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Engineer to talk about wind farm

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
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An enginner with the firm planning a wind farm southeast of Colby will meet with Thomas County commissioners Monday to discuss progress on construction along the Solomon River.

Peter Keenan, project engineer with Acciona Energy, plans to meet with the board at 9:30 a.m. Commissioner Ken Christiansen said the county has been in discussions with Keenan for a year. The firm, based in Spain, calls the development a major wind energy facility.

Emergency Management Director Susan McMahan will talk with commissioners about a meeting set for 5:30 p.m Tuesday, March 31, at the Law Enforcement Training Center to discuss the Regional Geographic Information Systems Project.

The project will produce maps with extra layers of information available to emergency crews, she said. McMahan said the meeting will allow first responders to say what they want to see on the new maps.

Jessica Frye, GIS Coordinator for the state adjutant general's office, said the project is about getting information to cross jurisdictional boundaries.

"If first responders from Shawnee County came to Colby to assist in an emergency, they would have all the information available

to people in Colby," she said.

Frye said the goal is to have all counties in northwest Kansas having the same information available to them. She said the project includes maps with five data layers available to all 18 counties. These layers would show schools (including elementary and preschool), electric distribution lines and facilities, hazardous materials facilities, health care centers (hospitals, dentists' office, doctors' office, and nursing homes) and water facilities, including public drinking sources such as water towers, and wastewater treatment operations.

In other business, the commissioners will:

- Meet with Regional Director Peggy Pratt of Juvenile Justice Services from 9 to 9:30 a.m.

- Go over the ballots cast in the Golden Plains School District primary election and certify the vote.

- Decide whether to pay \$160,604 for the materials that will be used to put a new roof on the courthouse.

- Discuss plans for a tax sale of delinquent property with County Attorney Bruce Flipse.

- Hear Christiansen report on meetings in northwest Kansas about groundwater issues.

- Decide if they want to attend a seminar about dealing effectively with unacceptable employee behavior and the Colby-Thomas Commerce banquet and annual meeting on Saturday, April 18.

Daylight Saving starts early this time

If you think this weekend's shift to Daylight Saving Time is happening earlier than usual – you would be right.

"If March 8 seems early, remember that the 2007 daylight-saving law moved the official start date from the first Sunday in April to the second Sunday in March," said Mary Knapp, state climatologist for Kansas. "Since March 1 fell on a Sunday this year, March 8 marks the start of daylight time in 2009 – almost a month earlier than in the past."

Obviously, the nation doesn't "save" any daylight as a result of the program, she noted. Sunrise and sunset still follow the same pattern they have for centuries.

"With Daylight Saving Time, we are shifting activities that are ruled by the clock to the hours with more daylight – thus saving energy," said Knapp, who is in charge of the Kansas Weather Data Library, based at Kansas State University in Manhattan. "U.S. Department of Energy studies show the energy savings to be

Set clocks Saturday

The evenings will be a little longer starting Sunday, and the sun will seem to hang in the sky later, as Daylight Saving Time begins.

Clocks will spring forward an hour at 2 a.m. Sunday. It's the first time this will happen the second weekend in March under a new federal law.

Remember to set yours clocks forward before going to bed Saturday night.

about 1 percent per day."

Not everyone likes the switch, she said. Hawaii and most of Arizona have state exemptions and stay on standard time year-round.

Information about Kansas weather is available at the Web site: www.oznet.ksu.edu/wdl.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Preparing to spell his word, Rex Branum (above) adjusted the microphone during the fourth-grade spelling bee at the Colby Grade School. Church of Christ Pastor Jerrod Spencer (below) helped with the contest. He congratulated Abigail Beintz, who won the fourth-grade contest.

Kids spell out 's-u-c-c-e-s-s'

Regional awaits winner

By Marian Ballard

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A Brewster eighth-grader is eligible for the regional spelling bee later this month in Great Bend, with a shot at the national championships, after winning the Thomas County Spelling Bee.

Fifteen students competed in the bee at the Brewster School, three from each of the five schools entered: Brewster, Colby Middle School, Heartland Christian, Sacred Heart and Golden Plains.

All students up to eighth grade and under the age of 16 could be eligible for the national competition in June, including homeschooled students, organizers said.

Rae Stewart of Brewster, which was host to the event, coordinated the bee. Lynnette Brown read the words, and Sherri Edmundson and Kathy Baird, Brewster; Tressa Weber, Colby; and Marsha Rogers, Golden Plains, judged the contest on Feb. 17.

First place went to Dan Brown, an eighth grader from Brewster. Second was Hiram Hendrich, a sixth grader from Heartland, son



Dan Brown



H. Hendrich



Holly Mayfield



Kylie Ritter



M. Boeger

of John and Kelly Hendrich. Third was Ana Bermudez, a sixth grader from Golden Plains, daughter of Ruben and Elisa Bermudez; fourth was Brandon Johnson, a fourth grader from Sacred Heart, son of Doug and Melissa Johnson; and fifth was John Faber, an eighth grader from Colby Middle, son of Rhonda and Josh Faber.

Brown will go on to represent the county in the Sunflower Spelling Bee at Barton County Community College in Great Bend next Saturday, March 14.

That regional competition is



sponsored by the *Great Bend Tribune*. The winner advances to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington.

The following week, Colby's younger students had a chance to show their stuff when seven students and one alternate from each of the fourth and fifth grades at Colby Grade School competed in a school spelling bee – fifth graders on Feb. 23 and fourth graders on Feb. 24. Students with above-average skills were chosen by their teachers, organizers said.

Spelling words were distributed to students several weeks before the contests to give them

time to become familiar with them.

Winning fifth graders were: first, Holly Mayfield, daughter of Lesley and Berry Mayfield; second, Kylie Ritter, daughter of Connie and James Ritter; and third, Morgan Boeger, daughter of Brandy Boeger.

The top fourth grade speller was Abigail Beintz, who correctly spelled the word "balk." Abigail is the daughter of Robert and Dawn Beintz.

The 2010 county Spelling Bee will be at Golden Plains in Rexford. For information, contact Rae Stewart at (785) 694-2236.

Briefly

Gem Lions cooking soup, chili

The Gem Lions Club will have its annual winter soup day on Saturday at the Gem Community Building. The menu includes homemade vegetable, chili and potato soup, plus crackers, corn bread and home-baked cakes. Donations will be accepted, with profits used for community betterment. Bring used eye glasses and hearing aids for recycling. Everyone is invited.

Students plan massage clinic

Colby Community College Therapeutic Massage students will have a clinic for pregnant women at 10:30 a.m. Saturday. Massages are especially good for those in their second and third trimester, said Carol Johnson, program director. The students plan a pediatric clinic on Saturday, March 14. Children must be accompanied by a parent or adult. Cost is

\$15. For information or an appointment, call Johnson at (785) 460-5427.

Women sponsor history talk

The Colby chapter of the American Association of University Women will sponsor a program at 2 p.m. Sunday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History for Women's History Month. The event, open to the public, will be in the Garvey Education Room. Marla Matkin of Hill City will talk on "Cherishing Our Historical Legacy," delving into that left to us by past generations through stories, songs and records.

Soccer camp to be Sunday

A soccer skills camp for boys and girls age 6 to 12 will be held at Heartland Christian School from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday. Fee for the program, sponsored by the American Youth Soccer Organization, is \$5. For information, call Greg Griffin at (785) 460-0647 or

Samantha Schnider at (785) 460-0661.

Radio Control club plans races

The Racing for Christ radio controlled car club will meet at 2 p.m. on Sunday at the First Baptist Church, 615 W. Webster. The club will be giving an RC car away in April. Come find out how to win. For information, call Kent Higerd, 462-3440.

Food sign up to be next week

Prairie Land Food sign up will be Monday to next Friday at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth. A food package is available at a reduced rate in return for volunteer hours. Delivery will be Saturday, March 28, at the Sacred Heart School Gym, 1150 W. Sixth St. For information, call 460-3579.

Seniors plan potluck Tuesday

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck din-

ner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share. Table service and beverage will be provided. The building is handicapped accessible with an elevator by the east doors. For information, call the church at 462-6342.

Justice scholarships available

The Thomas County Community Foundation is looking for applications for criminal justice scholarships to attend Colby Community College. Applications must be postmarked by Tuesday. Call Melinda Olson at 460-9152 for information.



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