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Weighing in for the county fair



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

These five little pigs went to the 4-H small animal weigh-in last Thursday instead of going to market. Bill Shields, and Travis Vaughn helped guide their way back into a trailer to make room for the rest of the 112 pigs signed up for this year's

Thomas County Fair. These little porkers will soon be hand fed, tamed and named by their young owners, and will be competing against each other for top ribbons come fair time, which is just a little over 60 days away.

Road crews seeking wage equity

By Vera Sloan
Colby Free Press
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All twelve employees of the road and bridge department were at the commissioners meeting on Monday to take a stand for the three of their number who receive less hourly pay than the others.

"We have talked about this - before the sheriff came to talk about raising his department's wages," said Road Foreman Bill Merryman and Shop Foreman Pete Schlageck, spokesmen for the group.

"We would like to see the road department employees receive

\$12 an hour," Merryman said.

Some of the reasons he noted were that the department loses good workers to better paying jobs after they are trained; in the past few years they have lost 11 employees compared to five in the treasurer's office over the same span of years.

"Once they are trained on the equipment, and know how to take care of it, it is hard to train someone new," Merryman said. "It pulls one of us off the job to train someone else and it costs about \$1,500 to train a new guy, because there are so many different jobs

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New horse club holds first show

The brand new Colby Trail Blazers horsemanship club hosted their first horse show on Saturday at the Thomas County Fairgrounds.

Board member Ashley Moser said there were 40 contestants at the Colby show, including the Colby team and others from the area. The newly-formed club began meeting in February and already has 20 families.

The Trail Blazers compete in the Kansas Western Horseman's Association

Moser said western horsemen shows have many different riding events including slow rides like Western Pleasure and Walk Trot

Horsemanship and fast rides like barrel racing and relay racing. The top four in each event get points that go toward qualifying for the state championship.

Moser said the next show is in Oakley on Saturday, May 22, and the club is planning more shows here.

Children of all ages are welcome to join, Moser said; the club doesn't have formal practices and members train on their own. Anyone interested in joining the Trail Blazers should call Moser at 462-0261 or Shawna Kersenbrock at 443-0154.

Legislature passes budget, tax increase

By John Hanna
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA (AP) - Gov. Mark Parkinson said Tuesday that he will sign by the end of the month the increase in the state sales tax that the Legislature approved to protect public schools and government services from cuts.

The measure boosts the sales tax from 5.3 percent to 6.3 percent, meaning consumers will pay more for groceries and other items beginning July 1, the start of the state's fiscal year.

Increasing the sales tax bal-

ances a \$13.7 billion budget. The spending plan for the next fiscal year, also approved by bipartisan majorities, protects aid to public schools and government programs from cuts - a key goal for the Democratic governor.

"State government helps the 6-year-old who's in the first grade," Parkinson told House Democrats during an afternoon caucus meeting. "Her schools are going down. You saved them last night."

Parkinson had pushed for higher taxes and had told the Republican-controlled Legislature that

he wouldn't accept significant budget cuts after multiple rounds last year.

The tax bill, which is expected to raise \$314 million during the next fiscal year, finally was approved by the House early Tuesday, 64-61. Members kept voting open for more than four hours, as a few votes switched back and forth, making the outcome uncertain. The Senate already had passed the measure.

With that settled, legislators wrapped up their business Tuesday, their 89th day in session, one short of what their leaders had

scheduled.

Parkinson noted that Kansas' sales tax will remain at 6.3 per-

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Cops honor fallen brethren with Law Enforcement Week

This week is National Enforcement Memorial Week.

Officially proclaimed in 1962 by President John F. Kennedy, May 15 is Peace Officer's Memorial Day and the surrounding week is Enforcement Memorial Week. Statewide services were held Thursday and Friday at the Statehouse in Topeka.

Government buildings will display the flag at half mast on Saturday and officers will wear mourning bands on their arms and fly blue ribbons on car antennae to honor fallen officers.

Two law enforcement officers have been killed in Thomas County since the county's incorporation in 1885. Thomas County Sheriff Sam Pratt died in the line of duty Aug. 24, 1925. He was killed at a roadblock north of Colby trying to capture two fugitives

wanted for the death of a Nebraska police officer. On Sept. 6, 1995, Kansas Highway Patrol Master Trooper Dean Goodheart was killed east of Colby on I-70 when he was struck by a passing motor vehicle during a truck inspection.

Several former Thomas County officers have also been killed in the line of duty. On April 9, 1995, John Teter, chief of police in Oxford, died in a car accident while pursuing a vehicle. He had been an investigator with the Quad County Task Force, which the Colby Police Department and Thomas County Sheriff's Office are a part of.

On June 25, 1995, Daniel Trail of the Beloit Police Department died while attempting a water rescue. He had served with the Colby and Atwood Police Departments.

Nursing Home Week kickoff



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Mayor Ken Bieber joined staff and residents at Colby Care Center on Tuesday for a balloon launch to kick off Nursing Home Week. The center is planning events every day this week. Thursday will be a cinnamon roll and coffee breakfast at 9:30 a.m. with flower planting following. Friday will be a potluck barbecue and "hoedown" at 5:30 p.m.

Briefly

Register for youth program now

Registration is still open for youth currently enrolled in fourth through eighth grades for the free Youth Chautauqua Camp, June 1-5 at the Prairie Museum. The camp, presented by Drs. Joyce Thierer and Ann Birney of "Ride into History," will offer youth the opportunity to research and then portray Thomas County personalities from the 1930s under the tent on the Chautauqua stage. Call the museum at 460-4590 for information.

Red Cross needs your blood

The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive from noon to 6 p.m. Thursday at the Community Building. To schedule an appointment, call (800) 733-2767.

Methodists plan youth camp

The Colby United Methodist Church will have

enrollment for its Summer Youth Program from 4 to 6 p.m. Monday and Tuesday at the church. The program, for children age 3 through sixth grade, will run Monday to Wednesday each week from June 7 to July 7. For information, call the church at 460-2761.

Expert to talk about diabetes

Dr. Phillip Challans of Wichita will give a free diabetes update at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 20, at Citizens Medical Center. Dr. Challans is taking over for Dr. Richard Guthrie, who is unable to attend the lecture. For information, call Jeanene Brown, director of education, at 460-4850.

High school teams selling meals

The Colby High School forensics and debate teams are selling tickets for their Celebrity Servers fund raiser Saturday, May 22, at Montana Mike's.

Tickets are \$15 for either a center cut sirloin dinner or a grilled chicken dinner. A portion of the ticket and all tips will go to the teams for their trip to the National Championship on May 28. For information, call coach Nancy Rundel at 460-5300.

Golf club plans tournament

A one-couple golf tournament to raise money for Meadow Lake Golf Club will begin at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, May 23, at the course, 1085 E. Golf Club Drive in Colby. Registration will be at 10 a.m., with tee-off at 10:30. Cost is \$60 per couple. Call the club at (785) 460-6443.

Class will prepare for college

The Colby Community College adult education department is offering a free college preparation class, "Math Review and Other Stuff Too," Tuesdays and Thursdays in June. In addition to math, the class

will include basic technology skills, writing, study techniques and problem solving. Director Nance Munderloh said the class will help both graduating high school students and adults going back to school. For information, call Munderloh at 460-4663.

Head Start taking applications

Thomas County Head Start preschool is accepting applications for 3- and 4-year-old children. The program takes applications all year, but children must be 3 by Sept. 1 to start class in the fall. Tuition is free. To apply, call 460-6067.

