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Harvester says county must fix roads

By Vera Sloan

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In a telephone conversation with a Thomas County citizen on Wednesday, the county commissioners were told it might be a good time to consider a ballot issue to put more money into the road department.

Jim Diebert, custom harvester from Colby had contacted commission chairman Ken Christiansen earlier in the week with a concern about township and county roads that he considers to be unsafe, especially during harvest time.

"An experienced driver could easily lose control from washboard conditions in many of these roads," Diebert said. "It looks like the windrows of dirt at the sides of the roads haven't been bladed or spread across the roads for a long time because weeds have had time to get a pretty good growth in the windrows, and those windrows need to be pushed either into the ditch or spread on the roads."

Christiansen told Diebert he had traveled two miles of road north of the Meadow Lake Golf Course that morning (Wednesday). He agreed with Diebert about the roads not being as good as they should be, and believed it to be partly due to lack of rain so that the roads could be worked. He told Diebert the road north of town is maintained

by Morgan Township, and that he (Diebert) would have to contact that board about that particular road.

Diebert said he realized how dry it was so that the roads couldn't be worked, but it was his opinion that all the county roads, both dirt and sand, in the county were in need of a lot of attention, and it was his thought that it might be a good time to put county unit system on the ballot, a system where all the roads in the county are maintained by the county, with townships giving up any authority.

The commissioners discussed the chances of the question getting approval if it was placed on the ballot and said there are several townships wanting the county to take over their roads. Right now, the county maintains two townships, Rovhol and East Hale. They took no action.

The county treasurer's office requested that her office be allowed to continue on Manitron software – the county's old software – through tax season, and until all the kinks are worked out of the new system from Computer Information Concepts.

Donita Applebury, county treasurer said they are having time-consuming problems with the new software because it comes up with inaccurate information and it takes a lot of time to go in and make a

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press



Milling project ties up Range

Workers from APAC Construction milled up a section of South Range Avenue near the College Drive intersection Thursday. APAC began the milling project on Monday. Workers will mill and repave north and south-bound lanes from just north of College Drive to the I-70 interchange. The Department of Transportation expects the job to take about two weeks.

Area foster agency says more volunteers needed

By Andy Heintz

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Youthville, a non-profit child welfare agency with foster care programs in northwest Kansas and Colby, is looking for foster care parents willing to take in youth between seven and 18.

Brett Weller, market coordinator for foster care and adoption at Youthville, said the agency needs about 20 more homes for children in northwest Kansas. He said they have a specific need for parents willing to take in three or more siblings.

Mandy Lanning, social worker for Youthville, said she has to turn children away on a daily basis. Youthville gets all of its children through the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Lanning said. The non-profit agency has an office in Colby, 770 S. Range Ave. No. 3.

Lanning said it's easier to get foster parents to take in babies and younger children than it is to get them to take pre-teens or teenagers. Kathy Roberts who, along with her husband Eugene, have taken care of over 50 foster

children in their Colby home over the past eight years, said teenagers are very interesting whether they are foster children or not. She said they come with their own special challenges and rewards.

Roberts talked about a teenage mother who lived with them until she became too old for the foster care system. Roberts said the young woman was able to get her General Education Development Diploma while living with them.

Roberts said it's rewarding to help teenagers who were about to drop out of high school because they had a poor living situation or because no one had any expectations for them. She said once these kids learn they are expected to do well in school they are able to perform and turn things around. Roberts said the one thing about having foster children that she didn't expect was how attached she became to the kids.

Roberts has three adopted children of her own: Everett, 33; Eli, 21; and Kalea, 13. She said it's important for parents to involve the entire family when deciding whether or not to have foster children. She said taking in foster children is going to affect every-

body in a family.

The first step parents take to becoming licensed foster parents is taking 10 free weeks of training, Weller said. The training course is called Partnering for Safety and Permanence – Approach to Partnerships and Parenting.

Weller said parents also have two background checks done on them by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation and the Child Abuse and Neglect Information Search to make sure they don't have a history of child abuse or child neglect.

Before parents are able to take in children the Kansas Department of Health and Environment has to come to their house to make sure the house meets certain safety requirements such as having smoke alarms in every room and having two ways to escape from a fire or tornado if the house has an upstairs or basement.

Roberts said Youthville provides foster parents with stipends to buy food and clothes for the child. She said the agency makes monthly visits to see how the foster family and the child are getting along and the state Department of Health

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ANDY HEINTZ/Colby free Press

Mark Carlton (from left), Dustin Pfeifer and Rich Epp talked local, state and professional sports on their webcast at Smoffee's on Monday, Sept. 20.

Sports announcer starts webcast

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Veteran sports broadcaster Rich Epp and Mark Carlton, who was a sports broadcaster in Ogallala, Neb., for several years and current pastor at the Colby Berean Church, are announcing Colby High School sporting events online.

Epp said the events will be streamed in audio and video form on two websites: openspacesports.com and j-rmarketing.net and will be available on S&T Communications cable on Channel 13.

J&R marketing was started by Epp and his wife Judy in 1997. The company handles television and radio advertisements for businesses in Northwest Kansas. Open Spaces Sports was started by Epp in

June 2010.

The veteran broadcaster said they are the only network covering all Colby High School sports. Right now they are covering Eagles' volleyball and football games. But Epp said he talks to every high school coach and posts results on openspacesports.com.

Epp said Open Spaces will eventually be branching out to cover sports in the surrounding 18 counties in northwest Kansas. He said the games they cover outside of Colby will be covered on his web site. He said they can go and shoot video for the web in any community.

Epp said he plans to branch out to cover other things such as weddings, reunions, little league sports and family reunions. He said the Internet was

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Briefly

Clinic has stray ferret

The Colby Animal Clinic has a stray, black and tan ferret. The clinic also has a long-haired, white and gray kitten for adoption. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

Dance the night away Saturday

There will be a Colby Singles and Couples Dance from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Saturday at the Meadow Lake Golf Course clubhouse, 1085 E Golf Club Dr. Craig Stevens will be the musician. For information, call Lue Duffey at (785) 269-7057.

Olympic athletes bowl Saturday

The Special Olympics West Region Bowling Tournament will start with opening ceremonies at 9:30

a.m. Saturday at Colby Bowl. Teams from Hays, Wakeeney, Atwood, Russell and Colby will compete. For information, call Denise Mentlick at 443-1719.

Play poker for Big Brothers

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Thomas County is sponsoring a poker run fund raiser at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at the American Legion Post, 1850 W. Fourth St. Registration will be from noon to 1 p.m. A silent auction will follow the run, and the Big Brothers Big Sisters will provide dinner at 5:30 p.m. For more information, call Diane Stithem at 460-9125.

Business to donate 20 percent

The Loft and the Thomas County Community Foundation are partnering for a monthly fund raising event. The Loft – located in the Oasis Travel Center

– will donate 20 percent of Saturday's proceeds to the foundation's Historical Society fund. For information, call the foundation at 460-9152.

Rehearsal set for county band

Anyone who plays an instrument is invited to join the Colby Community College band for a performance at the Thomas County 125th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, Oct. 9. A rehearsal is set for 7 p.m. Sunday in Cultural Arts Center band room on campus. For information, call Tony Schroer at 460-5519.

Consolidation meeting next week

The Colby chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star will consolidate with the Atwood chapter at a combined meeting at 2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9, at the

Atwood Masonic Temple. The meeting had previously been scheduled for Sunday. For information, call Joyce Gatlin 460-3656.

Students plan massage clinics

Students from the Physical Therapy Assistant program at Colby Community College will hold a massage clinic from 4 to 8 p.m. Monday in room 804 of the Health Science Building. The cost is \$12 for half an hour – \$10 with college ID – or \$22 for a full hour. The students are raising money for a trip to the spring physical therapy conference. For information or to make an appointment, call Trudy Wildeman at 460-4797.



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