



Legislature stalled over state budget

By John Milburn
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — As Kansas legislators prepare for what will be the final week of the first part of the 2010 session, they find themselves right where they were on Jan. 11: waiting for revenue.

The session began with a bleak budget outlook, the state ledger drowning in red ink as revenue collections continued to slide for an unprecedented fourth year in Kansas history.

Gov. Mark Parkinson trimmed the 2010 budget in December to get back to zero, based on November revenue estimates, but continued lagging tax collections

quickly dashed hopes of a recovery. He opened the 2010 session proposing tax increases to stop the bleeding and begin to restore some of the cuts to schools, social programs and health care.

Legislators generally panned those proposals and went to work on their own budgets. Senators produced a plan that follows some of Parkinson's recommendations and leaves a gap of \$364 million needing to be filled by taxes. The House continued to cut spending, producing a budget that would give the state more than \$300 million in reserve on June 30, 2011.

Now, after 73 days of toiling in Topeka, the 165 members of the House and Senate appear content

to wait a little longer.

"The decision not to move forward on a budget was unavoidable," said Senate Majority Leader Derek Schmidt. "The bottom line is there aren't enough votes for any budget, not one that cuts its way or one that taxes its way to balance."

Neither chamber has acted on the budgets or revenue packages required to make them balance.

"I'm not going to make cuts until I really know that's the last resort. That the responsible thing to do," said House Minority Leader Paul Davis, a Lawrence Democrat. "We ought to be incremental

See "BUDGET," Page 3

KU to honor area students

Seven Colby High students will be among those from 15 Kansas schools honored Wednesday, April 7, by the University of Kansas Alumni Association and the KU Endowment.

A total of 43 seniors from high schools in Thomas, Logan, Cheyenne, Decatur, Gove, Rawlins, Sheridan, Sherman and Wallace counties will be recognized for their academic achievements and named Kansas Honor Scholars at a 7 p.m. dinner program at the Colby Community College Student Union.

Colby High School students to be recognized are Gray Henry, Jacob Hutflyes, Anna Juenemann, Kalen Rasmussen, Jacob Rose, Collin Rous and Keesa Wright.

Others from the area include:

Brewster: Stefanie Eicher.

Golden Plains: Issac and Jonathan Broeckelman and Shaun Gilbert.

Oakley: Rachel Gosser, Caleb Jurey, Danielle Keller, Brandon Maurath, Matthew Temaat, Skyler Whittman and Austin Zerr.

Hoxie: Mackenzie Carman and Jenna Patmon.

Goodland: Alexis Bateman, Landon Brenner, Jay Cotter, Ismawl Garcia, Brook Redlin and Benjamin Waugh.

Cheylin: Naomi Reeh.

Rawlins County: Jill Bergling, Wendy Fields and Kevin Wolters.

Triplains: Jerri Williams.

Wheatland High School: Layne and Taylor Ostmeyer.

The Kansas Honors Program began in 1971 and has honored more than 107,000 students. Scholars from the top 10 percent of their high school senior classes are selected regardless of occupational or college plans.

Each student will receive an American Heritage Dictionary from Danny Lewis, assistant director of the KU Alumni Association. William J. Crowe, special assistant to the dean of libraries, will speak. Students will be guests of the Alumni and Endowment; parents and area alumni may attend at a cost of \$13 each.

Alumni volunteers collect reservations, coordinate details and serve as contacts for the event. County coordinators include Sherrie Wiedeman, Colby, for Gove, Logan and Sheridan counties; Charles and Connie Peckham, Atwood, for Rawlins County; and Paul and Sharon Steele, Colby, for Thomas and Wallace counties.

Let's get set up



Oakley Redi Mix and Machine Shop family members Kathy Button and Kerri Traynor began setting up shop for the week-end Home and Garden show on Friday afternoon, while in the booth next to them Craig Myers of Mingo Custom Woods put finishing touches to his hand-crafted cabinets, in anticipation of weekend lookers and shoppers.

VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press



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The Outback "S-series" is one of many precision guidance systems for agricultural equipment that today's farmers rely on when they go to the field whether they are spraying, planting or tilling. Here, Andy Davis, territory manager for western Kansas and eastern Colorado shows the most affordable entry level system offered at his families business, Golden Plains Ag Tech, in Colby. He said there are well over 700 guidance systems in operation in his territory.

Colby man helps farmers find their way in the fields

By Vera Sloan
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Golden Plains Ag Tech may be one of northwest Kansas' very well kept secrets. The company has been in business for well over 30 years, but few locals know exactly what it's all about. One impressive piece of information is that the company does business in 49 states, soon to be 50, and in 11 foreign countries.

Golden Plains got its beginnings as Ace Industry in the late 1960s, a chrome plating process for farm equipment that lengthened the life of sweep plows, discs and anhydrous knives. The company grew into a fertilizer application equipment parts outlet, with anhydrous equipment as a specialty. Further growth came when they began to convert regular corn harvesting machinery into sunflower harvesting equipment using a standard corn head. More recently they took on global positioning guid-

ance systems (GPS), the most precisely accurate guidance system in agricultural technology today.

The systems are manufactured by Outback, in Hiawatha, a division of Hemisphere Global Positioning Systems.

Andy Davis from Colby is the territorial manager for the product in western Kansas and eastern Colorado. He said utilization of the highest technology is in Europe, because governments there encourage their farmers to try for higher production, and have a huge support for agriculture as an industry. However, North America has a bigger draw for equipment with precision accuracy because of a larger land mass in crop production.

The idea for using global positioning guidance on agricultural equipment was the brainchild of Rick Heiniger, who worked for Golden Plains Ag Tech and is the nephew of the late Don Smith of Colby, the founder of Ace Industry. As a pilot, Heiniger was famil-

iar with aircraft guidance systems. Making a system for land vehicles was right up his alley.

Davis said there are 26 positioning satellites hovering far above the earth, with 12 of them positioned over North America at any given time, sending information to communication satellites closer to earth, who in turn send positioning information to aircraft, boats, ships and even to farmers in Thomas County fields.

"The latest in technology is so accurate it can come within one centimeter of accuracy in altitude, latitude and longitude in construction, grading roads and leveling ground," Davis said. "Today's agricultural input costs require a new level of accuracy and accountability.

"In the past, what was perceived as simple 'skips' or 'overlaps' when spraying, planting or tilling could quickly end up costing thousands of dollars. Precision

See "GPS," Page 3

Briefly

Series highlights Lent season

The Thomas County Ministerial Association will have its final *Lenten Brown Bags and Bibles* programs of the year at noon Wednesday, with Jarrod Spencer of the Church of Christ to speak. Come to the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 545 W. Fourth St. Bring your own lunch; beverage and dessert will be provided. Call 462-6342 for information.

Grant deadline Wednesday

The Thomas County Community Foundation is taking grant applications for the first quarter. Public Relations Coordinator Christina Schmid said proposals can be for any type of project, as long as it is not to benefit an individual, political activity or operating expenses. Nonprofit organizations, public agencies and religious institutions may apply. The

deadline is Wednesday. For information or applications, call (785) 460-9152.

Enroll at Puddle Duck Thursday

Puddle Duck Preschool will hold an enrollment open house for the coming school year from 4 to 6 p.m. Thursday at the school, 520 W. Fifth St. Children 3 to 5 from all denominations are welcome. For information, call Amy Jennings at 460-2603.

School meeting Thursday

The Colby School District will hold a community meeting on at 6 p.m. Thursday, in the Colby High School Commons. Superintendent Terrell Harrison said the purpose is to urge people to write letters to state legislators regarding school finance. Staff members will be available to help letter writers. They will have current information from the Legislature and

sample letters for reference. For information, call Harrison at 460-5000.

Church to hold egg hunt

College Drive Assembly of God church will have their annual Easter egg hunt for children 10 and under from 1 to 2:15 p.m. Saturday at the church, 245 W. College Dr. With over 1,300 eggs everyone will get eggs and candy. Doors open at 12:45 p.m. Children under 5 years old must be with an adult. For information, call Michelle Hillery at 443-1395.

City council meeting moved

The Tuesday, April 6, meeting of the Colby City Council has been moved to the Little Theater in the basement of the Community Building, 285 E. Fifth St., because the council is expected high attendance from the community. The meeting will start at 7:30

p.m. as usual. For information, call City Hall at 460-4400.

Chronic disease classes offered

Citizens Medical Center is offering six weeks of free classes to help people with chronic diseases optimize their lives for healthy living. Classes will be from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. beginning next Monday in the board room at the hospital. For information or to reserve a seat, call Courtney McCarty or Jeanene Brown at (785) 460-4849.

