



28 pages

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## Lake gets 250 lbs. of catfish

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks technician Brian Serpan and district fisheries biologist David Spalsbury put 250 pounds of catfish into Villa High Lake on Thursday. The department was stocking the pond for Colby Community College's Fishing Derby on Saturday. Spalsbury said the catfish average about two pounds each, but many in this bunch were larger. The derby begins at 9 a.m. Saturday.

## Crews have to wait for salary discussion

By Vera Sloan  
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County road crews and landfill workers heard Monday they will have to wait until after budget time to learn whether they will get pay raises they asked commissioners for at the April 10 meeting.

Two of the workers who had been at the April meeting came back Monday to ask about the raises.

"I don't want to turn down the request, but I think we need to defer it until after budget figures are done," Commissioner Paul

Steele said. "After I get numbers on June 30, I'll have a pretty good idea about what the figures will be. It may be that we'll have to concentrate more on gravel roads and sealing and patching instead of building new ones."

"After six months of records go by, we'll feel better about figures for salaries. We're eroding our finances, and the way the budget works, we'll know a lot more after we have those six months of records."

Road Supervisor Clair Schrock said the men in his department could see what was going on in other departments where workers

got raises, and wondered if there was any way the county could put all the money from fees in one pot and divide it out.

County Clerk Shelly Harms noted that fees collected by the clerk's and treasurer's offices do go into the general fund.

Steele reminded the group that when the state assistant attorney general was in the county a little over a year ago, he told the commissioners that any drug money collected by the sheriff's department is under the control of the sheriff, and that the county had no

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## City may restrict campers

By Andy Heintz  
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The Colby City Council discussed whether to prohibit vehicle campers from staying overnight at city parks at a meeting Tuesday at City Hall, taking no action but agreeing generally that, except for special events, parks aren't meant for camping.

"I don't know if we should permit people to stay overnight," said Councilman Dave Voss.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong wondered whether tent camping might be OK.

Mayor Ken Bieber and Councilman Patrick Mallory both said they thought there should be an ordinance against people in campers staying overnight at the parks except during special events. Councilmen said some campers even hook up to the city's power outlets.

While the council didn't take action, Mallory said he thought the council would eventually vote for an ordinance that would prohibit campers from parking at the parks.

In other business, the council:

- Approved an agreement with Midwest Energy on firm and "nonfirm" rates for wholesale power. The contract raises the demand charge from \$8.23 a month to a little over \$10. Council member Patrick Mallory said the increase is due to new government regulations on power-producing companies. Armstrong said one new rule requires all power plants to have a catalytic converter on every engine. Colby has six engines on its power plant, Mallory said.

- Approved an order requiring Pete Stephens to remove old lawn mowers on his property at Copeland and Second Street by Sept. 30. Stephens already has removed batteries from his property, Armstrong said, adding that she would go to the planning commission to see if a lot Stephens owns on the west end of Zelfer Avenue meets light industrial regulations. The lot is full of old cars that Stephens sells as collectibles, she said. Stephens said what people think of as a collectible is pretty subjective.

Building inspector Rick Dickman said Stephens had done quite a bit of mowing around the vehicles.

"It looks more like a salvage yard than an industrial site," Dickman said.

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## Family reunion will bring hundreds to Thomas County

By Vera Sloan  
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An outfit called Reunion Research estimates that 195,000 family reunions are held across the nation every year, with an average of 40 family members at each. So the Ostmeyer family reunion must rank as the granddaddy of all family reunions.

The first Ostmeyer reunion in 1974 attracted around 400 members of the clan, and family records show that as many as 600 have been together at one time to reminisce about their heritage. The family gets together every five years, and will do it again on Saturday, May 29, at the Comfort Inn Convention Center in Colby.

"We always honor the first cousins," said Colleen Bixenman, a member of this year's reunion committee. "In 1989, there were 600 of us at the Colby American Legion and we had the meal catered. We moved to the Convention Center in 2000. It will comfortably hold about 500 people, and they prepare and serve the



COLLEEN BIXENMAN

Elke Hilterman, Ken Bixenman, Mark Ostmeyer and Gerhard Hilterman examined a genealogy list showing the Ostmeyer name as far back as the 1500s. The Hiltermans, from Germany, are just a few of the Ostmeyer relatives who were in town for the family's reunion.

food there."

She said between 250 and 300 family members have registered for this year's event so far.

Bixenman said the family traces its roots to German immigrants Fred and Anna Ostmeyer, who settled near Angelus in Sheridan County in 1887. Family records show that more than half of the

couple's descendants still live within a 100 mile radius.

Bixenman said Fred Ostmeyer was born in Bad Laer, Germany, in 1853 the youngest of five children. His father died when he was 9. In 1868, his brother George and sister Anna Maria emigrated to

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## Unemployment rate dropped in April

TOPEKA (AP) - State labor officials say Kansas businesses added nearly 16,000 jobs in April, with construction showing the biggest gain.

The Kansas Department of Labor also reported that the state's unemployment rate fell to 6.3 percent last month, down from 6.9 percent in March.

The department issued its monthly employment report Friday. Officials said Kansas typically gains about 10,000 jobs from March to April, well below

this year's figure of 15,900.

Eight of 11 major industries reported job growth from March to April, with construction adding 6,100 jobs. The department says it's the first time since June 2008 that construction has gained jobs compared to the same month a year earlier.

Professional and business services added 4,200 jobs in April, with most of the gains in administrative and support services.

## Briefly

### High school teams selling supper

The Colby High School forensics and debate teams are selling tickets for their Celebrity Servers fund raiser Saturday at Montana Mike's. Tickets are \$15 for either a center-cut sirloin or grilled chicken dinner. Part of the ticket price and all tips will go to the teams for their trip to the National Championships next weekend. For information, call coach Nancy Rundel at 460-5300.

### Dance teams will wash your car

The Colby High School Dance Team will be washing cars to raise money for their dance camp from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday in the Dillon's parking lot. For information, call coach Denita Rogers at 460-1325.

### Golf club plans couples event

A "one-couple" golf tournament - which has golfers in pairs rather than foursomes - to raise money

for Meadow Lake Golf Club will begin at 10:30 a.m. Sunday 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. Cart rental is available, and lunch and snacks will be provided. Call the club at (785) 460-6443.

### Cemetery ready for cleanup

Sacred Heart Cemetery in Colby asks that people remove any decorations on the ground before Monday so the cemetery can be cleaned for Memorial Day. For information, call Jeannie Solko at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 462-2179.

### Moran's staff plans office hours

Staffers from Congressman Jerry Moran's will hold open office hours from 9 to 10 a.m. Tuesday at the Thomas County Courthouse. Chelsey Gillogly, a district representative for Mr. Moran, will be in the

commissioners' room to meet with area residents on their views on the federal government or any difficulties with Social Security, Medicare, Veterans Affairs or other programs. For information, call Gillogly or Rachel Robben at (785) 628-6401.

### Forensics team plans open house

The Colby High School forensics team will have an open house and performance night at the Pioneer Memorial Library beginning at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday. Team members will do selections from their season and answer questions about the program. Refreshments will be served. For information, call Nancy Rundel at 460-5300.

### Register for youth program now

Registration is open for students in fourth through eighth grades for a free Chautauqua Youth Camp from June 1 to 5 at the Prairie Museum. The camp,

led by Dr. Joyce Thierer and Dr. Ann Birney of "Ride into History," will offer kids a chance to research and then portray Thomas County personalities from the 1930s under the Chautauqua tent. Call the museum at 460-4590 for information.

### Remember book sale at library

It's time again for Pioneer Memorial Library's Memorable Book Sale, Thursday to Saturday, May 29, starting at 9 a.m. and closing at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, 4:45 p.m. Friday and 3:45 p.m. Saturday. For information, call the library at 460-4470.



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