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County, sheriff settle pay disputes

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press
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Sheriff Rod Taylor, accompanied by Undersheriff Mark Finley, Deputy Tim McCurdy and accountant Jeff Ribordy, met with the Thomas County commissioners Monday to work out the issues with the department's overtime and budget.

"Overtime hours are going down now," Taylor told the commissioners. "We were hit with three major cases of crimes against people, too delicate to discuss, and the officers can't just work eight hours and go home."

Finley said his hours accumulated because he had been working as the undersheriff and as a road deputy due to a manpower shortage.

County Clerk Shelly Harms said she had visited with Susan Lang at the state Department of Labor about the federal wage and hour law.

"The law states that the undersheriff, when functioning in two jobs, must be paid for both," she said.

McCurdy said that hiring another person would allow the department to schedule fewer regular hours for each officer and have extra hours to respond to spontaneous situations.

"If you have to schedule 171 regular hours, then you are immediately in overtime hours," he said.

McCurdy had a flow chart showing there would be no need for overtime, because it could all be covered in regular time, with a fourth officer.

"Once a man is hired and trained, you'll see the balance," Taylor said, "and if we could pull someone on by the middle of fall and pay out of this year's budget,

when 2010 gets here, then we are off to a clean start."

"We need to set the sheriff's office up to win, not to fail," McCurdy said, "and we need to accommodate the need, and not have just so much frustration about overtime."

"There is a solution, and it's maintaining the staff and getting it where it needs to be." Ribordy, who works at Adams, Brown, Beren and Ball, helped explain some of the funds in the sheriff's budget.

Harms said the sheriff has full authority to hire a new person within his budget.

The commissioners asked the undersheriff about people playing around with four-wheel-drive trucks on county roads. Commissioner Ken Christiansen described the roads as becoming "a four-wheel-drive playground," and asked the officers how it affects them. They said the riders can do a lot of damage.

"We have recently impounded three vehicles," Finley said. "It's not all kids, it's young adults too, and it creates lots of bills. The road department said it would take about four hours at \$75 an hour to fix the road out by the sewer pond."

Taylor recommend that the commissioners ask County Attorney Bruce Flipse to consider holding charges in favor of having the drivers pay restitution to help cover the cost of time and repairs to the road.

"Sometimes, when a rollover is reported, it also sends out the EMS and the fire and rescue people, and those costs need to be recovered," Finley said.

Flipse said the sheriff's department can issue tickets, but if the damage is severe, they can also file charges.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

About 25 bikers with the Colby Legion Riders held a practice run Monday for their first fund raiser, which will begin at 7 a.m. Saturday. Organizer C.W. Hamilton said the group hopes to revitalize the Colby American Legion Post and get the community more involved.

Legion riders aim to rebuild post

By Vera Sloan

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The Colby Legion Riders, a newly organized group of motorcyclists, plan a big day Saturday, with a pancake-and-sausage feed for breakfast and lunch, a poker run, a motorcycle show, a barbecue and a free dance.

The day begins with the pancake-and-sausage feed from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at Colby American Legion Hall, 1850 W. Fourth, with a suggested donation of \$5.

Organizer C.W. Hamilton said the group's

goal is to try to rebuild community involvement in the Colby Legion post.

"We are holding the event to raise money for veterans' causes, from assisting the Patriot Guard, to welcome-home celebrations," Hamilton said.

Other events throughout the day will include a bike show, with all makes judged in open class. The public will act as judges, and the top three winners will receive trophies, Hamilton said.

A Poker Run will begin at 2 p.m., with participants riding to Atwood, Bird City, Goodland and back to Colby, and an 80 percent

payout.

There will be a barbecue at 7 p.m. with a free dance to begin at 8 p.m. During the dance, there will be door prizes, an auction, a raffle for a quarter of beef, and a potluck 50/50 drawing, he said.

The riders' group was organized in February with 25 riders, and has grown to 37, with more planning to join.

"It is basically meant to be a family chapter," Hamilton said.

Anyone who is a descendant of any war veteran and has a 250 cc or larger motorcycle is eligible to become a member, he added.

College will use wind power to teach

By Andy Heintz

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Colby Community College will be installing a 1.9-kilowatt wind turbine on the campus, said Barry Kaaz, dean of external affairs, adding that the equipment is expected to be online by spring.

The installation is part of the Wind for Schools program sponsored by Kansas State University. Kaaz said he was told that the college had been selected last month

while he was attending a wind-energy conference in Chicago.

"The program is designed to broaden education about wind energy in the state," Kaaz said.

The campus will serve as a field-trip destination for area schools, especially any other schools in northwest Kansas who want to look at the technology. Kaaz said the turbine will be hooked to the meter that connects to the new dorm, so it will provide energy for the dorm.

"We will try to be an educational

focal point for all schools in northwest Kansas," Kaaz said. "We will serve as a learning center for several schools."

Kaaz estimated that the college's participation in the program will cost about \$2,000. He said Wind for Schools will sell the college "green credits" to help pay for the project.

Kaaz said green credits will be done through Kansas State, which will sell the energy provided by the turbine to help pay for the installation and operating costs.

The project, run through the Kansas Rural Center, is directed by Dr. Ruth Miller, associate professor at the Wind Applications Center on the K-State campus. The center is the operating arm of Wind for Schools, Kaaz said. Money for the project comes from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado.

Dr. Angela Dijanic, agronomy, chemistry and zoology instructor at the college, plans to use

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Farmers turn out for annual wheat tour

By Vera Sloan

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About 60 farmers took advantage of the light mist and fog on Tuesday morning to stay out of the field, listen to ag specialists and tour the research plots for the annual Extension Wheat Plot Tour.

The economic outlook was of special interest to farmers as they look anxiously toward the sky, knowing harvest looms on the near horizon.

Dan O'Brien, Kansas State University agricultural economist, told the group to look for clues of five or six cents in the market from

now to December, because there is certainly no signal to sell right now.

"The government report will be out Wednesday, and that will have an effect on prices," O'Brien said. "We will know then how much has been planted. Supply-wise, it will tighten up because of droughts and the freeze south of us and wet weather north of us."

He said there are about 2 to 3 million acres that have not yet been planted in the Dakotas due to wet weather. Supplies may be short because of fewer acres, and it would be a good year for Kansas to raise good-quality wheat, he said.

"The world market recovered by about 50 percent in ending stocks, but don't hang your

hat on the export market," he said, "because the rest of the world has a dim view of what U.S. wheat is, so this would be a really good year for Kansas to have good quality wheat."

"If you're wondering about the decline in the value of the dollar, let me tell you, Europe's wealth is traded in oil, on a New York market, and is valued in U.S. dollars. When the dollar is declining, the ability to buy oil is greater, and the price of grain is better."

"There is a feeding frenzy when the dollar declines. One year ago, the dollar went down and oil went up, but now the dollar is climbing, and you wonder where it will go. It all de-

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Out with the old



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Colby city lineman Shiloh Brogan used a chainsaw to down a tree at Fike Park on Tuesday morning. The city staff determined that several trees in the park were dead or dying and needed to be removed, he said.

Briefly

Pool open weekdays

The Colby Community College indoor swimming pool is open to the public for lap swimming from 5 to 7 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Open swimming is 4 to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Cost for general admission is \$3. Monthly and yearly passes are available. Call Kipp Nelson at 460-5476 for additional information.

Food signup is this week

Signup for Prairie Land Food will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Friday at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth St. Delivery will be 10 to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 27, at the Sacred Heart School gym, 1050 W. Sixth St. For information, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579 or State Farm at 462-7525.

Camp set for Tuesdays

The Colby Wesleyan Church is offering "Tuesdays

@ 10," a free summer day camp for children 4 to 12. Kids are invited to participate in the food, fun, games and God's love from 10 a.m. to noon every Tuesday through July 28. This year's "Son Rock Camp" will include nature hikes and outdoor activities with lunch. To register, or for information, call the church office at 462-8391.

Care Center to hold dog show

The Colby Care Center will hold a fashion show for dogs at 2:30 p.m. Thursday at the center. Everyone is encouraged to dress up their dogs and bring them by along with a \$5 donation for the center's Residents Activity Fund. Tammy Swarts will judge the entries and award prizes. For information, call Amanda Hillis at 462-6721.

Church plans Bible study

The Colby Wesleyan Church will offer a 12-week Beth Moore Bible study, "Daniel: Lives of Integrity,

Words of Prophecy," from at 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesdays through Aug. 19 at the Pioneer Memorial Library's community room. No homework is required and discussion will focus around the videos. For information, call the church at 462-8391.

Hospital to hold meeting

Citizens Medical Center plans a community meeting at 5 p.m. Thursday at the southwest corner of the hospital campus in Colby. Supper will be served. Everyone is welcome. For information, call the hospital's community relations office at 460-1214.

Team plans car wash, bake sale

The Colby High School dance team will hold a car wash and bake sale from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday in the Dillons parking lot. Proceeds will help the team pay for dance camp. Pre-sale tickets are available by contacting any member. For information, call Karen Raymond at 443-0952.

City picking up grass clippings

City crews are picking up grass clippings. Clippings must be at curbside by 8 a.m. on your regular trash day in a separate tipper can from household trash. Put clippings in the tipper loose, not in plastic bags. For questions, call the Public Works office at 460-4420.

Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has five kittens, one gray male adult cat and a year-old male husky available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.



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