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Dennen Field help wanted

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

A new stadium will start going up Saturday at Dennen Field, along Third Street in west Colby. And volunteers are needed to help.

“We need 30-35 volunteers,” said Joel Powell member of the Colby High School All-Sports Booster Club. “We have about 25 lined up now.”

The club raised money over the past few years to help pay for a new stadium at the football field. Members turned over a \$65,000 trust fund to the school district in October to pay for the stadium.

A \$99,500 bid from CBS Constructors of McCook, Neb., was approved last fall.

The new stadium will have 1,033 seats. The new stadium will be 121-feet long and have 15 rows of seating and stairs on each end. A 30x8-foot press box will cap off the stadium.

Powell said a technician from the company arrived in Colby today, and will supervise the construction. Expectations are high to finish as much of the stadium as possible.

“We’re hoping to get a big part of it done,” he said.

A stadium project takes the company about a week to con-



FREE PRESS FILE PHOTO

Fans cheered Colby High during a football game last season at Dennen Field. Volunteers are needed this weekend to help con-

struct with a team of five or six people. Powell said the Dennen stadium will take a little longer, because they are using volunteer help.

Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, and do not have to work the entire weekend. A couple of hours would help. Booster club members will provide food and drinks to volunteers.

With summer activities and har-

vest, he understands some volunteers might not be able to commit to an entire day of volunteering.

Finally reaching this point is the culmination of more than six years’ work.

“This will be a relief to finally see what we’ve been able to accomplish,” he said. “A whole lot of people have had a big part in this.”

Club members worked conces-

struct the new stadium for the field. Those interested are to start at 8 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

sion stands at football and basketball games, held soup suppers and more to raise money.

He said local businesses have also been a big help, and also thanked Commercial Sign for their assistance in taking down the press box earlier this year.

The project has been smooth sailing since hitting a snag last fall. The board’s attorney, John Gatz, in-

formed them the project must go to bid because of money being donated to the district. It was discovered once the money was turned over to the district, it would have to be handled as public money, and the bid process was initiated after a special board meeting in November. To volunteer, call Powell at 462-5551 or Dewey Augustine at 443-1548.

Dry, hot weather to spur wheat harvest in Kansas

WICHITA (AP) — Dry, hot weather that’s in the Kansas forecast for the next few days is expected to spur harvest activity in the midst of some of the highest winter wheat prices in years.

But many Kansas growers will be hard-pressed to cash in on them as they struggle to cut their damaged crops.

Ordinarily, wheat prices drop as the harvest goes on and supplies are replenished. But this season, wheat prices rose sharply as concerns mounted for a poor harvest. On Wednesday, July wheat futures

settled at \$6.05 a bushel on the Chicago Board of Trade, after spiking as high as \$6.11 a bushel.

While wheat prices briefly reached as high as \$7 a bushel in 1994, what is different this season is that the increase is expected to last longer, said Mike Woolverton, a grain marketing economist at Kansas State University.

“We are going to see wheat prices continue strong. We are not going to harvest as much wheat in the Great Plains as we thought we would,” Woolverton said.

Earlier this spring, the nation’s

wheat looked terrific, promising a recovery from last year’s smaller crop.

Then came the rain.

Texas farmers could not get in to cut their wheat soon enough, and reports now are surfacing in that state that wheat is sprouting in the head.

Sprouted wheat is heavily discounted, and the quality is dropping very rapidly, Woolverton said.

In Oklahoma, freeze damage was more extensive than first thought and the quality is not good, he said.

That grim assessment is continu-

ing as the harvest moves up to Kansas. Early yields have been disappointing, and the quality is not as good as last year’s drought-plagued crop.

“We had terrific quality wheat last year — high protein levels, high weights per bushel,” Woolverton said. “This year, not only is the yield down, but the quality is down.”

The crop has drastically deteriorated in the past six weeks, and it now appears freeze damage is also more widespread in Kansas than earlier believed.

Much of the wheat is lying down.

Freeze-damaged stalks have broken. Rain and hail in some parts have beaten down plants, while flooding has plagued other fields.

“Put it all together, this is going to be a tough harvest for some of these guys,” Woolverton said.

At the United Ag Service in Gorham, just east of Hays, a little wheat came in Wednesday with test weights in the mid-50 pounds per bushel. Southern Plains Co-op in Lewis received 11,510 bushels at its six locations, with test weights in the low-50-pounds-per-bushel range.

Wetter weather leads to more pesky insects

WICHITA (AP) — The wet spring means Kansans may have some unwelcome guests in their homes and yards this summer, and more insect bites when they’re outside.

Wild creatures that find their homes or their food supply wet will move to drier ground, meaning snakes and skunks are showing up near — or inside — people’s homes. Mosquitoes and ticks also are proliferating, which health officials say could mean an increase in insect-borne diseases, such as West Nile.

The biggest health risk from rain is an increase in molds and allergies, and the main season for West Nile Virus is from late July to late September. But people should not assume that mosquitoes flying around

now don’t carry the virus.

Also, termites and ants are more prevalent, said Larry Hawley, termite technician for Midwest Pest Control.

Snakes, mostly harmless rat snakes and bull snakes, are showing up in some yards and even going into homes through sump pump screens, dryer vents and tiny holes.

“Animals move to the nearest dry land,” said Joe Collins, Kansas Biological Survey herpetologist.

“Out in western Kansas, it has been so dry for so many years, some of the amphibians skipped a few years in reproducing,” Taggart said. “This year, they’ve all been pretty successful. I don’t remember a year that so far has been as productive as this one.”

the history of fences in America exhibit, said Janet Bean, museum director. The others locations include Lucas, Wamego, Winfield, Paola and Larned.

America’s fascination with fences is seen along highways, county road and city streets, she said, and the history of barbed wire fences, white picket, post rock,

Council reviews savings

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

A series of options for improving energy conservation efforts in public facilities was reviewed by the Colby City Council at its meeting Tuesday.

Jon McCoy of Lenexa, the public sector sales manager with John Controls, a company which helps businesses make self-funded energy improvements, approached the city about inventorying its properties.

In addition, the state of Kansas was also paying half the cost to assess energy-saving measures in public buildings, he said, and Colby is one of the last cities to take advantage of that offer. The state, he said, has no more money for this particular project.

“The facility conservation projects range from \$240,986 in option one to \$1,803,275 in option three,” said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager.

Each of the options McCoy presented, showed an annual cash flow analysis with the capital costs financed at 4.65 percent and the annual payments and savings for a variety of improvements at Colby City Hall, the bath house at the municipal swimming pool, the Community Building, Pioneer Memorial Library, Colby Police Law Enforcement Training Center, Public Works, line shop, Power Plant and municipal airport.

Following the presentation, the council requested Armstrong direct McCoy and Johnson Controls detail firm costs for Option one.

That includes changes in lighting, heating, insulation, sensors and more at the nine facilities already listed.

In other council news ...

Council approved revisions to its municipal codes at a cost of \$4,000, which included updates by Scott Hildebrand of Topeka, an attorney with the League of Kansas Municipalities.

“This was the first time since 1976 that the city’s ordinances were updated,” Armstrong said.

Although Hildebrand outlined many changes within each section of the code book, one major changes affecting residents this year deals with fireworks in the city.

Under the new ordinance, certain fireworks will be allowed to be discharged within city limits.

The ordinance states all fireworks offered for sale that have been tested and approved for use within the state by the state fire marshal will be permitted.

However, bottle rockets and other self-propelled firework devices using a tube and guiding stock or rod will not be sold or permitted to be discharged within the city.

A few other restrictions included no throwing of fireworks, discharging fireworks on streets or public property, and using fireworks within 50 feet of any gasoline pump, bulk station or near volatile liquids.

Another part of the ordinance noted the chief of police or a law enforcement officer could seize and confiscate all fireworks which are in violation of accepted rules by the state fire marshal.

For questions, call the Colby Police Department, 460-4460.

Bedtime stories



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Weldon Turner of Colby, foreground, and other children listened to a story during “PJs and Bedtime Tales” family night at Pioneer Memorial Library Thursday. The evening storytime, where children could dress up their pajamas, included stories, rhymes and a craft project. The event was part of the library’s summer reading program. Another is planned July 12.

Oakley museum offers unique exhibit

Fick Fossil and History Museum in Oakley will host “Between Fences,” a Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition starting today and continuing through Aug. 5.

The exhibit was made possible by the Kansas Humanities Council and the museum is one of only six in Kansas to show the

split rail, electric wire and patio privacy fences will be illustrated.

The Oakley museum, 700 W. Third St., is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and from 2 to 4 p.m., Sunday. For questions about the museum or the exhibit, call Bean at (785) 672-4839.