

Weekend drug sweep nets nine

DRUGS, from Page 1a

Dighton, where he allegedly picked up the methamphetamines to sell to the Denver man.

"As far as we're concerned, this has been an ongoing thing for the last three years," he said.

The busts, Murphy said, did not involve any methamphetamine labs, but are for drug trafficking. He said the drugs originated at the Mexican border.

The group, he said, has been supplying drugs across northwest Kansas from Kanorado to Dighton and in between. Murphy said he hopes last weekend's busts cut off a major supplier.

Police recovered \$9,000 in cash along with the quarter pound of methamphetamines at the hotel and a small quantity of meth at Hill's home. Murphy said some methamphetamines were found in Dighton, along with a small amount of marijuana. No firearms were found in the searches.

After arresting the suspects, Murphy said, police have 48 hours to press charges. He said Monday police have asked county attorneys to press charges including possession with intent to sell methamphetamines, sale of methamphetamines,

Meth often overlooked as big problem

Methamphetamines are an often overlooked problem in north-west Kansas, says Douglas Murphy, drug enforcement coordinator for the Quad County Drug Task Force.

Murphy said 98 percent of people who use meth will become addicted. Kicking the habit is hard, with an only 7 percent success rate with rehabilitation.

The biggest problem facing law enforcement, he said, is the apathy of the community.

A meth education seminar at the Northwest Kansas Technical College earlier this month brought out about 15 people, he said.

"Most people I've found," he said, "don't believe there's a

problem or don't believe the problem affects them."

He said while Goodland, Sharon Springs and Colby are small towns, there is still drug use here.

"We aren't immune to what affects the rest of the world," he said, adding the percentage of use is no higher or lower than Kansas City, Wichita or anywhere else.

Murphy said many people feel drug crimes are a victimless crime, but the problem hits people in the pocketbook.

He said productivity of addicts is low, and they can cause injuries and eventually force others to carry their weight. Addicts who aren't employed, he said,

are making and spending money outside of regular commerce, so they don't pay taxes.

When an addict gets arrested on drug charges, Murphy said, they usually seek help. He said the addict sees the error of his ways and wants treatment, but it often doesn't last.

"Meth is extremely addictive," he said.

Education is the key to battling the meth problem, he said, and the public can be a big help to police.

"We, in law enforcement," he said, "can't do this on our own. We need the help of the public."

Extra eyes and ears help police follow methamphetamine manufacturing, use and trafficking.

conspiracy to sell methamphetamines, use of drug paraphernalia to sell or distribute and not having state drug tax stamps.

He said charges are anticipated in Sherman, Wallace and Lane counties.

The past three years of surveil-

lance will bring more charges for drug trafficking, sale and distribution later, Murphy said.

The arrests were made in cooperation by the task force, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation; the Wallace, Lane, Sherman, Greeley and Logan county sheriff's depart-

ments; the Goodland Police; and the Eastern Colorado Plains Drug Task Force.

The Quad County Drug Task Force includes the Logan, Thomas, Sherman, Wallace and Greeley county sheriffs and the Oakley, Colby and Goodland police departments.

City, county meet Wednesday on road project

ROADS, from Page 1a

the major arteries to the city, roads that have been identified by both commissions. Those include old U.S. 24 across the county, Caldwell Ave. north to K-27, Eighth Street west to County Road 14 and south on County Road 14 to County Road 64, serving the Energy Center site. Seventeenth Street from the railroad tracks west to Broadway is one of the city streets listed in the joint plan.

Estimates are these main arteries would cost \$11 million, and bonds would be issued to get construction moving. The bonds would be paid back by the one-cent sales tax over about 10 years. Depending on the total cost, the tax could take a year or two longer to pay off the bonds before it would disappear.

If the city commission is willing to ask citizens to approve the sales tax, it would hold a special election in November or December.

The city commission has called a special meeting for Wednesday

Grader repairs slice through repair budget

The county's old graders are slicing through the repair budget, and Public Works Director Curt Way thinks they need to buy a new one this year and maybe two next year.

Way and Steve Goodman, road and bridge supervisor, told county commissioners last Tuesday the department was having quite a few expensive repairs on road graders and other equipment.

Way said the county graders are beyond their warranty, and the county is not able to take advantage of a buy-back program from Caterpillar.

He and Goodman suggested the department needs to replace one grader this year, and possibly two more next year to begin to get the equipment up to date.

Way said the cost of repairs on one grader was

over \$24,000 and that was enough to put a down payment on a new grader.

Way said he expects the total repairs to be over \$86,000, meaning they will have to shift money from the asphalt line item to cover the costs.

"I want to try to buy one motor grader by the end of the year," Way said. "Next year, maybe two motor graders and a pickup or possibly a loader.

"We need two motor graders now and one next year, but we can't justify the payments this year."

Commissioner Mitch Tiede suggested Way check to see what might be available and come back to the next commissioner meeting.

Rasure suggested the road and bridge budget be increased next year to plan for purchase of two graders.

morning with the road project as one of the agenda items to allow the commission to act if an agreement is reached.

Another item on the city and county agenda for the joint meeting is a presentation by S&T Telephone about the city and county changing phone services. The city and county

have a joint phone system that has been with Southwestern Bell, but the contract is due to end in October.

S&T representatives ask the city and county about changing about two years ago, but at that time it would have cost the two about \$20,000 to get out of the Bell contract.

Bell, now known as SBC, has

given the county some figures on a new contract, and those will be available to the two commissions to compare to the presentation from S&T.

The commissioners will meet in the commissioner room on the main floor of the Sherman County Courthouse, 813 Broadway.

Two board candidates to be interviewed

SCHOOL, from Page 1a

as assistant eighth grade boys basketball coach; Cleve Trachsel as seventh grade boys basketball coach; Char Avila as assistant seventh grade boys basketball coach; Travis Witman as eighth grade girls basketball coach; Greg Craig as junior high track coach; David Hardy as junior high track coach; Connie Livengood as junior high track coach; Tracy Waugh as junior high cheerleading sponsor; and Gerald Weber as a substitute bus driver all for the 2005-2006 school year.

Before the vote for the hires, board member LeAnn Friedrichs asked if the coaches' salaries were accounted for in the budget.

She expressed concern about having so many coaches for the 45-member football team and only having one teacher per 30-student class.

Board member Marty Melia said sports teams are split into offensive and defensive groups that need separate attention. Board member Fritz Duke said the classroom and the football field aren't the same.

He added that the board puts aides in larger classrooms where teachers

need help. They plan, he said, to hire aides for kindergarten classrooms that have 22 students in each.

- Accepted the resignation of Shawn Gastineau as high school library technician and Ardy Showalter as a teacher aide.

- Approved bills for \$62,694.
- Gave Selby permission to seek and accept the highest bid to invest cash in the contingency reserve.

Selby said there is \$1 million currently in a certificate of deposit with First National Bank that expires at the end of the month.

Sherman
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Tonight 7:00
Wedding Crashers
(R)
Starts Friday 7:00
Dukes of Hazard (PG-13)

Brewster All-Star Booster Club

Calendar for Aug. 31 - Sept. 6

Friday - Football at Otis Bison, 7 p.m.

Monday - No school, Labor Day

Tuesday - Volleyball at Weskan, 3 p.m.

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Budget is good news for county taxpayers

BUDGET, from Page 1a

With a \$5 million increase in assessed valuation, the total county budget for next year of \$8,146,885 will take 6.6 mills less than this year's \$7,112.130, an 11.3 percent drop in property taxes to pay for the county budget. The budget increase is about 14.5 percent.

The current mill rate is 58.174 and is projected to drop to 51.562.

Once the commissioners approve the figures, a public hearing will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 14.

Increases in budgets passed by the city and school district will swallow the property tax drop from the county, but County Clerk Janet Rumpel said the total of all property taxes would be up by about one penny, or .013 mills. She said a homeowner would see a one-penny increase for every \$1,000 of assessed value of their property.

A person with a \$50,000 house and the assessed valuation of \$5,750 (11.5 percent) would see an increase of 7 cents for their total property tax bill. Without the increases from the city and school district, the county property tax would drop about \$38 for the same house.

The proposed county budget includes an increase of 7 percent for future pay raises. The plan is to review each department and give raises to make the positions more competitive with similar counties and cities. The salary

review will be done in December and the new raises to take effect in January.

Rumpel suggested this would be a good year for the commissioners to establish a capital improvement fund to help pay for future building projects. She said the commissioners could establish the fund by resolution.

Commissioner Kevin Rasure said it would be a way to put money aside every year.

Rumpel said the commissioners can move money into the fund from any other county fund. She suggested establishing the fund with \$100,000 from this year and adding \$150,000 next year.

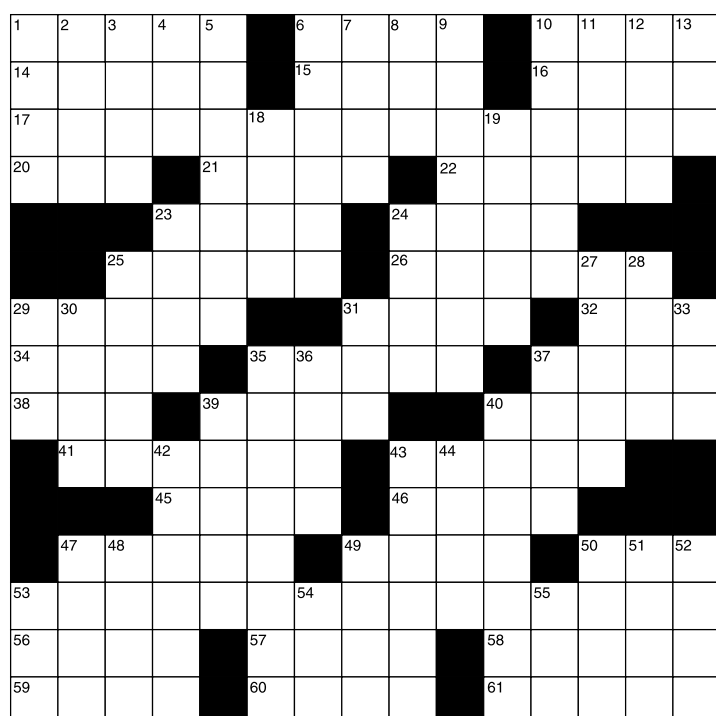
"It is up to you to approve the resolution," she said.

Reviewing the department budgets, the commissioners made a few suggestions, with most of them prompted by spiraling energy prices, to increase the budgets for natural gas for the winter, and for gas and diesel for the sheriff, road and bridge and noxious weed departments.

"The department heads do a good job of handling the money," Commissioner Kevin Rasure said. "That is why we are seeing more carryover that helps hold the taxes down."

"They don't go out and spend everything," Commissioner Chuck Thomas said. "They are only spending for what they really need."

Crossword Puzzle



CLUES ACROSS

- Non _____
- Leash
- Ripe
- Container
- Greek inhabitant
- Not there
- Rodents
- ____-du-chat syndrome
- Companion
- Soup
- Related
- Journey
- Owns
- Mined metals
- Clothes pressers
- Mad
- ____ and span
- Famous companion
- Tether
- Back talk
- ____ Gardner, actress
- Filth
- Humor
- Scriptural your
- Aerials
- Bih cat
- Honcho
- Island country
- Type of gin
- Des _____, Iowa
- Seed part
- Boyfriend
- Jimmy
- Wonk
- Gov't dept.
- Dozes
- Avails
- Roman emperor
- Be in debt
- Souse
- Accountant

CLUES DOWN

- Lump

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Elm St. Storage	Ward Drug	Custom Trophy	Addleman Drug
Fredrickson Insurance	Ron's Tire	Graphix by Salem	Rockin R
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