

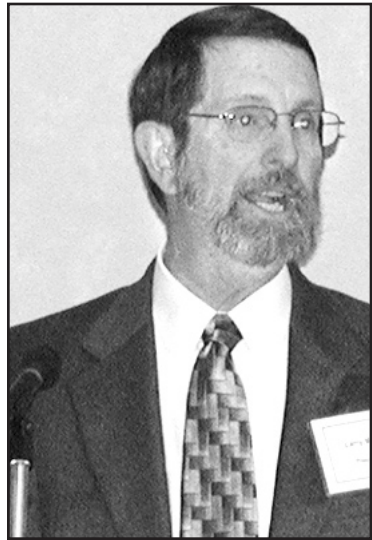
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Larry Maxwell at meeting.

Farm credit has \$4.4 million net

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkanas.com

Three directors were elected at the eighth annual meeting of Farm Credit of Western Kansas at the City Limits Convention Center on Thursday.

Sam Crosse was elected to be a new director in Tier 1 (Cheyenne, Rawlins and Decatur counties), Carl E. Ziegelmeier for Tier 2 (Sherman, Thomas and Sheridan) and Mitchell Glimpse for Tier 3 (Wallace, Logan and Gove). Ziegelmeier and Glimpse

were both incumbents, which Crosse will be serving his first term.

Tier 1 had 248 voters, Tier 2 301 and Tier 3 had 144.

Larry Maxwell, president of the cooperative, Mary Jane Smith and Cathy Hawk were honored with awards for 35 years of service.

Maxwell said net income this year was \$4.4 million, with \$2.5 million going back to members of the cooperative based on the interest they paid during the year.

He said low interest rates for members are expected to continue in 2009.

“This is very essential for our members because it holds down operating costs,” he said.

Low rates are a two-edged sword for the association, Maxwell added.

“We realize that the current conditions will reduce the association’s income,” he said, “but one of the benefits of strong capitalization is being able to weather the storm. We will continue with our objectives of offering as low an interest rate as we can, generate needed earnings to capitalize growth and patronage the balance to the membership.”

Values for dryland fields for cooperative members increased by 50 percent in the nine counties the co-op serves from January 2008 to July 2008, said Maxwell. He said dryland values moved from the \$700 to \$800 range to the \$1,200 to \$1,300 range during this time. The commodity prices have gone down since then, he said, but the real estate value has held strongly.

Maxwell said stress on financial markets in the current economy will create several challenges for the association and the agricultural economy here this year.

Candidates face questions

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkanas.com

Voters are invited to a public forum for the Colby Community College board candidates will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Frahm Theater in the Cultural Arts Center, at the southwest corner of the college campus.

Another forum, for Colby City Council and Colby School Board candidates, will be at the same time and location on Wednesday.

There are six candidates running for three positions in the college election. Trustees Cindy Black and Kenton K. Krehbiel will be running for re-election. Board member Cleona Flipse decided not to file for re-election.

The other four candidates running are Shad Metcalf, Robert M. Renner, Bill Shields and Vernon L. Wranosky. The three candidates who receive the most votes will fill the three open spots on the board.

The forum will be sponsored by the Colby Community College

Endowment Foundation, the faculty alliance, the student chapter of the Kansas National Education Association and the Student Senate.

Questions the candidates will be asked at the forum will be chosen by a committee beforehand, said Nick Wells, president of the foundation.

The committee will receive questions from the public, then choose six questions to ask the candidates at the forum, he said. The candidates will draw from a hat to see which question they will have to answer. After a candidate answers his or her question, all others will also have a chance at it.

The school board and the city council forum will start at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday at the theater.

Six candidates are running for the three positions on the school board: J.C. Carter, Janice Frahm, Gerald Fulwider, Susan McClemore, Tracy Rogers and Dale Vap. Frahm, Fulwider and Black are all

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Commissioners may hire cleaners

Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkanas.com

The Thomas County commissioners may select a contractor to replace county-paid custodians at courthouse and County Office Complex when they meet Tuesday.

Custodians Darrin Bell and Ron Roeder will turn in their vehicle and building keys and have an exit interview with the commissioners at the meeting, which begins at 9 a.m. in the third-floor courtroom.

The commissioners will get an update on the courthouse roofing project from a consulting firm, Custom Energy, and the contractor, Roofmasters, at the meeting.

Kenneth Gatlin, county emergency medical services director, and Assistant Medical Director Dawnelle Umberger plan to ask the commissioners to approve the county ambulance being taken to Hutchinson for training. The ambulance cannot be taken to another county without the commissioner’s approval, said Deputy

Clerk Sue Guill.

The commissioners will approve a bank resolution and signature card for the sheriff’s department.

Road Supervisor Clair Schrock, Road Foreman Bill Mariman and road employees will discuss their mowing and milling plans for the summer with the commissioners.

“We will give them an update on our project laying asphalt north of Brewster and east of Brewster and mowing rights of way in the county,” said Schrock.

People dig Guard out

PRATT (AP) — Even the National Guard needs help sometimes.

Eight guard members were called out in the south-central Kansas town of Pratt, where 28 inches of snow fell over the weekend. One of their Humvees got stuck on a city street Sunday and residents gave guard mem-

bers a hand.

“The Pratt National Guard is here to save us,” said resident Tina Haun, “but we’re digging them out right now.”

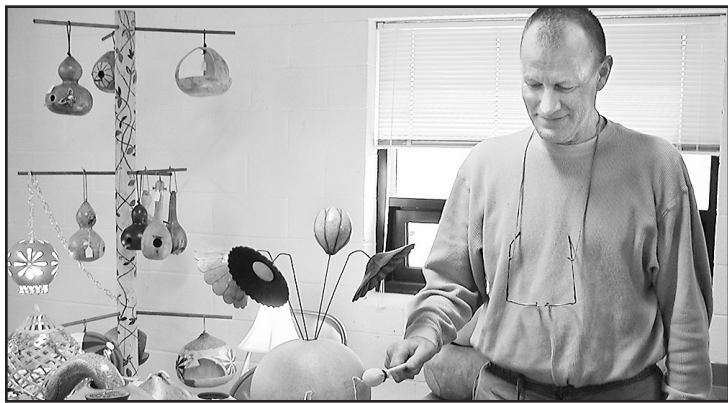
Haun said snow piled up in six-foot drifts around the town of about 6,400, 80 miles west of Wichita. Pratt County was among 62 declared a disaster.



Checking out the show

VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

A steady stream of visitors (above) took advantage of the nice day Sunday to get out to the Better Living and Home Show. About 45 vendors braved a wintry day Friday to set up displays for the three-day event. Treva Fite (right) sold home-made crafts. Scott Ackerman (below) had a collection of carved gourds. Sponsors were KXXX Radio and the Colby Chamber.



College wind seminar for owners

Colby Community College plans a seminar to give landowners information on wind energy and land leasing from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Friday, April 3, in the Northwest Kansas Cultural Arts Center on campus.

Lunch will be provided.

Peter Kennon, project manager for Acciona Energy, will discuss the wind farm to be built near

Mingo. Other speakers will include Dan Hartman, facilitator of the Northwest Kansas Energy Collaborative and Logan County economic development director; Don Teske, president of the Kansas Farmers Union; Bob Crangle, Northwest Kansas Collaborative attorney; Jennifer O’Hara, Lincoln County attorney; and Mike Irvin, former Goodland city manager

and now a lawyer with the Kansas Farm Bureau Legal Foundation; and Dan Nagengast, president of the Kansas Rural Center.

Topics will include lease arrangements, agricultural implications and community wind.

Cost is \$10. To preregister, call Kathy Cayton at (785) 460-5413 or go to the college web site at www.colbycc.edu.

Briefly

Foundation sets new hours

Effective Tuesday, the Thomas County Community Foundation office will be open from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Executive Director Melinda Olson said other meeting times may be scheduled by calling the office at 460-9152 or by e-mail at tcfcf@st-tel.net.

Farm deadline pushed back

The cutoff date for Environmental Quality Incentives Program applications in Kansas to be considered for fiscal year 2009 money has been extended to Friday, April 10, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service. For information, stop by the county office or call (785) 462-7671.

Commodities here Monday

Government commodities will be distributed from

1 to 2 p.m. next Monday at the Retired Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center. Distribution to eligible people, under income guidelines, is first come, first served. Participants are asked to not arrive before 12:30 p.m.

Preschool looking for kids

Puddle Duck Preschool, 520 W. Fifth, plans an enrollment open house from 4 to 6 p.m. Wednesday for kids age 3-5 interested in the fall term. Call teacher Amy Jennings at 460-2603 for information.

Films give tour of Bible lands

A film series on archaeological digs in Israel which retraces some of the early sites where Bible characters such as Abraham lived and walked continues at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the College Drive Assembly of God church, with installments at the same time

through Wednesday, April 29. The public is invited.

Woman the star of discussion

The final Lenten Brown Bag and Bible program at noon Wednesday will be led by the Rev. Carol Rahn on the topic of “Mary Magdalene.” The program will be in the fellowship hall of the First Presbyterian Church. Bring your own lunch; drinks are provided.

‘Gently worn’ dresses for sale

After cleaning their closets, Sue Draper and friends plan a prom dress sale from 6-9 p.m. Thursday in the basement of the Colby United Presbyterian Church to raise money for Genesis-Thomas County Food Bank. Donations may be doubled by a challenge grant. All of the dresses will be \$20 and all have been “gently worn.” Draper says there will be quite a variety of colors and sizes. Call here at 460-4842 during the day with any questions.

Hospital offers childbirth class

Citizens Medical Center plans a four-week series of childbirth education classes from 7 to 10 p.m. Thursdays starting this week. Mothers who expect to deliver before August should attend with their labor support partner. For information or to register, call Jeanene Brown at (785) 460-4850.

High School ‘WhoDunit’ set

Come help solve them mystery of “The Great High School WhoDunit” at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Colby High School auditorium. Tickets are available at the door, from cast members or at the high school office at \$4 for adults and \$2 for students.



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