



10 pages

# COLBY FREE PRESS



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## Line forms for ‘In God’ license tags

By Vera Sloan

*Colby Free Press  
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Several Thomas County people took the state at its word Wednesday morning when they showed up at the courthouse to sign up for the first Kansas license plates with the “In God We Trust” motto on them.

The state had promised that vehicle owners could place orders for the new tags beginning July 1.

The tags cost \$40, plus the \$5.50 registration fee. The registration fee is a normal fee, and when purchasing a tag, if property tax hasn’t been paid, it is collected at this time.

“I really think it will be late fall before the plates are available,” said Thomas County Treasurer Donita Applebury. “People can now order any time they want, and we will eventually have a supply in stock for those who decide later

that they want ... one.”

Once the state has received the minimum 1,000 requests needed to order the plates, and the initial orders are filled, she said, they will send a stock to each county to have on hand.

“At first, the state wanted \$7,000 worth of orders, then it changed to \$13,000, and now it is up to

\$40,000,” said Francis Landry, one of the initial organizers of the movement to make the tag available. “That won’t be a difficult figure to reach, as there are quite a few people who want the special tag for several vehicles.”

Customers who preordered their plate will receive a letter when it’s time to pick up their “In God We Trust” plate as soon as they are received here, Applebury said. The plate replaces the regular state tag and is permanent. A renewal sticker will be needed each year, as before, the treasurer said.

The office will reopen on Tuesday. Ad deadlines for Wednesday’s paper will be noon Tuesday. Next week’s *Country Advocate* will have normal ad deadlines, noon on Friday.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Three combines made short work of this wheat field, owned Wednesday. The National Weather Service is predicting rain by Vernon and Karen Flanagan, east of Country Club Drive on this weekend, which may slow the harvest.

## Wheat harvest trucking along

By Vera Sloan

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Warm days and gentle breezes are a dream come true for wheat farmers this week, as they anticipate what appears to be a bin buster harvest — at least where the crop escaped hail damage.

With a forecasts of possible rain for tonight, and for the rest of the week, farmers are scurrying to get in what grain they can, before the weather turns against them.

“Harvest is just barely started, and once they get going full swing, it could take 10 to 12 days to wind it up, barring any rain delays,” said Scott King, Cornerstone Ag operations manager, on Thursday. “We have taken in around 200,000 bushels since the first test load on Saturday.

“Test weights are good, with one load testing a low of 58 pounds, which is rare, to between 60 and 63 pounds. Moisture content is going down, with the driest wheat coming in the middle of the afternoon and going up in the evening hours.”

This morning, workers were loading a grain train for shipment as a set of locomotives waited to haul the cars off.

Prices have continued to go

down as the harvest predictions go up, however. The cash price Thursday was \$4.87, compared to a closing cash price of \$8.22 a bushel on the same date last year. The Colby price was above \$6 as recent as June 9, this year.

The Kansas Agricultural Statistics service report for Wednesday said the state’s wheat stocks were 91.7 million bushels on June 1, which was 227 percent higher than a year ago.

The report said that on-farm wheat stocks were at 4.7 million bushels, while off-farm locations account for 87 million bushels at mills, elevators, warehouses and processors.

Corn and milo are also listed as having higher stocks than a year ago. Soybeans stocks shows a 10 percent decrease, while oats were down 25 percent from last June and barley was down slightly, with no percentage figure given.

Corn planted this year stands at 3.8 million acres, only 1 percent less than last year’s crop.

Soybean plantings are expected to be up about 9 percent this year, and would be a record high if that figure is reached.

Acres of grain sorghum, or milo, remained level with last years acreage. Kansas ranks first in the nation in sorghum.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Weigh in, dump, and weigh out, never gets monotonous when it’s wheat harvest in Thomas County. Trucks were coming and going in a steady stream Wednesday at the Cornerstone Ag elevator on County Road Q, as harvest got underway for a lot of farmers who were anxious to get the crop in before the next rain stalls their progress.

## Free Press to close for Sixth of July

The *Colby Free Press* office will close on Monday for the Fourth of July holiday. There will be no paper that day, and the next issue of the paper will be Wednesday.

The office will reopen on Tuesday. Ad deadlines for Wednesday’s paper will be noon Tuesday. Next week’s *Country Advocate* will have normal ad deadlines, noon on Friday.

## I-70 ramp opened

It’s open!

State Department of Transportation crews finished subgrade repairs and paving by midday Thursday, and the department opened the westbound ramp from Country Club Drive about 4:45 p.m.

Eric Oelschlager, area engineer for the department out of Atwood, said equipment breakdowns al-

most delayed the opening — and the crew’s departure for planned holiday fishing trips — but they managed to keep everything going.

The ramps should be repaved completely next summer, he said, and the department hopes the job this week will hold until then.

# Governor plans new budget cuts to combat shortfall

TOPEKA (AP) — Gov. Mark Parkinson imposed another round of spending cuts Thursday to keep Kansas’ budget balanced, trimming aid to public schools and higher education, highways and other programs.

A few of the \$160 million in adjustments announced by the Democratic governor will require approval from the Republican-controlled Legislature when it reconvenes in January. But most — including education cuts — take effect immediately under a state law that allows the governor trim the budget to head off a shortfall.

Some prominent Republican lawmakers questioned whether Parkinson had gone far enough, but one described the governor’s actions as prudent.

A deficit loomed on the second day of the state’s 2010 fiscal year because tax collections for the just-ended fiscal year were \$126 million short of official estimates. The state already sought to cope by delaying tax refunds and payments to school districts from June into July.

But paying the delayed bills — and others due in coming weeks — also will require internal borrowing. Parkinson plans to ask legislative leaders Monday

for permission to transfer \$700 million from various funds into the state’s main bank account to forestall cash crunches in coming months.

He didn’t rule out the possibility that the state’s revenues will continue to fall below expectations, requiring even more cuts — or even consideration of tax increases next year.

“My hope and my optimism is that our revenue numbers will stabilize,” Parkinson said at a news conference. “If the revenue numbers deteriorate further than what we anticipate, everything’s on the table.”

The fiscal 2010 budget already contained less spending financed by state tax dollars than the old budget.

House GOP leaders had sought even deeper cuts before legislators finished their work in May, and Appropriations Committee Chairman Kevin Yoder suggested Parkinson was still too optimistic.

“I’m just nervous that we haven’t gone far enough,” said Yoder, an Overland Park Republican. “If he gambles and is wrong all the time, it ends up being harder on everyone.”

But Senate President Steve Morris endorsed Parkinson’s relatively “gentle” ap-

proach.

“The situation’s fluid enough, we just have to go one step at a time and evaluate things as we go along, and that’s what he’s doing,” said Morris, a Hugoton Republican.

Aid to public schools was a natural target for additional cuts because it consumes more than half of the state’s tax dollars. It already had been reduced before Parkinson sliced an additional \$39 million Thursday.

Schools have now seen a cut of \$163

See “BUDGET,” Page 3

## Briefly

### Help needed to assemble rides

The Thomas County Amusement Association needs your help to set up rides for this year’s fair. Volunteers will be working on the rides at 7 p.m. Tuesday, July 14, at the fairgrounds. The more people who come to help, the faster it gets done. For information, call Melinda Morton at 462-7329.

### County van to take a holiday

The Thomas County transportation van will not run today or Monday because of the Fourth of July holiday. It will not be running next Thursday for driver training or on Thursday, July 16, because the driver will be at a mandatory meeting. Please make other travel arrangements. For information, call the county clerk’s office at 460-4500.

### Singles, couples dance tonight

A Singles and Couples Dance will be from 7:30 to

11:30 p.m. tonight at the Community Building. Entertainment will be provided by Granny Z. For information, call Lue Duffey at (785) 855-2341.

### Picnic in the Park Wednesday

Next week’s entertainment at Picnic in the Park will be Lenay Marteney. The series continues at noon every Wednesday through July 29 in Fike Park. For information, call the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at 460-7643.

### Nursing home plans dog show

The Colby Care Center will hold a doggie fashion show at 2 p.m. Saturday, July 11. Dress up your dogs and bring them by, along with a \$5 donation for the Residents Activity Fund. Veterinarian Tammy Swarts will judge the entries and award prizes, and

give some free advice for dog owners. For information, call Amanda Hillis at 462-6721.

### Sheriff can check vehicles

The Thomas County Sheriff’s Office is now checking vehicle identification numbers for cars, light trucks and motorcycles. The office is open 8 a.m., to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Call Sheriff Rod Taylor for information or to set up an appointment at 460-4570. Taylor said requests for inspection of trailers still have to go through the Kansas Highway Patrol office in Hays. The fee for an inspection is \$10.

### KU alums to welcome freshmen

Incoming University of Kansas freshmen and their parents from northwest Kansas will be welcomed into the KU family at a Jayhawk Generations Wel-

come Picnic at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 15, at Fike Park in Colby. Area alumni, new students, students interested in KU and parents are invited. Each new Jayhawk will receive a free T-shirt. For information or to make reservations, go to [www.kualumni.org](http://www.kualumni.org), call the Alumni Association at (800) 584-2957 or e-mail [kualumni@kualumni.org](mailto:kualumni@kualumni.org).

Invited guests so far include Erica Huntington, Samantha Leitner and Roy Palmer, Atwood; Megan Allen, Brewster; Kristin Cox, Nicholas Howard, Rebecca Howard, Aubrette Stephens and Robert Weiss, Colby; Courtney Sheldon and Tanner Smith, Goodland; Katelin Neuenschwander, Hoxie; and Edward Machen, Quinter.



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