



COLBY FREE PRESS

Whistle while you work



CRYSTAL RUCKER/Colby Free Press



Students in the kindergarten through 12th grade at Triplains participated in a spring music program entitled, "There's No Business Like Show Business" held Thursday in the school auditorium. The program included music performed by the band and choirs with selections from Rogers and Hammerstein and Irving Berlin, along with music from movies such as the *Wizard of Oz*, *Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs*, *Scooby-Doo*, and more. **ABOVE:** Third and fourth graders (front from left to right) Gus Lamb, Ethan Plummer and Jerry Nichols (back row) Kylie Homburg and Logan Babst, played Red River Valley during one of the segments of the show. **LEFT:** Gibson Palmer accompanied the others with guitar also during the *Red River Valley* selection.

County approves bid for road graders

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Commissioners approved a bid for two new county road graders at their end of month meeting this morning.

They accepted the low bid from Martin Tractor in Colby for a lease on two new graders.

The cost will be \$30,211.72 a year for four years and a balloon payment of \$180,000 in the fifth year.

Commissioner Ron Evans said there's a guaranteed buy-back price of \$117,000 each or \$234,000 total for both graders.

"This has been a good program," Evans said.

"It works good."

The bids were opened at the April 19 meeting but the commissioners



Ron Evans

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Ron Evans,
Thomas County commissioner

told Clair Schrock, head of the county road department, to help two of the companies that submitted bids to recalculate their figures to match the way the other bids were figured.

In other business:

• Sandy Swob, of the county's household hazardous waste department, said the school district has two pallets of latex paint it needs to dispose.

She said her department usually doesn't charge anyone for getting rid of their chemicals or paint, but because the state considers a school a business, Swob wanted to know if she needed to charge for taking the paint and getting rid of it.

Evans said there was no reason to

charge if no one else is having to pay and asked if there's a possibility something else could be done with it.

"There's no use letting it sit around so we might as well get rid of it," he said.

Swob said she was considering making it reusable and giving it out. She said it'll probably be done, depending on how many gallons of paint there are and what shape it's in.

• The commissioners also participated in two tree planting ceremonies, one at Fike Park in celebration of Arbor Day and another at the Thomas County Office Complex to honor the 150th sesquicentennial of Kansas becoming a territory.

Colby braces for some big construction projects

Building season is at hand, says city's inspector

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Summer is rapidly approaching and with it brings construction — of all kinds.

Colby building inspector Doug Lewis said spring through late fall is the time when activity booms in the community.

"Right now," he said "only a few projects are going on, including a couple of additions and a new

house." Lewis said Jeff Barton is putting an addition onto his house at 155 S. Mission and Harold Linville is also doing work on his house at 980 Donelan.

The Colby High School woods classes, taught by Don Balush, are building a new house for Shawn and Cody Dale of Colby. The house is north of town in the La Hacienda area.

Even though there's not much going on now, Lewis expects that to change very soon.

One of the project's he'll be dealing with in the future is a Wal-Mart Supercenter. The store itself and several projects associated with it

will require building permits.

An example is a contract for road improvements by the store's location at South Franklin Avenue and Willow Street, which the city council just approved.

He said that will be a large project for his department when it kicks in.

"They should be getting in touch with us," Lewis said.

"That's definitely a big permit deal."

Lewis said building permits are not required for all projects, and he strongly suggests anyone getting ready to do any kind of construction — regardless of size — to call his office for clarification.

Tour pegs Kansas wheat harvest at 355 million bushels

WICHITA (AP) — Participants in this year's Wheat Quality Council tour pegged the Kansas wheat harvest at slightly more than 355 million bushels.

"Overall the group was a little surprised once they got out there to see some of the stressed conditions the crop was in — especially in

western Kansas," said Justin Gilpin, project coordinator for the Kansas Wheat Commission.

Their forecast is far below last year's bountiful winter wheat crop when Kansas farmers brought in 480 million bushels. Few other crops prospered.

Kansas usually produces about

400 million bushels in a state renowned as the nation's breadbasket. During the 2002 drought, Kansas harvested 267 million bushels. In 2001, the state harvested 328 million bushels.

After a three-day tour inspecting 453 wheat fields, the group also forecast average yields statewide of

37.4 bushels per acre.

"This is just a snapshot at this point in time.

It is good for people not to just sit in a trading office talking about it, but to actually see some of the stressed conditions Kansas farmers are going through and to hear about some of the abandonment."

Brewster farmer Ray Crumbaker, who met up with the tour in Colby, told participants he likely would abandon half of what he planted last fall.

Some other farmers in the extreme northwestern part of the state are abandoning as much 85 percent of their wheat fields.

Excel recalls 45,000 pounds of beef

WICHITA (AP) — Excel Corp., a meatpacking unit of Cargill Inc., is recalling 45,030 pounds of ground beef because it may contain harmful E. coli bacteria.

Excel announced the recall Thursday. The Wichita-based company said it packaged the ground beef in 10-pound cylindrical tubes with a use or freeze by date of April 29, but the meat likely was repack-

aged by retail stores.

The meat, which was produced at Excel's Dodge City plant, was sold to distributors in Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Texas.

Excel said it tested the meat earlier this month and it was negative for E. coli. However, the U.S. Department of Agriculture told Excel this week that beef reground at a

business had tested positive for E. coli. Excel said no illnesses have been associated with the beef and most of it probably has been eaten.

E. coli can cause fever, abdominal cramps and severe diarrhea.

Excel suggested consumers ask their grocers if ground beef they sold is involved in the recall. The company also established a hotline, 1-800-267-6946.

Briefly

Arts association performance set

The Western Plains Arts Association and Accessible Arts, Inc. are sponsoring a performance of "Return of the Scarlet Pimpernel" at 2 p.m. on Sunday at the Quinter High School auditorium. Admission is \$4 students and \$8 for adults, or by arts association season passes.

College board to meet

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will meet at 5 p.m. Monday in the board room of the administration building. Items on the agenda include a wellness center proposal, approval of contracts and agreements, a resignation, the policies manual, approving an application for a federal grant and contract negotiations. The meeting is open to the public.

Commissioners to meet Monday

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m.

Monday at the county courthouse. Items on the agenda include a 911 software presentation, a review of the current health insurance plan and bid openings for the landfill borrow excavation project. The meeting is open to the public.

School board agenda noted

The Colby School Board will meet at 7 p.m. Monday at the Administration Building, 600 W. Third. Items on the agenda include charter school plans, a curriculum presentation on the Colby Middle School Technical Student Association, principals' reports, curriculum director and superintendent reports. The meeting is open to the public.

Flatland Band to perform

The Flatland Big Band, a jazz group comprised of area band directors, will perform Saturday in the Colby High School auditorium beginning at 7:30 p.m. There is no admission charge for the concert, she said, but free-will donations will be accepted to defray the cost of travel and motel rooms.

Barbershoppers here Saturday

The Tumbleweed Chorus will present, "Songs Like Daddy Used to Sing," at 3 and 7:30 p.m. on Saturday at the Frahm Theatre in the Cultural Arts Center at Colby Community College. Yesterday's Heroes, Tone-Henge and the Tumbleweed Chorus will perform. For information or tickets, call 462-6552 or 460-8640.

Bake sale scheduled

Heartland Christian School in Colby is sponsoring a bake sale from 9:30 a.m. until sold out, on Saturday, at Dillons. Proceeds will help defray yearbook costs for school families, said Shannon Myers. For questions, call her at 462-2467.

Piano recital Sunday

Piano students of Shirley Malcolm will present their spring recital on Sunday at 2 p.m., at the Colby United Methodist Church. The public is invited to see the soloists and ensembles participating.



Turn to warmer

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area

Tonight...Cloudy. A 30 percent chance of rain showers. Cooler. Lows in the upper 30s. Northwest winds 5 to 15 mph. **Saturday...**Partly cloudy. Warmer. Highs in the mid 60s. Northwest winds 5 to 15 mph. **Saturday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows near 40. West winds 5 to 10 mph shifting to the southwest around 10 mph after midnight. **Sunday...**Partly cloudy. Highs around 70. West winds 5 to 10 mph. **Sunday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows lower 40s. **Monday...**Partly cloudy in the morning then clearing. Highs in the upper 70s...Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 80s.

The numbers
Thursday's high, 43
Low this morning, 34
Records for April 30, 89 in 1967 and 5 in 1907
Year ago today, 66 and 45
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.10
April total, 2.70
April snowfall, 3 inches
Soil temperature, 67

The sources:
The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.



