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City Council gives raises at entry level

By Andy Heintz
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The Colby City Council approved a 3 percent cost-of-living pay increase for all workers in "entry-level" positions at a meeting Tuesday at City Hall.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said the raise is needed to offset the increase in the cost of living people are experiencing.

Councilman Tim Hutfles, the sole dissenting vote, expressed disapproval of the blanket increase. He said people in some departments, such as police officers, may need a raise, but he was against across-the-board wage increases.

Armstrong said six percent of employees' pay is immediately withheld for the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System. She said the city was losing entry-level workers because they were going to jobs where they got \$11 per hour.

Councilman Fred Taylor said Armstrong had told him that the city was unable to fill some jobs because of the wages it was offering. He said the \$10.45 per hour offered to new street, sanitation, parks and community building workers last year doesn't take into account paying for a new employee to get trained and paying for someone to train that person. Taylor also said he didn't think a 3 percent increase would keep up with the increased cost of living in the long run.

Hutfles said many people in the private sector are not being paid as well as city workers. He said a lot of the business owners would like to raise wages, but they can't because of competition. He added that a lot of the people paying taxes are people making less than beginning city workers.

Hutfles said he called several businesses, and the average starting wage was about \$8.50. He said

See "RAISES," Page 3

Counting the votes

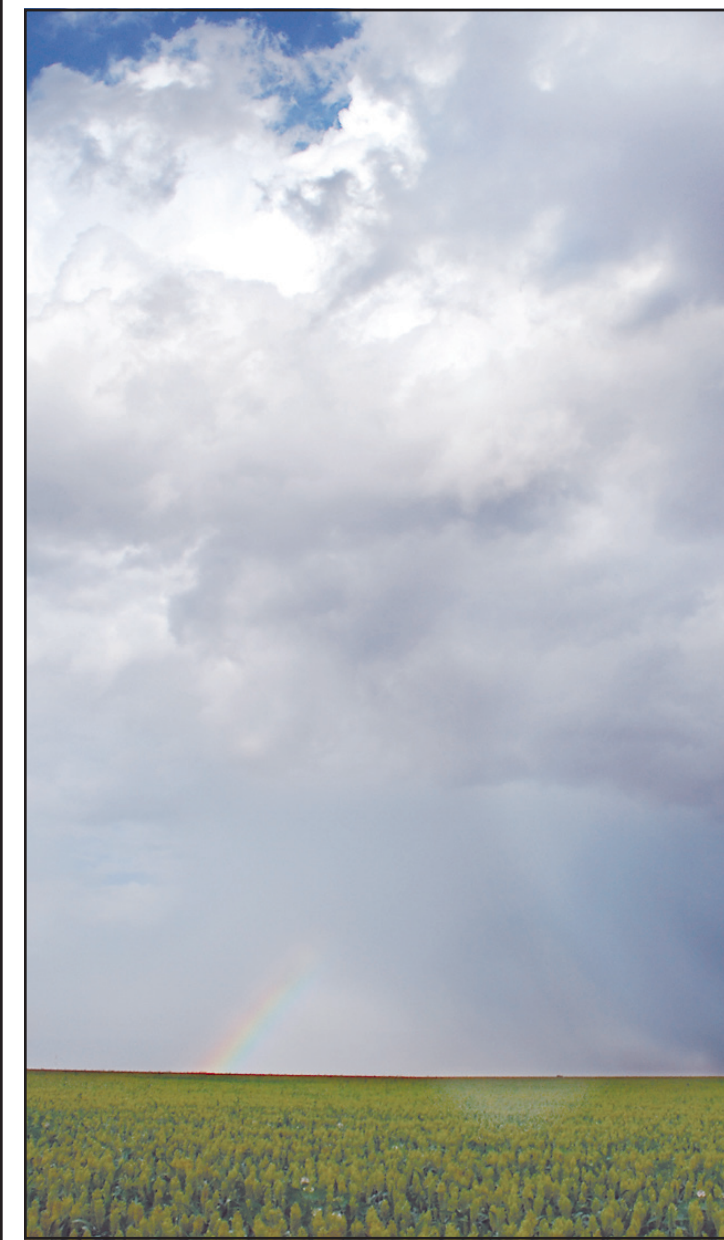


VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

No, that is not a pizza in the blue bag, Chairman Ken Christiansen, it's provisional ballots, and you have to help count them by hand! Certifying the vote from Tuesday's election is never the most fun job in the world, but somebody's got to do

it. By state statute, it's included in the county commissioners' job description. Deputy County Clerk Kristi Mann was on hand to record the votes in the official election book and other un-elected county personnel gathered to witness the count.

Fast-moving storm



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

This thunderstorm moved southeast through Thomas County on Wednesday, but did little more than drop some rain around Levant and create some limited visibility on I-70.

Board president and secretary call Thomas County Fair a success

By Vera Sloan
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Parents and 4-Hers may be heaving a sigh of relief after the end of this year's Thomas County Fair, but the Fair Board hasn't had time. Board President Jim Anderson said they have already begun planning next year's fair.

"It was really a great fair this year," said Audrey Hines, Fair Board secretary. "It was too bad the Demo Derby was somewhat of a disappointment because of the low number of cars that came for it. The whole event only lasted about an hour, and the fans of Demo Derby fill the stands."

She said the number of cars for the derby is beyond the board's control. There is no preregistration, Hines said, so there is no way of knowing how many cars to expect. The reason for not having preregistration is because the owners never know how long it will take to get their cars running after their last derby, she said.

Anderson agreed the board felt bad about the demo derby, but said those things happen sometimes. He said there is a point system going between the demo derby people in Colby, Goodland and St. Francis. Even though they expected more cars, it's anyone's guess as to how many will actually show up.

At the fair itself, Open Class entries were down, Hines said, adding that she wondered if there were people who came out on the weekend and were disappointed because the animals had been released on Friday.

"Weekends are about the only time some families can go see all the exhibits," she said.

She said overall, she thought the fair had gone well, and said people had lots of good things to say about an unusually good parade. She gave the credit to the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, which organizes and takes entries for the parade.

"It's just something they do so well," she said, "and the board

couldn't begin to spend the kind of time they put into making it such a nice parade."

Anderson said he has been on the fair board for about 20 years, and has seen some good changes in the facilities and grounds.

"This is the first time we've had seven nights of entertainment," he said, "and it seemed to work well. There's been quite a few changes in the last two years, and when there's change, we always wonder how it's going to work out, but so far, it's been fine."

He said the motorcycle races were a nice addition, and he thought people really liked them.

See "FAIR," Page 3

Livestock sale nets \$228,294 for kids

By Vera Sloan
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The 56 buyers who purchased 122 animals at the 4-H livestock sale last Thursday at the Thomas County Fair broke all previous records.

When the gavel came down for the last time, and the last bid had been tallied, the final count was \$228,294.

"There were around 250 market animals entered in the fair this year," said Extension Agent Clint Milliman, "but 4-H members are allowed to sell only one animal per species in the sale."

One hundred twenty-two animals were sold: 53 pigs, 11 lambs, 26 goats, 30 market steers

and two yearling bucket calves. More livestock was sold at last year's fair, but the total bids came in less at \$168,251.

The Chamber of Commerce ag committee gave a helping hand, clerking the sale and pitching in wherever a hand was needed.

Buyers were treated to a steak dinner, with steaks compliments of Crop Production Services and the rest of the meal sponsored by the 4-H Council, and served by 4-H'ers.

Michael Schmidt's 281-pound Grand Champion market swine sold to Crop Production Service of Brewster for \$3.75 a pound. The Reserve Champion, exhibited by Justin Schmidt, tipped the scales at 296 pounds and sold to Frontier Ag in Brewster for \$3.25. Steve Vaughn of Superior Livestock gave each boy \$250 as a congratulation for winning grand

and reserve champion. The Schmidts belong to the Brewster Prairie Gem 4-H Club.

Abilene Hustlers 4-H member Taylor Todd sold her 140-pound Grand Champion market lamb to F&M Insurance Store for \$7 a pound.

The market goat grand champion was exhibited by Michael Schmidt of the Brewster Prairie Gem 4-H club. The 73-pound goat sold for \$10 a pound to Frontier Ag, Brewster. The Reserve Champion was exhibited by Braden Thummel of the Solomon Valley 4-H Club. The 87-pound goat was purchased by Dale Thiel for \$8.50 a pound.

The Grand Champion market steer was exhibited by Chandler Comfort, also a Solomon Valley member; the steer weighed in at

See "SALE," Page 3

Briefly

Eagles, parents to meet Saturday

A meeting for football players and parents for the fall season will be at 10 a.m. Saturday in the Colby High School auditorium. All players should attend. For information, call (785) 460-1390.

Dance Saturday at golf club

A singles and couples dance is planned at the Meadow Lake Golf Club, 1085 E. Golf Club Dr., from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Saturday, with music by Jim Christensen. For questions, call Lue Duffey in Rexford at (785) 269-7057.

4-H kids want to dip your dog

The 4-H Dog Program will hold a "dog dip" from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday at Orchem's. Leader Carrie Bredemeier said the dip helps keep the dogs free from mosquitoes and other pests. The cost is \$2 for

small dogs and \$3 for large ones. For information, call Bredemeier at (785) 269-7001.

Commodities here on Monday

U.S. Department of Agriculture commodities will be distributed from 1 to 2 p.m. Monday at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center. Anyone who's eligible may come and get commodities first-come, first-served. Items will include vegetable soup, apricots, beans, instant milk, spaghetti, spaghetti sauce and rotini. For information, call the volunteer office at 462-6744.

Seniors plan potluck Tuesday

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck dinner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share. Table service

and beverage will be provided. For information, call 462-6342.

Football meeting set for Tuesday

A meeting for Colby Middle School football parents and equipment checkout will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Middle School cafeteria.

Soccer parents to meet next week

The American Youth Soccer Organization will have a parent meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Little Theater at the Colby Community Building. Registration is open through next Friday for anyone ages 4 1/2 to 19. Games begin Saturday, Aug. 21. For information, call Emily Griffin at 460-0647.

Heartland seeks young students

Heartland Christian School is accepting enroll-

ment applications for preschool and kindergarten classes. Call (785)460-6419 for information on the 2010-11 school year. The school is at 1995 W. Fourth Street in Colby.

Sacred Heart enrollment Aug. 17

Sacred Heart School enrollment will be from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 17, at the school for all students in preschool through fifth grade. New students need to bring a copy of their birth certificate, Social Security number, immunization records and physical. For information, call Principal David Evert at 462-2813



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