



Anticipation



JOEY FALKOFF/Colby Free Press

Fourth-grader Casey Quagliano of Colby got set to take dive into the water Wednesday at the Colby Municipal Swimming Pool. The pool has been open since Memorial Day weekend. For a summer pass, contact the rec department 460-4440.

Brewster to review water plan

By Jan Katz Ackerman
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Brewster officials are scheduled to review and adopt the city's emergency water plan at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, during their regular meeting. The plan has been submitted to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in Topeka.

City Superintendent Mike Schultz said the plan will help the city of Brewster respond to water needs in case of an emergency.

"It's a document so in the event of a disaster we know what to we would do to restore our water and wastewater back to what it was before the disaster," Schultz said. "It's a way of getting a system back up and running."

Brewster's water system has three wells which pump water into a 50,000 gallon above ground storage tank, Schultz said. Should a disaster happen in Brewster, Mayor Mike Baughn will be the first line of defense for the water system. At Baughn's direction, Schultz will oversee all municipal services. His duties will include preservation of the safety and welfare of the public, with his priorities being for the public's water, food and shelter, according to the document filed with the state.

The disasters covered by the plan include, but are not limited to, drought, accidental spills or contamination of the water system.

Baughn said the city's progress in preparing for protection of the residents, as well as more routine city activities, are in good shape.

"I'm please that the city is going well," Baughn said. "I'm also pleased that the Kansas Avenue Improvement project is going well and things are looking up."

The Kansas Avenue Improvement project has included ongoing work to replace roadway and sidewalks along Kansas Ave., which runs north and south from County Road 24 on the south to Manchester Ave. on the north, is the longest street in Brewster and serves as the business district.

This year's portion of the project include replacing 100 feet of concrete guttering on Kansas Ave., installation of a 50 foot valley gutter at the intersection of Third Street and Kansas Ave.

Schultz said summer weather is allowing several projects around town to get underway.

"We'll have a city-wide clean up day on June 14," he said. "We go around town and help people who are unable to get something in a residential trash container."

Schultz said the service of helping clean up Brewster is free. Anyone having items they need help disposing of can contact the city office at (785) 694-2205 to get on the list for pickups done during the event.

Other projects Schultz has been overseeing includes working with Thomas County Emergency Management Director Susan McMahan to heighten public awareness about safety during storms. A public meeting will take place in Brewster from 9 to 11 a.m. June 24 at the Brewster School, 127 Kansas Ave.

In other business, signs leading into Brewster will be replaced with council approval of a bid from Colby Canvas for \$1,000. The council received a thank you note from the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce for continued membership in the organization. The council is looking at software options for possible upgrades for the city's computers, and Schultz will crack seal the streets, at the cost of \$3,500.

Youth runs for charity

By Pat Schiefen
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A 15-year-old runner from St. Francis succeeded in his run Wednesday from St. Francis to Goodland, around 36 miles, arriving around 10:30 a.m. for a time of about four hours.

Robert James Herman III said he did the run to help kids at Children's Hospital in Denver, where he had almost nine surgeries over a little more than a year.

As he neared Gulick Park he had enough energy to pick up speed a little but his face was flushed. Earlier he had a measured pace when he was at Jack Armstrong's, north of Goodland.

"My feet hurt," he said after he arrived. "The worst part of the run was the hills. The best part is how happy the kids will be for the hospital to get the money."

Originally, he had planned to run back, but Wednesday, he said he didn't think that was going to

happen. Herman has a shunt to drain fluid off his brain. His mother, Jeanie Herman, had planned on having him checked by a nurse before he ran back to St. Francis.

His medical problems started after he went to a Boy Scout camp in Kiowa, where he found a tick on his stomach and was bitten by a mosquito, his mother said. After he got home, he wound up with a 104-degree fever and vomiting. He was eventually diagnosed with West Nile Virus, spread by mosquitoes, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever, spread by ticks, she said. While he was being treated for those things, doctors found a brain tumor, his mother said. They told her the tumor probably had been growing since he was born and had been aggravated by his illnesses and the medications he took for it.

Anyone who wants to donate to his fund can send checks to him at 320 Webster, St. Francis, Kan. 67756.

Commissioners discuss wind energy

By Jan Katz Ackerman
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Wind energy and how it can help northwestern Kansas farmers was the topic of a lengthy discussion at Friday's Thomas County commission meeting.

"Wind energy is a practical way to put money on the table of Kansas family farmers," said Dan Hartman, director of the Logan County Development Corporation. "Wind energy is going to come out here. It's happening as we sit here."

Hartman wanted to know whether Thomas County Commissioners Ken Christiansen, Paul Steele and Byron Sowers would attend a multi-county meeting to talk about wind energy if he arranged it.

For almost an hour, the commissioners listened to Hartman's plan for hosting a meeting to talk about several counties working cooperatively to develop a substation to transport electricity generated by wind turbines.

"Just running the numbers on what could be done," Hartman said. "I'm looking at a group of counties to do the infrastructure and get things done. The group could look at either being a utility or a transportation entity."

Hartman said Logan County Commissioners Nick Scott, Carl Uhrich and Doug Mackley supported his plan. He said besides talking to Thomas County's commissioners, he plans to talk to those in Wallace, Gove, Scott and Sheridan counties.

Steele said the 2007 Kansas

Legislature approved counties to work cooperatively for plans just such as Hartman was presenting. He said separate and distinct municipalities and counties that want to "sign on" does so and to form a "separate government entity."

Hartman said he has talked with Kansas electricity regulators and officials at Midwest Energy and Sunflower Electric about his plan for a wind energy substation in northwest Kansas.

"Midwest Energy is upgrading their power lines to handle the power," Hartman said. "They are cool on the idea of buying all the power, but they are not closing the door."

Steele said while he supported looking in to creating some form of wind energy business in the area, he was concerned about which cities or counties would participate in the venture.

"The down side of public development is if some people get left out, all of a sudden you have opposition and the bottom line is they don't get paid," Steele said.

Hartman said the argument to opposition is that the "money is helping the county."

"Negotiators have to look at overall project and have to look at the long haul of better utility rates is better than cash," he said.

Steele said the first thing to find out was if a 100 mega watt system is developed in northwest Kansas is whether transmission lines can handle it.

"Yes," Hartman said.

"So you've had Midwest Energy and Sunflower Energy say they can handle a 100 mega watt system?" Steele asked.

Electric companies show support

Northwest Kansas electric company officials support looking at wind energy as a power source, as well as a source for jobs.

Bob Helm of Hays, Midwest Energy's manager of corporate communications said he was aware Hartman has talked to the company's officials about wind energy.

"We are supportive of wind energy," Helm said. "We are actually the largest purchaser of wind energy in the state. We have several transmission lines and there might be something we can work with, but we don't have any plans of building a large transmission substation right now."

Helm said Midwest Energy is constantly looking at "renewable energy" as a way to provide electricity to its customers.

"Yes," Hartman said. "Not today, but it's in the near future."

As far as how many turbines would be needed for a wind energy project, Hartman said it "depends on the size of the generators." He also said how much money a farmer is paid for use of their land for a turbine is wide open.

"It's a wildcat world," Hartman said. "It's all over the board. Some leases a farmer gets are for \$2,000 a tower, some get \$2,000 a tower plus two percent of the energy sold."

Steele said farmers who rely on irrigation systems may be particularly interested in exploring wind energy options, especially since

Wind energy is a renewable energy source, but always must be backed up by "base load energy" such as coal, natural gas or nuclear energy to produce electricity.

"What we look at is if it's comparable or less for our customers then we'll look at it," Helm said.

Steve Miller, senior manager of external affairs with Hays-based Sunflower Electric, said Sunflower Electric is very supportive of wind energy. He said the company, like Midwest Energy, is already purchasing power from wind sources.

"We purchase 13 percent of our electricity from the wind farms in Gray and Ellsworth Counties," Miller said. "We want to be cooperative with anyone who wants to bring legal jobs to western Kansas."

diesel fuel has topped the \$4 per gallon mark.

"Irrigators are looking for dependable sources of energy," Steele said. "A lot of irrigators are going back to electricity because they are tired of paying for both sides of a war."

Hartman said the commissions need to "sit down and look at the numbers" as far as what is practical when it comes to wind energy. "We need to collaborate. This is not something that's going to happen in a year," Hartman said.

"It's worth a meeting," Sowers said. "The reason I'm pushing so hard for (wind energy) is because we need to stay in front of it."

Briefly

Diplomas ready

Diplomas for the Colby High School Class of 2008 can be picked up at the Colby High School front office. For questions, call 460-5300.

Open house Sunday

Genesis-Thomas County, Inc. will be holding an open house at their new location in the Thomas County Office Complex, Suite 13, on Sunday, June 8, from 1-3 p.m., Sunday. Organizers are encouraging everyone to come for refreshments, tour the new facility and to find out more about the impor-

tant services they provide for the citizens of Thomas County.

Car wash Saturday

The Tumbleweed Tumblers are having a car wash from noon to 4 p.m., Saturday, at the car wash on the corner of Franklin and Pine Streets in Colby. The cost is free-will donation to help the girl get to camp in Lincoln, Neb. For questions about the event, call Brette Pfeifer, 462-1513.

Decoration removal

Officials at Beulah Cemetery in Colby will re-

sume the regular maintenance on the grounds and are asking families to remove any non-permanent containers, pots or decorations from grave sites. Any decorations not removed by Monday, June 9, will be disposed of by staff. For questions, call Debbie Henry or Paul Baird, 460-3188.

Fundraiser Saturday

In conjunction with the Brewster City-Wide Garage Sale starting at 7 a.m., Saturday, in Brewster, a fundraising event to benefit Ashton Domsch, who plans to attend school in Ireland as a exchange student will begin at 10:30 a.m. at the Our Savior's

Lutheran Church, Brewster. The benefit will include Sloppy Joes, salads and desserts. In addition, hand-tied fleece quilts and handmade jewelry will be sold. All proceeds from the lunch and sale of items will go toward paying her expenses to Monaghan County, Monaghan Ireland.

Rod Run set June 13-15

Colby's annual Cruise to the Past Rod Run is scheduled Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 13-15. The Cruise-In and registration is from 4-7 p.m. at Sonic and Montana Mikes with the "Show and Shine" beginning at 9 a.m., Saturday at Fike Park.