



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Drought persists; wheat matures faster

By Kevin Bottrell

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In stark contrast to the heavy rains and flooding in eastern Kansas, Thomas County remains dry as a bone.

The Kansas State University weather station in Colby recorded 2.32 inches of precipitation in May, bringing the area up to 5.2 inches for the year. By this time the county has normally gotten 7.21 inches. The county hasn't seen any precipitation in the first three days of June while tem-

peratures soared to 93 degrees.

The University of Nebraska's Drought Monitor still lists most of Thomas County as under moderate drought, with the eastern quarter downgraded to "abnormally dry."

What the area has had a lot of recently is wind. This week saw sustained winds of up to 40 miles per hour on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, with gusts up to 70. Meteorologist Jesse Lundquist with the National Weather Service in Goodland said the wind came from two different weather patterns.

On Memorial Day, a cold front in northeast Colorado produced thunderstorms, Lundquist said, which sent out cold air that raced across the area. Late in the day dust from the dry field created a dust storm that lowered visibility to 1/2 mile in areas.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the area had what Lundquist called a "low level jet," a stream of high wind a few thousand feet off the ground. An atmospheric disturbance brought it down to the ground, he said, causing gusts up to 70 miles per hour.

Weather spotters reported damage all around northwest Kansas. In Colby, at least one vehicle was damaged by tree limbs broken off by the wind. A roof was partially blown off a mobile home in Goodland and another partially blown off a barn in Logan County.

A thunderstorm did blow over Graham and Norton Counties on Wednesday, producing quarter-size hail and at least one funnel cloud.

The wind hasn't bothered the wheat too much, said County Extension Agent Clint Milliman. If the area has high winds later

in the month as the wheat is drying down, he said, some of it may lay over, making it harder to pick up with combines.

However, the wind has sucked a lot of the moisture out of the air, he said, moisture which could have helped the crop. The hot, dry weather has stressed the crop, speeding up maturation.

"What we're looking at is harvest close to a week earlier," he said.

Wheat harvest normally begins at the end of June, but the stressed wheat

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### Writing out the check



CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press

Gary Adrian and Ron Binder, vice president and president of the Colby High Booster Club, accepted a \$6,000 donation from Steve Ostmeyer of Tubbs and Sons Ford Sales on Wednesday. The money was donated by Ford Motor Co., for the Drive One 4UR School fund raiser in which Tubbs and Sons got more than 300 test drives in one day.



TOM BETZ/The Goodland Star-News

These curves on K-27 south of Sharon Springs are on the list of road projects announced by Gov. Sam Brownback. The Kansas Department of Transportation plans to straighten the road to alleviate safety concerns.

## State to eliminate curves on K-27 in Wallace County

A modernization project to straighten the curves on K-27 seven miles south of Sharon Springs are among the projects in western Kansas announced on Thursday by Gov. Sam Brownback at a media event in Dodge City.

The sharp curves south of Sharon Springs were the major safety concerns associated with this project. There are similar curves on K-25 on the Thomas-Logan County line.

Transportation Secretary Deb Miller said that while public participants and local officials would

like to see the entire corridor modernized, they understand cost constraints and rated this section as a top priority.

Gov. Brownback flew to five cities around the state to announce the highway projects being funded under T-WORKS, the transportation program approved by the state legislature last year.

The project on K-27 is expected to cost \$9 million and a contract will be let for construction under the program sometime in the six years from 2014 to 2020.

"This work will provide huge

safety and economic benefits to those who depend on these roads for work, school and commerce," said Gov. Brownback. "The projects I'm announcing today are the ones you told us were most important to you during the Local Consultation process and I'm pleased we could address those concerns with the limited funding we have available."

Secretary Miller, who accompanied the Governor on the tour, said T-WORKS is significantly

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## Kansas student shot on trip to Costa Rica

By Mariana Jimenez  
The Associated Press

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica — A 16-year-old Kansas high school student was shot and killed at a Costa Rican hotel by a security guard who mistook him for a thief, authorities said Thursday.

High school senior Justin Johnston of McLouth was shot in the chest before dawn Thursday at the La Cangreja Lodge hotel in the city of La Fortuna de San Carlos, Costa Rican police said in a statement.

The security guard, who was identified as a 34-year-old man by the last name of Guevara, has been detained, police said.

Police said the students had been sent to bed at 10 p.m. Wednesday but a group left their rooms and went to another building on the premises. They were returning to their rooms before dawn Thursday through a desolate area when the security guard spotted them and thinking they were thieves opened fire.

Johnston was on a nine-day trip to the Central American nation with a dozen other students in the school's Spanish club, said McLouth School District Superintendent Steve Splichal. No other students were injured, he said. The group was accompanied by

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### Pinto rally rolls through



TOM BETZ/The Goodland Star-News

The Pinto Stampede came through Colby on Sunday on the first leg of a trip from Denver to Carlisle, Pa. The stampede marked the 40th anniversary of the Ford Pinto. Drivers Becky

McKaa, Louis Bagi, Joe Escobar and Norm Bagi stopped briefly in Goodland before moving on. There were only four Pintos in the first leg, but more joined the rally later.

## College player and former Globetrotter returns for kids camp

Elbert "Tree" Gordon, a former Harlem Globetrotter, will be in Colby next week to teach a basketball fundamentals camp for kids.

Gordon played basketball for Colby Community College before joining the Globetrot-

ters. He has been returning each summer to teach the "Global Legends Basketball Camp." The camp will be from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday at the Community Building.

Gordon said he will be helping kids one-on-one to improve their shooting and other skills. He said he enjoys teaching the camp every year and sees it as an opportunity to give back to the community.

## Briefly

### College pool open for summer

The Colby Community College swimming pool has reopened for the summer. Pool hours are 5 to 7 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday to Friday for lap swimming. Open swim hours are 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The pool is available for group parties. For information, call Kipp Nelson at 460-5476.

### Singles dance is Saturday

There will be a singles and couples dance from 6 to 10 p.m. Saturday at Meadow Lake Golf Club. Granny Z will be the guest musician. For information, call Lue Duffey at (785) 269-7057.

### Baseball team to hold day camp

The Colby High School baseball team is holding a youth camp fund raiser from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to

4 p.m. Saturday at the Colby Recreation Fields. The camp will teach hitting, pitching, base running and defense. The cost is \$30, with proceeds going to the baseball team. For information, call 462-8342.

### Bible school to visit 'Big Apple'

The Colby Berean Church will hold a Vacation Bible School for kids age 4 to seventh grade from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Sunday to Thursday at the church. This year's theme will be "Big Apple Adventure." For information, call 460-2862.

### College offers exercise class

Colby Community College will offer two sessions of a Water Exercise Class from Monday through Thursday, July 28, in the college pool. The first session will be from 7 to 7:55 a.m. and the second session will follow from 8 to 8:55 a.m. The classes are

taught by Leslie Wagoner. For information, contact Penny Cline at 460-5404 or penny.cline@colbycc.edu.

### Improve your pitching Tuesday

The Colby Recreation Department is offering pitching clinics from 10-11:30 a.m. Tuesday mornings throughout the summer beginning Tuesday. Clinics will be taught by Colby Community College staff and baseball team members. Cost is \$30 per player. For information or to register, call the department at 460-4440.

### Wesleyan Church offers camp

Colby Wesleyan Church will hold a free summer day camp for children ages 4 to 12 called "Tuesdays @ 10" from 10 a.m. to noon every Tuesday, June 7 to July 26, at the church, 320 W. Pine. Children

will participate in object lessons, stories and crafts. Lunch will be provided. For information, call the church office at 462-8391.

### Lutherans plan Bible school

Trinity Lutheran Church will hold a Vacation Bible School from 9:15 a.m. to noon Tuesday to Friday at the church. The school is open to kids age 3 to fifth grade. This year's theme is "Big Jungle Adventure: a Faith Journey With Jesus." For information, call the church at 462-3497.

