Plan tree planting for shade, beauty

By Jim Strine

District Forester Kansas Forest Service

Trees are a valuable resource. They provide shade, beauty and homes for wildlife. They add value to property, clean the air we breathe and can reduce storm water runoff. Trees make our recreation areas more enjoyable.

But despite the many benefits that trees provide, more trees are being removed in our towns than are being planted.

To keep the benefits that trees provide, we need to plant more. And it's critical that the right tree be planted in the right place. Before you buy a tree, ask yourself some questions. For instance, what is the purpose of the tree? Are you planting it for shade, spring or fall color, wind protection, wildlife habitat or a combination of reasons? The reason you are planting a tree should influence the type of tree that you buy.

Space limitations will also affect your choice. Before you buy a tree for a location, be sure to look up, look sideways and look down. Is there enough room for a large, spreading tree such as a burr oak, or do you need a smaller tree such as a flowering crabapple or redbud? Consider the mature size of a tree before you buy it. Choose a tree that fits the area. Do not try to force a tree into too small a space.

Selecting a tree that will thrive in a given set of site conditions will help ensure its survival. Is the tree going to be planted on a site exposed to the sun and the hot winds of summer, or is it going to be in a more protected area? The choice of species adapted to an exposed, windy site can be limited.

Soil conditions will also have an affect on selection. Most species grow best on deep, well drained, fertile soils. Unfortunately, in towns the top soil has been disturbed and can be shallow and compacted. Choosing trees that can tolerate this is easier than trying to change the soil. Getting the right tree in the right place makes tree establishment easier and can prevent many problems.

There is more to planting a tree than just digging a hole, setting the tree in it, and backfilling around the roots. Proper depth is critical. Many trees are planted too deep. A common misconception is that if the tree is planted deep, it will force the root system down into the soil to get water. The majority of the fine feeder roots of trees are within 12 to 18 inches of the surface. Many of the fine roots will be within the top six inches. Planting trees too deep deprives

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the root system of oxygen.

Mulching a newly planted tree with shredded bark or wood chips is one of the best things you can do for a newly planted tree. Do not mound the mulch around the stem. Instead, place a two- to three-inch layer in a circle three to four feet around the tree. Mounding mulch around the stem can hold moisture and encourage stem diseases. Properly applied mulch will reduce competition from grass and make the soil temperature more favorable for root development.

Newly planted trees need to be watered. Check the soil moisture by pushing a thin metal rod into the soil. If it can be easily pushed in the soil, it is moist. If there is 12 to 18 inches of soil moisture, the tree does not need to be watered. If you can only push the rod five to six inches into the soil, it is time to water. Check the moisture at least once a week throughout the first growing season.

It takes commitment to grow trees in this part of Kansas. Proper tree selection, planting and followup care will make establishing trees easier and more enjoyable.

This article from Jim Strine of the Kansas Forest Service in Hays was provided by Marvin Bickner of the Colby Tree Board. For questions, call Mr. Strine at (785) 625-3425, Ext. 220, or e-mail jstrine@ ksu.edu. Check the Forest Service website at www.kansasforests.org.

Ag program graduates Brewster, Colby men

of Colby are among 35 farmers, ranchers and other agribusiness professionals who have completed Kansas State University's 2008-09 Management, Analysis and Strategic Thinking program.

The program, combines new information and decision-making tools with online distance learning. It is designed to help farmers and agribusiness professionals build their management skills, said Alicia Goheen, program coordinator in K-State's Department of Agricultural Economics.

Starting in November, the four-moth course kicks off with participants attending an oncampus session. At home, they

Jon McKee and Matt Hartwell work through online modules of Brewster and Jason Schielke presented by K-State agricultural economics faculty on land and machinery ownership and leasing, financial analysis, human resources, tax management, risk management and marketing.

Throughout the program, faculty members are available to help students explore ideas that might help their business succeed, Goheen said. Technical support is also available.

The program ends with a second session on campus. Participants once again meet with faculty and administrators and are recognized for completing the

For information, go to www. agmanager.info/MAST/, or contact Goheen at (785) 532-4434 or agoheen@agecon.ksu.edu.

Solomon Valley 4-H Club

The meeting of the Solomon Valley 4-H club was called to order by President Abbie Reed Monday, Dec. 8, at the 4-H building. After the flag salute and the 4-H pledge, Kelly Sloan led the song, "Jingle Bells." Roll call was answered by 17 members and two leaders.

Danita Comfort reminded us of the pizza sales that would be due Jan. 12 and that there would be no council meeting for December.

Project talks given were Cole Ziegelmeier, Brianna Thummel,

and Kayla Sloan on what she is going to take to the fair.

For new business, the 4-H council sent a letter about County Club Day. Kayla reminded us that January is parents night.

The meeting adjourned. Recreation was "Simon Says." The hosts were Ross Sloan and Phillips.

- Brianna Thummel, reporter

Bridge Club

for Tuesday were first, Elaine Pta- er; fifth, Sarah Jane Barrett; sixth, cek; second, Margaret Dennler; Larry Barrett.

Meadow Lake Bridge winners third, Joy Davis; fourth, Jan Harp-

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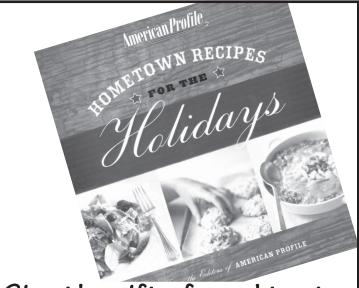
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Clarification

A photo caption on Page 1 of the Thursday, March 12, Colby Free Press inadvertently identified three persons, when only one was included in the final photo. The person pictured was Chief McLemore. A second photo had

to be dropped from the layout. * * * * * *

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.



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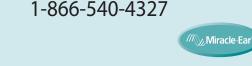
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Do you feel that people mumble or do not speak clearly?

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John Lang will be at The Community Center in Colby on March 19th from 10am to 4pm Club Room 1; 285 E. 5th St Colby, KS 67701 Call to make an appointment

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Cheryl Banister, RN

Specialty Clinic Director