



COLBY FREE PRESS

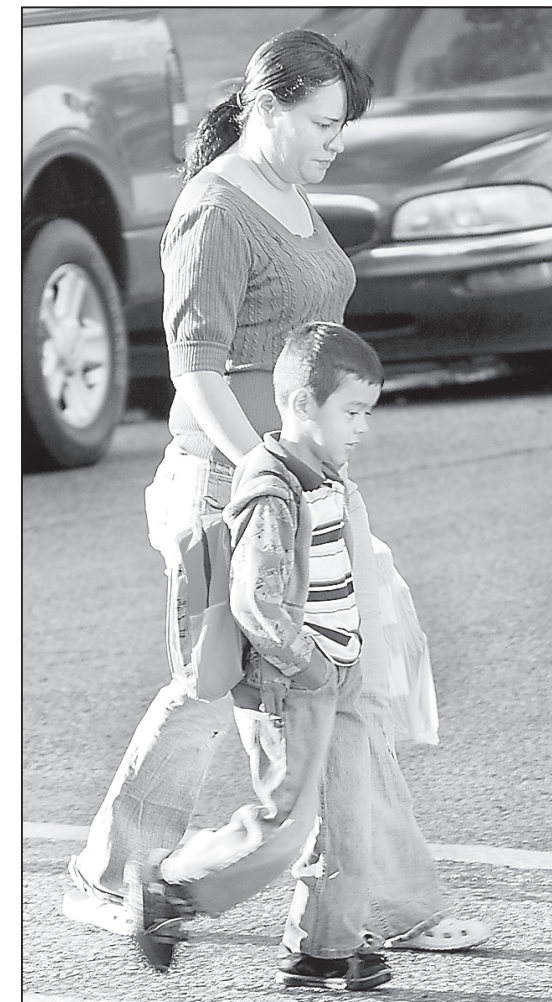
Thursday

August 20, 2009
Volume 120, Number 130
Serving Thomas County since 1888

8 pages



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Area kids head back to school

Colby Grade School fourth grade teacher Jim Myers (above) began the first day of school today by going over the rules and procedures for the class. A little bit of rain didn't dampen these student's spirits (below) as they were helped across Grant Avenue by Sarah Diercks before school. The first and second graders were let off in the parking lot between Grant and

Garfield Avenues and were walked from the lot to the school by crossing guards. Some families, such as Rosalina Monge and her son Jesus Monge (left), parked and so the parents could walk their kids into the school. Grade school Principal Lance Krannawitter said drop-offs at the new zones went very smoothly for the first day.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

City residents to decide fate of new sales tax

By Andy Heintz
Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkansas.com

After much discussion, the Colby City Council approved a resolution that will allow the public to vote on whether or not they are willing to accept an additional 3/4 percent sales tax to pay for the new fire station and a new swimming pool. The council proposed that the special election will take place on Nov. 3.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said the public input she had received suggested that the public wanted the fire station and pool to be voted on as two separate issues. She said 25 out of 28 Rotary Club members she had met with wanted the resolutions to be separated into two questions. However, the council voted to keep the resolution as a single ballot issue.

Jennifer Burr attended the meeting on behalf of the pool committee that is pushing for a new pool. The council asked her what the work group thought of the resolu-

tion. "There is no consensus one way or the other," Burr said. "There are strong feelings to have it separated. The main concern for the work force is we planned to go out and sell the sales tax for the pool. I think members would have a difficult time with the fire station on there because that's not our deal, the pool is our deal."

Councilman Mark Beringer said he didn't want to split the two issues up because he was worried one of the issues would be voted down.

Armstrong said if they separated the issues and approved the pool and not the fire station, taxes will still probably have to go up three or four mills.

"We will still have to pay for the equipment we took out of this year's budget and we will have to pay for a little more bond issues," she said. "If the interest rate goes up, the budget will go up four mills instead of six unless the

See "COUNCIL," Page 3

County looks at road-side farming

By Vera Sloan
Colby Free Press
v.sloan@nwkansas.com

A county landowner told the Thomas County commissioners, on Monday, about neighbors who were farming the county rights of way. It's not a new problem, but one that may be getting to be more common.

Lloyd Theimer, who farms in Summers Township, in the southern part of the county, brought pictures on Monday that revealed wheat stubble right up to the edge of one road. He also had pictures showing farming right up to power poles, a swerve around the poles and so on, down a row of power lines.

"When heavy equipment is allowed to continue to farm up on

the shoulder of the road," Theimer said, "the strength of the road is compromised, and it turns soft, and finally slides down, every time the road is maintained. Then it's not long until the road is not an elevated road anymore."

"Last spring, the first mowing left three to four feet of weeds," Theimer said, "and the guy running the mower said he was allowed to make only one swath. I thought he would be back, but he never did come back. I took pictures on section 2-10-34 that shows 12 feet of wheat is harvested out of the ditch on both sides of County Road 412."

"We tell our men on the county crew to mow two swaths, which is about 4-5 feet from the end of

See "COUNTY," Page 3

Colby oil company gets new director

By Vera Sloan
Colby Free Press
v.sloan@nwkansas.com

A long time Colby business, Service Oil Co., has a new vice president and director of operations.

Jonathan Ketchum arrived in Colby from Omaha in mid June to assume the helm of the business, which includes 10 locations in Kansas and Colorado.

Ketchum has been in the oil business since 1982, living and working in Australia, South America and London before coming back to the United States. After spending five years in California and one in

Omaha with Buchanan Energy, he arrived in Colby to assume his duties with Service Oil.

Ketchum said he believes the highlight of his career was to live overseas for seven years, and the low was what speculators did to the entire economy a year ago this summer when gasoline hit the \$4 mark.

He said he likes Colby, and thinks the people here are very friendly.

"We prefer rural areas over city life, he said and usually look for a place with some land."

He and wife Kris have two daughters. Aubrey (Kevin) Shannon lives in College Station, Texas, and Jai-

me (Isai) Tirado in Amarillo.

The history of Service Oil goes back to 1924, when Ray Hugh Garvey, who needed gas for farming operations, purchased the failing Western Trails Co., named its chain of service and supply stations Service Oil Co. and made the delivery service available to other area farmers.

The company continues to provide gas and oil service, plus farm delivery, as they have done for the past 85 years.

Service Oil is still owned by the Garvey family as a subsidiary of JaGee Holdings LLC, headquartered in Fort Worth.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Jonathan Ketchum was recently hired as Director of Operations for Service Oil. Service Oil has been in business for over 85 years in Northwest Kansas and Eastern Colorado.

Briefly

Music Boosters plan picnic

The Colby Music Boosters will hold their annual potluck picnic at 5 p.m. Saturday at Fike Park. Anyone with a music student or an interest in music is welcome; bring a side dish to share, table service and lawn chairs. The group promotes and keeps people informed about music programs in Colby schools. Drinks will be provided. For information, call Becky Schiferl at 460-0121.

Gem Lions' hog roast next week

The Gem Lions Club will hold its annual hog roast from 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at the Gem Community Building. Entertainment will feature the Jeff Wagener Family, the Bugbee Sisters and other area entertainers. Donations will be accepted for the meal, with the proceeds used for community projects. The Lions also will be collecting used eyeglasses and

hearing aids. For information, call Ken Poland at 462-7809.

School calendars offered for \$5

Colby Public Schools pocket calendars will be available at the Colby High School volleyball and football scrimmage on Friday, Aug. 28. The calendars, which cost \$5, are a fund raiser for the Colby Music Boosters. For information, call Kris Lemman at 460-6586, Elaine Bremenkamp at 462-7860 or any Colby music teacher.

Western artist's work at museum

The work of nationally known artist Keith Avery is on display at the Prairie Museum through the end of August. Avery's realistic items include detailed paintings and drawings of horses and cowboy life. The exhibition is open during regular hours. Call

(785) 460-4590 for information.

City picking up grass clippings

City crews continue to pick 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.

Logo needed for 125th bash

The Prairie Museum of Art and History and the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring a logo contest for Thomas County's 125th Anniversary. Entries should include the theme for the celebration: "The Spirit of the Prairie Lives On." They may be submitted on an 8 1/2-by-11 inch sheet of paper to the museum or the Chamber office

by mail or in person by Tuesday, Sept. 15. For information, call the museum at 460-4590 or the Chamber at 460-3401.

Sheriff can check vehicles

The Thomas County Sheriff's Office is now checking vehicle identification numbers for cars, light trucks and motorcycles. The office is open 8 a.m., to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call Sheriff Rod Taylor for information or to set up an appointment at 460-4570. Taylor said trailer inspections still have to go through the Kansas Highway Patrol office in Hays. The fee is \$10.

