the 18 northwestern Kansas counties. Mischawd said in those counties there are 140 people employed in 137 businesses.

"I'm so pleased businesses in northwestern Kansas are open to giving people with disabilities a chance to work," he said. "They see what people can do, not what they can't do."

In 2008, Thomas County taxpayers contributed \$77,253, or 0.957 mill, to the agency. Mischawd said for 2009, he would submit a budget request "for the same or more," anticipating to again ask for \$80,639. A mill equals one dollar in taxes for every \$1,000 in valuation.

Steele said the actual appropriation for the agency will be 1 mill of the valuation once it is set later this year.

## Whoa — look at that!



JOEY FALKOFF/Colby Free Press

An 18-wheel truck from Waller Truck Company of Excelsior Springs, Mo., hauling hardboard lost control and overturned into a ditch three miles north of Colby on Kansas Highway 25 Tuesday afternoon. Don Fainter, Kansas City, Mo., was the driver of the truck. "I heard something pop and I dropped off the shoulder," he said. "I tried to get it to come back and didn't come back." Among the debris was a yellow "No Passing Zone" sign he ran over. Highway trooper Andy Schippers was the responding officer to the scene.

## Rainy weather slows northwest Kansas harvest work

By Kimberly Davis

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Spotty showers over the weekend slowed harvest, which had barely gotten started, to almost a standstill in the county by Monday.

In the Traer area, Dan Grafel, co-owner

of D&S Grain and Cattle Co., said the area received around half an inch over the long weekend. That with the cooler weather and humidity has slowed things down, he said.

Farmers around Traer, he said, started to cut last Wednesday. The test weights have been pretty good, he said, and the

yields on the summer-fallow wheat have been good, anywhere from 35 to 80 bushels per acre. The elevator, said Grafel, has taken in around 73,000 bushels, with the ability to hold around 350,000. Traer got 15 hundredths of rain Sunday night and then a light sprinkle Monday morning, said Grafel. He said he hadn't heard

from a lot of the farmers in the area about this year's crop, except for the fact that people are ready to get harvest over with. It's later than normal, he said; most years they are done by now.

In Norcat, the ground was wet, too, with the northeast part of the county getting around 25 hundredths of an inch of

rain Sunday night and 10 hundredths Monday morning. With the little dabs of moisture, said Todd Johnson, general manager at Norcat, it's been hard for crews to get going. Test weights in Norcat have been 56 to 62 pounds per bushel, he said, but it's too early in harvest to tell on the yield amounts.

## Blood drive nets 92 units

By Patty Decker  
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Although Colby's blood drive fell short of its goal Wednesday at the Comfort Inn, organizers said they were pleased with the overall results.

Vicky Copess, American Red Cross donor recruitment from Scott City, said more than 75 percent of the goal was met, which is excellent considering many people are in the midst of harvest.

"Our goal was 120 units of blood and we collected 92 units. Of those, 10 were new donors, which was a record for Colby," she said.

The drive was held from noon to 6 p.m. and about half-way through the day, Copess said 42 units were collected.

"We were thrilled with how many more people donated before the end of the day," she said.

In addition to coordinating the



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Brian Unruh, physician assistant at Colby Medical and Surgical Center, was one of the 92 blood donors at the American Red Cross blood drive held Wednesday at Colby's Comfort Inn Convention Center. Red Cross Nurse Cecilia Rogers of Wichita assisted in the blood donation. Unruh, is also on the Eagle Med staff, a critical care transport service, and believes donating is important. "Once on an Eagle Med flight we did not have enough blood when transporting a patient," he said. "Ever since then, I try to donate blood when I can."

blood drive, Copess is hoping more people might volunteer to organize future events.

"We need a coordinator in Colby," she said. "Church groups, civic groups, one or

more people can volunteer for one or more drives."

Copess said the duties of a coordinator include assisting with publicity, arranging volunteer help and being present at that

particular blood drive.

Anyone interested in coordinating one or more drives is encouraged to call Copess at (620) 872-5075 or e-mail: copessv@usa.redcross.org

## Commissioners review land changes

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
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County commissioners on Monday answered questions about land they changed boundaries on in June.

"Nothing has changed but just the mapping," Commissioner Byron Sowers told Shirley Weber, director of the Northwest Kansas Local Environmental Protection Group.

Weber asked Sowers and Commissioners Ken Christiansen and Paul Steele whether current codes and covenants governing a portion of land in the north part of Colby remained in place after they replatted it.

Weber referred to Section 2 - 3.12 of the environmental codes that talks about tracts of land subdivided into two or more lots for the purpose of sale or building development, whether immediate or future, including the streets, alleys or other portions that are intended for public use.

"They can't be sold in less than two acres," Weber said.

"They have to follow the rules," Steele said.

On June 16, the commissioners signed paperwork to change Murray Subdivision No. 2, tracts 38 to 59 to Block 1 of Stephens Subdivision to replat 22 acres of ground at the north end of Franklin Ave.

The action to change the design of the acreage did not change zoning or planning commission guidelines. It did take away the county's obligation to maintain roads within the area.

In other business, the commissions met with Darrin Bell, courthouse custodian, to clarify they did not direct him to seek bids on contracted mowing of courthouse lawns. They said they told him to get estimates from local landscaping crews about how much it would cost to change from the custodians doing the work to contracting it out. Bell is to seek estimates and report back to the board.

Thomas County Treasurer Donita Applebury met with the commissioners to talk about a new postal meter. They directed her to talk with Thomas County Clerk Shelly Harms about the needs of county offices for mailing and get back with them with suggestions for a new postal meter.

## Briefly

### Gaither video Sunday

The Colby Berean Church, 1000 S. Franklin Ave., is hosting a Gaither video concert, "Turn Your Radio On," at 6 p.m., Sunday. Organizers are encouraging everyone to "come and enjoy" this old, classic concert free of charge. The event will be shown on a big screen television with refreshment available.

### Pets ready for adoption

Colby Animal Clinic has a six-month-old (chocolate-colored) Labrador Retriever and a male kitten ready for adoption. Clinic officials said this is a very nice dog and would make a good pet for just about

any home as would the kitten. All adopted animals have current shots. Although these are the only two available at this time, clinic officials urge interested people to call from time-to-time and check for new arrivals. The goal is to find homes for animals rather than to euthanize them. For questions or minimal adoption costs, call 460-8621.

### Contestants sought

The Thomas County Rodeo Queen and Princess Pageant is looking for contestants for the 2008 contest. Girls ages 8-11 are eligible for the junior princess; those 12-15 for the princess and young women, 16-23 for the queen contest, said Marie Skolout, co-

ordinator. "Contestants will be judged in horsemanship, interview, speech and modeling," she said. "A trophy saddle is awarded to the queen along with other great prizes for the princess and junior princess." This year's contest will be held Wednesday, July 23 with entries due by Saturday, July 19. For entry forms or questions, call Skolout at (785) 586-2228.

### Food donations sought

Pickin' On the Plains Bluegrass Festival organizers are wanting to help Genesis of Thomas County by collecting canned goods at the Thomas County fairgrounds ticket booth, July 18-20, said Bev Biel,

food drive coordinator. "All items need to be non-perishable and due to regulations, items cannot be opened or partially used." Some items given to those less fortunate in Thomas County include green beans, corn, peas, soups, canned fish or meat, Hamburger Helper/Tuna Helper, peanut butter, cereal, toilet paper, sugar and many other similar-type foods and staples. "Please help those in need through your donation to the food bank," she said.

### Square dance Saturday

The Golden Buckle Square Dance Club will meet from 8 p.m. to midnight, Saturday, at the Colby Community Building.