



COLBY FREE PRESS

Rain stops fall harvest

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

Fall harvest came to a screeching halt due to rain.

According to the National Weather Service in Goodland, 24-hour totals across the region were as low as .09 in Atwood and as high as 1.18 inches in Oberlin.

Nate Reid at Rexford Grain Company said this rain, while slowing down fall harvest, had good timing. "This is a great rain," he said.

"It's a good time to come for the wheat."

Reid said fall harvest is still low, with not much corn having been brought in to the elevator.

"We've had some milo and beans, but not much corn yet. It's still pretty slow," he said.

Hoxie Grain manager Nick Otter said harvest in the Hoxie area picked up a little over the weekend. He said corn yields vary from lows

in the 100 bushels per acre to as high as 240 bushels per acre.

Otter said drought conditions in the area meant some corn did not even pollinate due to summer heat.

"I know some of the farmers said it depends on whether they had hail," Otter said.

Jackie Schulte of Hi-Plains Co-op in Selden said harvest is still slow.

"We had a decent day on Friday and took in about 15,000 bushel," she said. "Overall, it's nothing to brag about yet."

Audrey Hines of Cornerstone Ag in Colby also said the harvest is just getting started.

"Irrigated corn is still pretty wet yet, but I'm hearing about dryland (corn) yields between 80 to 100 bushels," she said.

Other 24-hour rain totals reported: Goodland, .54; Oakley, .78; Hoxie, .77; and as of 11 a.m. Colby had 1.08 inches

Candidates talk about state taxes

TOPEKA (AP) — Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and Republican challenger Jim Barnett are talking about taxes as they campaign, but neither is telling a complete story.

Sebelius has told voters in her ads that she's improved the economy, put state government back on a firm foundation and committed more money to schools. In her latest TV ad she looks into the camera and says, "And all without a tax increase." Barnett is promising to push for a series of income and estate tax cuts to help stimulate the economy, saying such a step will generate job growth Kansas needs to catch up to the rest of the nation.

But if Barnett now portrays himself as a champion of tax cuts, only four years ago he voted in favor of tax increases worth \$252 million a year, or \$235 for every household in the state.

And if Sebelius can claim that good things have happened on her watch without a tax increase, she's also proposed some big ones her-

self, only to see them rejected by a GOP-controlled Legislature. Her proposals, when fully phased in, would have cost Kansans more than \$350 million a year.

Bob Beatty, a Washburn University political scientist, said polls consistently suggest that only one in 10 Kansans are willing to consider higher taxes to solve problems. Yet they also want candidates to talk about taxes.

Sebelius has confounded, irritated and even angered Republicans with her no-tax-increase talk.

In January 2004, she proposed phasing in more than \$300 million in sales, income and even property taxes to provide additional dollars for public schools. Then, before the year was out, she unveiled another plan to increase tobacco taxes by \$50 million to finance health care initiatives. Neither plan had much traction with the Legislature.

"God, what a big lie — but the big lies are easier to believe than the little ones," said Sen. Phil Journey, R-Haysville.

Western Plains Energy.

This will begin at 1 p.m., followed at 2:30 p.m. by a corn pile money hunt sponsored by The Bank.

Saturday's events end with an awards banquet at 7 p.m. at the Oakley High School cafeteria.

Tickets are available at the Oakley Area Chamber of Commerce office located at 313 Center Ave. in Oakley.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Betty Rhodes, left, danced with Willie Walls of Binkelman, Neb., Friday during a singles dance at the American Legion.

"We don't want to see them die," Bird said. Singles, couples, married or not, and young people are wel-

come to come. She said the dances would be a good opportunity for them to learn to dance.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

LEFT: Ben and Barbara Duell of Colby were among the more than 50 people talking with Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline Sunday. MIDDLE: Kline spoke about what's been done in his office

since he was elected in January 2003. RIGHT: Gene Rothfuss, left, and Randy and Melissa Regier, listened as Kline laid out his blueprint for a safer Kansas.

Attorney general visits Colby

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline campaigned in Colby Sunday talking with supporters about accomplishments and challenges in his bid for re-election.

Kline spoke about Jessica's Law, which significantly increased penalties for sexual predators in Kansas; the successes in finding theft and fraud of the state's Medicaid system; and the decrease of 70 percent in methamphetamine labs.

He spoke about his offices work in creating the Cyber Crimes Task Force to catch online predators and creating the Consumer Protection Emergency Response Team providing assistance to people following devastation from natural disasters, along with many other promises he made in his first term.

Kline also spoke of how 89 of the 104 Kansas county sheriffs have supported him for re-election.

"Eight of the sheriffs are members of the Democratic party," he said.

He spoke about his opponent Paul Morrison and how Morrison's Senate Bill 323, which would have reduced the sentences of thousands of convicted felons like Douglas Belt, Vernon Harris, Godfrey Edwards and David Hoolehan, failed.

"Go to www.paulspolicy.com and search for Paul's released felons whom are now back in prison by county or by crime," he said.

In laying out his action plan for re-election as Kansas Attorney General, Kline asked everyone to consider taking bumper stickers and yard signs, along with offering any financial help they can.

"A bumper sticker is worth 10 votes and any amount of money means a lot — it's whatever some-



PATTY DECKER/Free Press Editor

Kelly Riccitelli of Gem listened while Kline talked about his re-election bid and asked for help from his supporters during a grassroots meeting Sunday.

one can do," he said.

The grassroots kickoff brought more than 50 people to Colby's Quality Inn to see what they can do to help the Republican candidate stay in office another four years. Kline's office began a statewide tour in the northwest part of the state and for local Republican committee members that meant a lot.

"Anytime any candidate takes an

interest in northwest Kansas we want to show our appreciation for them coming out," said Steve Ziegelmeier, Thomas County Republican chair.

In addition to Ziegelmeier, other members of the Thomas County Republican Central Committee also attended.

Those included Mike Baughn, treasurer; Tamara Ziegelmeier,

vice-chair; and Lisa Schroeder, secretary.

Others in attendance were Rep. John and Renee Faber, Sen. Ralph Ostmeier, Thomas County Commissioner Paul Steele, challenger for Ron Evan's commission seat, Byron Sower, and precinct committee members from Thomas, Sheridan and Sherman counties. The election is Nov. 7.

Oakley hosts 35th annual Kansas Cornhusking Contest

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

Corn ears will be flying high during the 35th Annual Kansas State Corn Husking Contest Saturday in Oakley.

Warren Park, current president of the Kansas State Corn Husking Association, said the contest will take place west of Oakley near the Buffalo Bill sculpture.

"It's a dying art that a lot of folks get together and have fun doing," Park said.

Until 1941 when World War II ushered in mechanized corn pickers, corn husking was done by hand. The contest, revived in 1971, will draw corn huskers from nine states which host state contests.

Those states, besides Kansas, are Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, Missouri, Illinois

and Indiana.

Park said many of the same people who attend the state contest in Oakley will attend the National Corn Husking Contest Oct. 21 in Columbus, Neb.

"The states use the same rules as the national contest," Park said.

The contest in Oakley contest is patterned after events in the 1920s and 1930s, with husking times of 10, 20, and 30 minutes.

Wagons pulled by mule or horse teams travel along side men, women or children as they husk corn and throw the ears into the wagons.

The contest begins at 8 a.m. with a continental breakfast in the cabin next to the Buffalo Bill sculpture being sponsored by the Farmers State Bank of Oakley.

Following breakfast, corn huskers will participate in one of 12 classes.

Those are novice, for those who have husked two years or less; girls and boys youth up to 20 years of age; women and men, 21 to 49; women and men 50 and over; men 75 and over; women and men's invitational for out of state contestants; and a team competition of teams of three.

Other activities during the contest at the same location will be a corn throwing contest sponsored by

Singles dance draws more than singles

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

For more than 20 years, singles dances have given individuals and even couples something to do on Friday nights.

Carolyn Bird, 68, of Colby has been dancing for six years and for the past year, has helped schedule the dances and the music acts.

"They started out at the VFW and moved to the American Legion," Bird said.

The dances were started by four women and have maintained a steady audience since.

"Anybody can come," Bird said. "Anybody that loves to dance can come."

midnight the first Friday of each month, and the cost to get in is \$7 per person. Two dances were scheduled for October. The first was Friday and a Halloween costume dance will be Friday, Oct. 27. There will be prizes for costumes.

"That should be a fun evening," Bird said.

Swing N Country will perform that night.

Singles are encouraged to come, but married couples also show up to dance. But things have changed over the years. Not as many young singles like to, or even know how to, dance anymore and the demographics have changed.

"We're running into an age thing here," she said. Older people still like to dance,

but younger people dance to a different beat, so to speak.

"They hop around, they don't dance," Bird said.

The average age for dancers is about 60. Many of the couples who attend are now married, having met at a singles dance.

One couple that met at a dance celebrate their anniversary at the dance each year.

Bands that play are mainly from Nebraska. Country classics is the most popular type of music at the dances. Polkas and waltzes are occasionally played too.

"Dejays are entertaining, but they don't play country and western, or 50s and oldies music," Bird said.

Another change may be in store for 2007. Bird said the dances may

change locations in March or April, but she declined to mention the reason why.

Bird started going in 2000. After her husband died in 1999, she decided to give the dances a try. She went alone.

"I didn't like it," Bird said, "because there were 'old' people there."

Later, she changed her mind when she met someone she liked. She kept going back.

A year ago, she stepped forward and started scheduling the dances.

"It's been fun," she said. Knowing the bands and people coming to the dances are two of the things she has enjoyed. She would like to see the dances continue, and to build up attendance.