



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

Senator tours state, plans stop in Colby

By Roxana Hegeman
The Associated Press

KINGMAN. (AP) — Sen. Pat Roberts and Kansas farm leaders toured drought-ravaged Kansas on Wednesday.

As a part of his statewide “listening tour,” Roberts will be in Colby at 8:15 a.m. Tuesday to talk to the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce and the Thomas County Farm Bureau.

In Kingman, Roberts witnessed firsthand the toll this summer’s unrelenting triple-digit temperatures have taken on portions of the state: Irrigated corn growing under the center pivot that’s fared so poorly it was good only to cut for silage, and dryland corn left to decompose in the field.

The drought tour also revealed struggling crops in Reno County, where an alfalfa field yielded only one cutting with two or three bales, rather than the a typical three to four cuttings with dozens of bales.

Outside the tour bus where the Republican senator from Kansas rode along with state officials and reporters, the temperature had already reached 106 degrees. It was a far cry from the air-conditioned comfort of the Hilton Wichita Airport Hotel where on Thursday Roberts and other members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry will meet to hear testimony from Kansans about the 2012 Farm

See “TOURS,” Page 2

Firefighters run benefit Saturday

This weekend the Colby Fire Department will once again be standing on street corners trying to fill boots with donations.

From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, firefighters will be at the intersection of Fourth Street and Franklin Avenue and at Dillons and Walmart taking donations for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The firefighters will have boots

that they will try to fill up with donations from passing motorists and shoppers.

Some of the department’s fire engines will also be on display for the public to look at.

The department participates in the national boot campaign each year. Assistant Fire Chief Sean Hankin said the department raised \$2,020 last year.

Lawmakers question department’s choices

TOPEKA (AP) — Members of a Kansas legislative oversight committee have asked Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services officials to explain changes the department is making in the way it administers programs to needy and disabled residents.

The House-Senate Committee on Home and Community Based Services quizzed SRS staff Tuesday about how the department was

handling \$6.6 million in new state revenue to help residents with disabilities.

The Lawrence Journal-World (<http://bit.ly/rrNU2t>) reports that legislators and advocates for the disabled were concerned about how the department was setting priorities for distributing the funds.

See “CHOICES,” Page 2

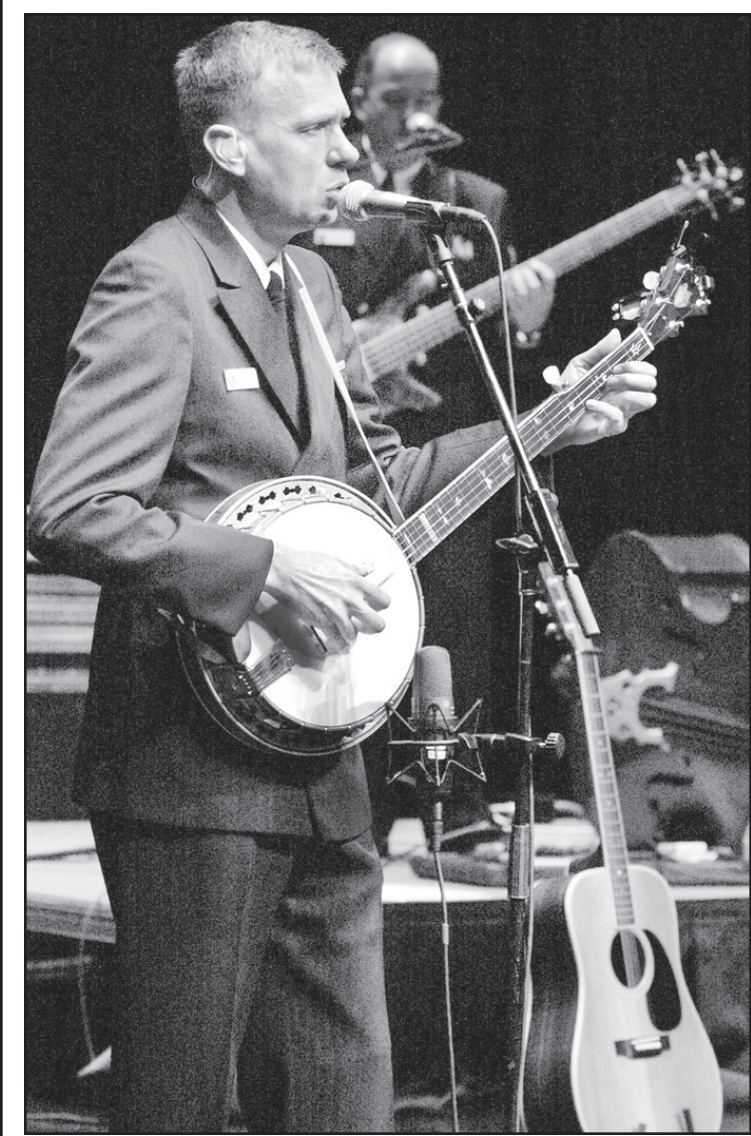
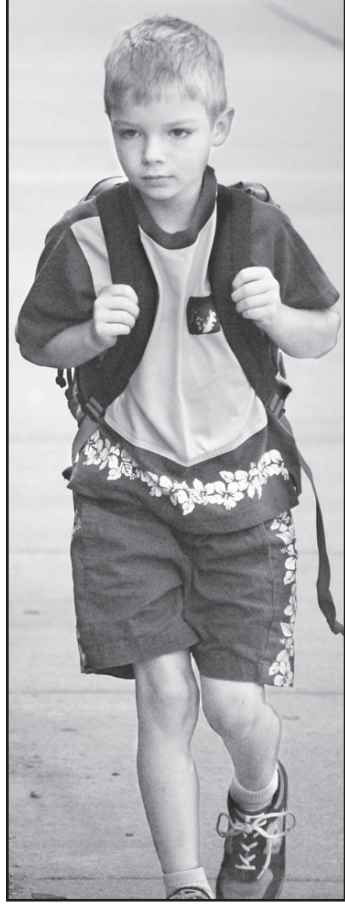


KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press



How about a smile: it's the first day of school

Plenty of young mothers and fathers brought cameras with them to snap pictures of their kids on the first day of school. Some kids walked to school on their own, while others had a parental escort. Some posed for pictures with their younger siblings who aren't old enough to come to school yet. All Colby schools, including Sacred Heart and Heartland Christian, began class today. Most held back-to-school events earlier this week to get kids acquainted with their new surroundings.



The U.S. Navy's country and bluegrass band Country Current will be performing in Colby at 7:30 p.m. Sunday Sept. 11.

Free tickets available to see Navy band

The U.S. Navy's premier country and bluegrass band, Country Current, will give a free concert at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 11, in the Colby High School auditorium.

To get the free tickets, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Pat Ziegelmeier at Colby Community College, 1255 S. Range Ave., Colby, Kan., 67701.

The seven-member Navy band was formed in 1973. It is directed by Senior Chief Musician Keith Arneson. It tours the country each year in support of recruiting efforts, and performs at various other venues such as the Grand Ole Opry, the Glen Campbell Goodtime Theatre in Branson, Mo., and the Academy of Country Music Awards show.

The concert is sponsored by the Western Plains Art Associa-

See “BAND,” Page 2

Republican River meeting to focus on interstate issues

The Republican River Compact Administration will hold its 51st annual meeting at 9 a.m. on Aug. 31, at the Burlington Community and Education Center located at 340 S. 14th St. in Burlington, Colo.

The engineering committee will meet at the same location at 1 p.m. on Aug. 30 — the day before the annual meeting — for the committee's annual work session.

These public meetings focus on compact compliance and water related issues and activities within the Republican River basin in Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas.

Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas entered into the Republican River Compact in 1943. The Republican River Compact Administration is comprised of three commissioners: Kansas' Chief Engineer, David Barfield; Colorado's State Engineer, Dick Wolfe; and

Nebraska's Director of the Division of Natural Resources, Brian Dunnigan.

The compact's purposes are to provide for the equitable division of the basin's waters; remove causes of controversy; promote interstate cooperation; promote joint action by the states and the United States in the efficient use of water and the control of destructive floods; and provide for the most efficient use of waters in the Republican River basin.

Additional information about the Republican River Compact, including information about the Aug. 31 meeting, can be found under “Interstate Water Issues” on the Kansas Division of Water Resources website at www.ksda.gov/interstate_water_issues/content/142 or by contacting Chris Beightel at (785) 296-3830 or chris.beightel@kda.ks.gov.

Oil prices drop as unemployment rises

NEW YORK (AP) — Oil dropped Thursday on higher U.S. unemployment claims and concerns about less demand for oil and gas.

Benchmark West Texas Intermediate oil lost 95 cents at \$84.18 per barrel in New York. Brent crude, which is used to price oil produced abroad, fell 49 cents to \$109.66 per barrel in London.

Oil fell after the government said the number of people seeking unemployment benefits increased

last week. The Labor Department said the number of applications was the highest in five weeks, although it was inflated by a strike at Verizon. When fewer people drive to work, demand for gasoline generally goes down.

Meanwhile gasoline pump prices increased nearly a penny to a national average of \$3.582 per gallon. A gallon of regular has fallen 40 cents since peaking in May near \$4 per gallon, but it's still almost 89 cents more than a

year ago.

In other energy trading, heating oil was virtually unchanged at \$2.9656 per gallon and gasoline futures rose about a penny at \$2.7671 per gallon. Natural gas was up 4.1 cents at \$3.963 per 1,000 cubic feet after the government said the nation's supplies rose last week.



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