



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Healthy harvest outlook

*Kansas farmers could be cutting 9.7-million acres*

WICHITA (AP) — Kansas farmers are expected to harvest 45 percent more wheat this year than during last year's drought-stricken harvest, according to the Kansas Agricultural Statistics Service.

The agency's first official forecast of the 2003 wheat harvest estimates 388 million bushels of winter wheat will be cut this year based on crop conditions May 1.

The predicated average yield for Kansas is 40 bushels per acre, up from 33 bushels last year.

Kansas farmers planted 10.3 million acres of wheat last fall. The statistics service estimates they actually will harvest 9.7 million acres — the largest acreage harvested since 1998 in the state.

That compares to the 8.1 million acres of wheat taken off the fields last year.

The official government estimate — although far higher than earlier predictions from other wheat industry experts — still falls below the 400 million bushels that Kansas farmers usually produce in a state known as the nation's breadbasket.

During last year's drought, Kansas harvested only 26 million bushels. IN 2001, the state harvested 328 million bushels.

The statistics service forecast for Kansas is higher than the estimate from this year's annual wheat tour of farm industry leaders.

They pegged the 2003 winter wheat crop at 364 million bushels, estimating an average yield of 38.8 bushels per acre.

Nationally, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates wheat production at 1.56 billion bushels, with Kansas again leading the nation in winter wheat production.

Oklahoma ranks second with 159.8 million bushels and Texas ranks third with an estimated 114.7 million bushels.



### Showers likely

#### Thomas, Logan Counties

Tonight...partly cloudy...Then cloudy with scattered showers and thunderstorms after midnight. Lows in the upper 40s. North wind 10 mph becoming southeast early in the morning. Chance of rain 30 percent. Thursday...showers with scattered thunderstorms. Highs 65-70. Southeast wind 10 to 20 mph. Chance of rain 80 percent. Thursday night...showers with scattered thunderstorms. Lows in the lower 50s. Chance of rain 90 percent. Friday...cloudy with a chance of showers and thunderstorms in the morning, then partly sunny. Highs 65-70. Chance of rain 50 percent.

#### The numbers

Tuesday's high, 82  
Low this morning, 44  
Year ago today, 84 and 48  
Records, 97 in 1941, 26 in 1953  
24-hour precipitation, 0.00  
Month's precipitation 0.88  
Year's precipitation 4.90  
**Water Usage/Colby**  
May 12 = 1.749 million gallons  
May 13 = 2.105 million gallons



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Summar Stephens shows off her 12-sport letterman award to fellow senior, Desiree Sharp. Stephens was the first female in the history of Colby High School be honored in such a manner. Only five men have received the honor.

## Hundreds of scholarships and awards given to Colby students

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS

Colby Free Press

History was made at Colby High School during the Monday evening awards presentation. Senior Summar Stephens became one of six individuals — and the only female — to be honored as a 12 sport letterman.

Stephens has lettered in volleyball, basketball and track for her entire four years of high school and has received many all-league, all-area and all-state honors for her efforts.

Freshmen, sophomores and juniors were honored for their achievements during a special assembly during school on Monday, while seniors were honored that evening.

Those honored and the awards they received are:

- **Sarah Ackerman** - Academic Letter 2002-2003
- **Courtney Albers** - Academic Letter 2002-2003

- **Rachel Albers** - 2003 Talon Sports Editor
- **Ashley Amos** - Academic Letter 2002-2003
- **Matt Augustine** - Academic Letter 2002-2003
- **Rocky Baalmann** - Academic Letter 2002-2003; Excellence in Business Administration
- **Ashley Backus** - Forensics Letter
- **Zach Baird** - Academic Letter 2002-2003; Rotary Student of the Month
- **Zanae Baird** - Academic Letter 2002-2003
- **Angela Bennett** - Forensics Letter
- **Curt Beringer** - Who's Who Among American High School Students; First in State in Computer Construction and Troubleshooting; National Society of High School Scholars; Board of Regents Curriculum Completer
- **Andrew Breese** - Outstanding Applied Geometry I Student

- **Michelle Bremenkamp** - Academic Letter 2002-2003
- **Shalin Brogan** - Academic Letter 2002-2003
- **Siobhan Cassidy** - Certificate of Merit - Burger King Founders Award
- **Kristi Colton** - All-A's for the year
- **Lacee Cooper** - Forensics Letter
- **Joe Cox** - Academic Letter 2002-2003; Hays City Silver Award
- **Josh Cox** - Academic Letter 2002-2003; Forensics Letter
- **Shawna Cox** - Academic Letter 2002-2003; Top Biology Student
- **Jared Cranston** - Bronze Award from Fort Hays State University; Baseball Scholarships to Seward County Community College, Fort Hays University

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## Tractor repairs put on hold by commissioners

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS

Colby Free Press

The commissioners did not approve a nearly three-page list of bid repairs submitted by a local company for the compactor tractor at the Thomas County Landfill during their Monday morning meeting.

Larry Jumper, landfill supervisor, had brought the bid to the commissioners for their approval after estimates had been made last month. The total of the bid was for \$34,266.47 from Martin Tractor.

Two items on the list were in question since they were not on the original estimate. Those included the cost to test the machine in the amount of \$363.30 and the cost to move the machine in the amount of \$263.50.

The commissioners asked Jumper to talk with Martin Tractor about the two items before they would approve the repairs.

In other business:

- The commissioners reviewed a letter from the county attorney, Allan Taylor, about the qualifications for the county coroner. After receiving the information, it was determined that Dr. Victor H. Hildyard III, who is now the coroner, could continue in that capacity.

The issue was brought up following recent events between Citizens Medical Center and Dr. Hildyard's

privileges being revoked at that facility. Based on this situation, the commissioners wanted to make sure there would be no problems or hindrances associated with the physician continuing in the position as the Thomas County coroner.

Taylor said that the laws require the coroner to be a resident of the State of Kansas licensed to practice medicine and surgery by the State Board of Healing Arts or a military or federal person licensed to practice medicine and surgery with their respective affiliate.

- Jumper gave the monthly landfill reports.

- Director of Public Works for the City of Colby, Gerry Bieker, requested the commissioners approve the Urban Area Boundary Line Resolution which establishes boundary lines of the city and urban areas. Bieker gave the commissioners a map with the lines displayed. Both the city and county officials have to approve the resolution. It was signed and approved.

- The 2004 Communications Agreement with the City of Colby was approved in the amount of \$57,232.80. The city hired the dispatchers and this amount is the portion the county pays to the city for the salaries and benefits of those employees, said Tracey Perkins, county clerk.

## Governor signs bill delaying state aid to the school districts

TOPEKA (AP) — Gov. Kathleen Sebelius has signed a bill delaying a June 15 payment of state aid for school districts until July 1, a change that will continue in future years.

Legislators had approved the two-week postponement of the \$213 million aid payment so that the state would end the current fiscal year June 30 with money in the bank.

The payment will instead be made July 1, the first day of fiscal 2004. The cash carried over from fiscal 2003 will help balance the new budget. An aide to the governor confirmed Tuesday that Sebelius had signed the bill Monday. With the new law taking effect Thursday, the state will make only 11 monthly payments, rather than the usual 12, to public schools in the current fiscal year. The state will make 12 payments again in fiscal 2004 but will remain a month behind into the future.

Some officials said school districts probably would not be affected much by the delay, even though payroll expenses often balloon in June as some teachers exercise their right to collect an entire summer's pay in one lump sum.

Jim Edwards, a lobbyist for the Kansas Association of School

“We understand it's a difficult economic crunch we're in and the choices are limited.”

Bruce Wyatt,  
state board of education

Boards, said Tuesday that school districts had been alerted for months that the June payment might be postponed.

“We've been hearing that a lot of districts have been planning for the delay already,” Edwards said.

The bill will help prevent a projected \$254 million deficit in the \$10.2 billion budget lawmakers approved for fiscal 2004.

Sebelius eliminated the deficit without increasing taxes or reducing spending.

“We understand it's a difficult economic crunch we're in and the choices are limited,” said Bruce Wyatt, a member of the State Board of Education. “I'm afraid that we may be just delaying a problem that we're going to have to resolve at some point.”

## Briefly

### Brewster commencement Saturday

The commencement ceremony at Brewster High School will begin at 4 p.m., Saturday in the school's gymnasium. Baccalaureate will be at 2 p.m., also on Saturday.

### Colby graduates to practice Friday

Colby High School seniors will hold graduation practice at 10:30 a.m., Friday at the Colby Community Building. For questions, call the school at 465-5300. Commencement ceremonies will begin at 3 p.m., Sunday, also in the Community Building.

### Clinic to give free physicals

Colby Medical and Surgical Center, 175 S. Range, will be providing free physicals to all students entering seventh through twelfth grade next year, a spokesperson from the clinic said Tuesday. Physicals will be given on Thursday, May

29, beginning at 5:30 p.m., for students at Colby Middle School; 6:15 p.m., for Colby High School students; and 7 p.m., for students from Brewster and Golden Plains. All physicals will be done at the clinic. Students are reminded to bring their physical forms with them and it will be their responsibility to make sure the forms are returned to the appropriate school prior to beginning 2003 fall practices.

For questions, call either the center, 462-3332; Colby Middle School, 465-5200; Colby High School, 465-5300; Brewster Schools, 694-2236; or Golden Plains, 687-3265.

### Childbirth classes continue

Childbirth education classes are underway, said Amy Hutfles, one of the teachers. The classes are from 7-10 p.m. on May 15 and 22 in the Health Sciences Building on the Colby Community College campus. The cost is \$40 and includes books and materials.

For questions or to enroll, call Hutfles at 460-4344.

### Brewster board meeting rescheduled

The Brewster School Board meeting scheduled for Monday, May 19, has been changed to 7 p.m., Tuesday, May 20, in the school cafeteria, 127 Kansas Ave. There will be a special meeting at 6 p.m. prior to the regular meeting to review board policy. For questions, call (785) 694-2236.

### Half staff for flags on Thursday

Dean Ludlow, community flag expert, said that Thursday is Law Enforcement Memorial Day, and that flags should be flown at half staff from daylight to dark.

### Barbershoppers plan guest night

The Tumbleweed Barbershop Chorus is sponsoring a special guest night at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday at the Colby United Methodist Church. Barbershoppers are inviting everyone to come and enjoy the fun, food and fellowship of the Tumbleweed Chorus and bring a friend.



