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## County workers to train on new software

By Vera Sloan

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Thomas County commissioners got an education on county government software Friday from Manatron representative Brent Gustin from Hays.

Gustin said his company furnishes software and support for all but 12 counties in Kansas. He said he would like to continue with Thomas County on a new program his company has worked out with Microsoft. Gustin said Manatron has one of the top programs for county government nationwide and has programs in foreign

countries.

After slide presentation, department heads told the commissioners they would like to have Gustin come to each office and give a demonstration of what the new software will do for them and how it works.

Gustin agreed to educate the departments sometime at the end of this week, since it is so near to their budget hearing time.

Commissioner Paul Steele said before the commissioners make a commitment to spend taxpayers' money, he wants a written statement from each department to let the commissioners know exactly

what they need, and if it looks like this software will fit their needs.

"We are going to do this only once, because this is something we will probably use for the rest of the working history for all of us," Steele said. "Also, I want you to have Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball (the county's auditors) take a look at it and see what they think before we make a determination on spending this kind of tax dollars."

Gustin said the county is looking at around \$105,000 for the software, plus \$21,000 a year for support and updates.

The commissioners told Gustin to get with his boss and get some detailed bids

on what the cost will be.

Commissioner Steele said there is some provision in the budget for new software, but maybe not enough for this year, and asked Gustin if there could be some kind of a "pay some now and some later" program. Gustin agreed to get details and get back to them.

Undersheriff Mark Finley met with the commissioners to give an update on the teleconferencing equipment, an expense that is shared between the sheriff's office and the district judge.

He said that the mental health office has the same equipment, which is a duplication of services, and after this budget year

is over, they will share the equipment with them as well.

Finley said he'd had a concern over handicapped parking at the fairgrounds. He said it appears handicapped parking was not adequate for events such as the concert and fair activities this summer. He said they had taken care of it and advised the fair board to make adjustments in the future.

In other business, the commissioners:

• Heard from Al Smith, custodian at the Thomas County Office Complex, regarding a heating and cooling unit for another

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## County free fair has record livestock auction

By Vera Sloan

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The Thomas County Fair Board has heaved a collective sigh of relief now that this year's fair is over, and the members are looking forward to preparing for next year.

"Over all, the fair was a great success," said Audrey Hines, fair board secretary. "We had good comments, and no negative responses, so that has to be a good sign."

"The rodeo was good, the crowd

was good and we actually made money with the rodeo this year, which hasn't happened for a long time."

She said the Demolition Derby filled the stands and was one of the best they have had in recent years.

She said she thought one of the most helpful things this year, was that the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce took over the parade, planning and executing the entire event. With the great weather during fair week, things could not have gone better.

Diann Gerstner of the Thomas

County Extension office said the 4-H exhibits were down just a little from previous years, but the quality of projects was good, and everything flowed smoothly.

Total sales for the livestock sale on Thursday were \$168,000 for over a hundred head.

"That figure tops sales figures for many past years' totals," said Clint Milliman, extension agent for Thomas County.

Milliman said he didn't have exact figures available, but thought it was quite a lot more than several recent years.

## Colby doctor here to stay

By Vera Sloan

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Citizens Medical Center and Family Center for Health Care say that Dr. Bruce Kellogg has extended his contract and will continue his practice in Colby.

"I've always intended to stay," said Dr. Kellogg. "It was time to renew my contract, and I signed."

Over the past five years, Kellogg said, he has had the privilege of being a part of his patient's lives, and they have allowed him to deliver their babies, to take care of their sick children, to teach them how to maintain good health and to hold their hand when life came to an end.



Dr. Kellogg

He said the people he serves are more than just patients; they are his friends, neighbors and coworkers. He believes he has had a unique relationship that only happens in rural medicine.

"Colby is my home, and I care deeply for the people here," he said.

Kellogg, who began his practice at Family Center for Health Care on Aug. 9, 2004, said he is looking forward to the arrival of Dr. Steven Bear, who he said will add important services to the clinic, and feels Dr. Bear and his family will be a good fit for the clinic and the community.

Dr. Darren Matchell said he is excited that his partner has extended his contract, and said he looks forward to many years of working with him to enhance health care in northwest Kansas.

## New doctor coming to family clinic

Dr. Steven Bear, a native of Georgia who now calls Kansas home, has agreed to a contract with Colby's Family Center for Health Care.

He will begin participating in emergency room coverage beginning this fall, and plans to move with his family to Colby in August 2010 to begin a full-time practice at the clinic.

Dr. Bear received an undergraduate degree from Georgia State University, a master's from Johns Hopkins and his medical degree from the University of Kansas.

He completed a residency at the Smoky Hills Residency program in Salina. The program has a long history of training physicians to practice in rural areas, the clinic says, and is one of the top rural-based residency programs.

Next, Dr. Bear will be trained in adult medicine, including care

of the senior population, disease management and preventative medicine.

He has training in pediatric medicine, including well child care, pediatric illnesses, pediatric disease management, obstetrics and c-section births. Dr. Bear will also perform endoscopic procedures, including colonoscopies and esophagogastroduodenoscopy, better known as EDGs.

Clinic Manager Scott Focke, said he is well skilled in all aspects of family practice and will be able to meet the needs of both the older and younger patients.

"The decision to set down roots in Colby was one that my wife and I took very seriously," Dr. Bear said. "From a professional standpoint, I knew it had to be a town that had what I needed to grow as a physician and practice good medicine."

"I wanted a thriving hospital, strong colleagues with a heart for medicine, as well as a brain for medicine."

"From a family standpoint, we wanted a strong community with good schools and activities, as well as a relatively young population for our kids to grow up with. We feel that we have found these things in Colby."

He said that ultimately, the decision was based on people. He said the people he and his family have met have been the type of people you want to work with, the kind of people whose kids you want your kids to play with.

"These are the important things to my wife and I and why we are excited to call Colby our home," he said.

Dr. Bear and his wife Kim have son Jackson, 3 1/2, and a daughter Ansley, 1 1/2.



VERA SLOAN/ColbyFreePress

Once lush green plants now stand like sticks as witness to the forces of nature after a devastating hail storm hit the area on June 17. Thousands of acres of fall crops, including corn, milo, soybeans and sunflowers, were destroyed by a storm that covered an area estimated at several miles wide from Trenton, Neb., to the Oklahoma border.

## Some area corn a total loss

By Vera Sloan

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For more than a few farmers in Thomas County, interest in the corn crop has turned from what it will make to what's left. For many, that answer, unfortunately, may be nothing.

A fast-moving hail storm June 17 shredded hundreds of acres of what was looking like a record corn crop. Reports of total acres lost and the extent of damage haven't been filed yet, and may not be known until after harvest.

Crop adjuster Jim Malcolm said the storm in Thomas County went from north to south, from county line to county line, and hit especially hard in the Mingo area.

"That particular area was anywhere from one to three miles east and west of Mingo and all the way

to the Logan County line," he said. "I saw some corn fields in the Monument area where anything left standing looked like pitchfork handles sticking up in the fields."

"The afternoon storm of June 17 was a bad one, that went pretty much from Trenton, Neb., to Garden City," he said.

Fields are showing damage ranging from mild to severe leaf damage, which robs the plant of nutrients; to tassel loss, which stops pollination; to destruction of the stalks, which kills the plant.

Field Service Technician Ryan Inman of Servi Tech said the storm seems to hit the best of the best, when looking at good soil and good producing wells.

"We're talking fields whose average production was 200 to 240 bushels to the acre on irrigated

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## Briefly

### Brewster enrollment Tuesday

Enrollment for the Brewster School District will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday at the school. The first day of classes is Tuesday, Aug. 18. For information, call the school at 694-2236.

### City to trim trees this week

City crews will be trimming trees from 7 a.m. to noon Tuesday and Friday on School and Garfield Avenues south from West Eighth Street. Trees will be trimmed to a height of 13 feet, 6 inches over streets and alleys and 8 feet over sidewalk. Residents are asked to move vehicles parked under low-hanging branches. For information, call City Hall at 460-4410.

### District to hold public meetings

Colby School District Superintendent Terrell Harrison and Business Manager Jo DeYoung will con-

duct two public meetings at 7 p.m. tonight and Tuesday in the Colby High School auditorium to explain the district's budget status and cuts that have been made. People will be able to ask questions. For information, call the district office at 460-5000.

### School registration Thursday

Enrollment for all returning students, from kindergarten to seniors, will be from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday at Colby High School. New student enrollment will be at 8 a.m. Friday in each school. The first day of athletic practices will be on Monday, Aug. 17, with time set by each team. The first day of classes will be Thursday, Aug. 20. The district has 2008 diplomas available for pick-up at the administration office. For information, call 460-5000.

### Dance planned for Friday

There will be a singles and married couples dance

from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Friday in the Community Building. This is a free dance for Janet Phelps' 75th Birthday. Please, no gifts. For information, call Lue Duffey (785) 855-2341.

### Sacred Heart enrollment Monday

Sacred Heart School will hold enrollment for all students in preschool through fifth grade from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. next Monday at the school, 1150 W. Sixth St. For information, call the school at 460-2813.

### Rexford enrollment next week

Golden Plains School District enrollment will be from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 13, and Friday, Aug. 14. Pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students will register at the Selden School, while middle and high school students will register at the Rexford building. The first day of the school will be

Wednesday, Aug. 26. For information, call Tammy Shaw at (785) 386-4560.

### Equivalency classes offered

The Adult Education Department at Colby Community College is offering free General Education Development (GED) preparation classes beginning Monday, Aug. 17. The degree is widely recognized as the same as a high school diploma by employers and colleges. One in 20 students enrolled in post-secondary education nationwide holds a general education diploma. Class times are flexible. To enroll, call Nance Munderloh at (785) 460-4663.



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