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# COLBY FREE PRESS



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## State may help pay for bridge replacement

By Vera Sloan

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Thomas County Commissioners learned on Monday that the the state may be able to replace the “Chase Bridge” three miles south of Colby on K-25 in the next couple of years.

Eric Oelschlager, area engineer for the Kansas Department of Transportation, told commissioners it would cost around \$1.2 million to replace the bridge, which is considered to be a narrow bridge.

The route connects Colby with U.S. 40 to the south, so traffic would need a

detour. The present maximum width of 24 feet would be increased to a width of 36 feet, allowing six feet on each side for shoulders, the engineer said.

“I am authorized to spend around a hundred thousand dollars to improve a nearby crossroad to make it stand up under detour traffic,” Oelschlager said.

“It would be in Morgan Township,” said Commissioner Ken Christiansen, “and I’d like to get some input from the township board.”

Construction would take up to 120 days, Oelschlager said, but the contractors could be done sooner if they have good weather.

“It will be a four month-inconvenience, no matter what,” he added.

The construction would be targeted for a time that did not include harvest traffic, he said, but the road serves farm-to-market traffic during the entire year.

K-25 would be closed to through traffic from U.S. 40 to Colby, with the official detour through Oakley and up I-70, Oelschlager said.

The commissioners said the Mingo Road, County Road K, might need a seal to carry the extra traffic and the Chase Road which is county road N, going east from K-25 would be a secondary detour, unless it’s muddy.

“If plans go as they should, the bids will be let in October 2010, and work will be completed in 2011,” Oelschlager said.

Road Supervisor Clair Schrock said he and Oelschlager will take a look at Morgan Township roads, and talk to the township board, and report back to the commissioners.

The commissioners received a bid for custodial work at the sheriff’s office from Rain or Shine Custodial Services for \$9,600 a year.

Sheriff Rod Taylor said the law allows for a portion of the cost to be paid from forfeiture funds, and he would have to find the rest of the money from some-

where in his budget. The cost could be split half sheriffs office budget and half forfeiture funds.

“The cleanliness of the place is not ideal, to say the least, and it is open 24 hours a day, with people coming and going all the time, so it just gets really dirty,” Taylor said.

“The offices have been without custodial service, and it’s something that needs to be taken care of,” said Commissioner Paul Steele.

The board approved the bid on a month to month basis.

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## School board reorganizes for 2009-2010 fiscal year

By Kevin Bottrell

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In its first meeting of the new fiscal year Monday, the Colby School Board went through its yearly reorganization process, naming board officers, banks, contacts and representatives to various boards and groups.

The reorganization, a formality required at the beginning of each year, involves approving school lunch prices and board meeting dates, appointing school officials such as the board treasurer, clerk and truancy officers and appoint-

ing board members to committees such as the coordinating council and the building committee.

The board voted to change several things for the coming year, including some start and release times. Colby Middle School classes will begin at 8:05 a.m. instead of 8:07. Colby Grade School will release at 3:25 p.m. instead of 3:29.

Superintendent Terrell Harrison said the district decided to stagger drop off and release times to help reduce congestion outside the schools. This year, more parents and vehicles will be in the parking areas because, she said, because

the board eliminated in-town bus-

sing to save money. The board voted to increase the price of school breakfast and lunches by 5 cents each. Breakfast will be \$20 per month for students for 20 meals and \$29 for adults. The cost for lunch will be \$40 per month for students in kindergarten through second grade, \$44 for students in grades three through 12, and \$71 for adults.

Fees for milk, summer music lessons and summer weight training remain the same.

The board voted not to schedule

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## Music festival full of stories

By Vera Sloan

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Many people involved in the the Pickin’ on the Plains Bluegrass Festival over the weekend are stories themselves.

One of those is Marshal Allen Bailey, who emceed the three-day event. He is a real marshal, one of three in the country. He was appointed to the position by the Dodge City Mayor and city commission.

He actually lives in Montezuma, about 25 miles southwest of Dodge City.

“The reason they have a marshal is because they’ve always had one, and always will,” Bailey says. “Being marshal is sort of like being president, because once a marshal, always a marshal.

“My mom would have never believed it,” he added with a chuckle.

And how does a nonresident come by such an honor?

“I think it was the hat,” Bailey replied.

He said he actually is a historian of sorts, is involved in civic events and does tours of the famous western town. An engineer by education, he worked for 20 years with

Williams Brothers Natural Gas, until Texas oilman T. Boone Pickens came on the scene.

“There’s a lot of history in Dodge City,” he said, “and I just have a heart for the real history, and not the Hollywood version.”

He said he had lived in the Dodge City area all his life, but had never heard of Wyatt Erp in his growing up years. He said he pulled weeds for an older lady when he was 10, and leaned some truth about the early days in Dodge City. He said when he searched the archives, he found out most of the stories

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## Speculation may inflate wheat prices

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal regulators are seriously considering restrictions in the wheat futures market being urged by lawmakers concerned over speculation they say has artificially inflated prices, hampering risk management by farmers and grain processors.

A year-long investigation by a panel of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee found that the disconnect between the wheat futures and cash markets can mean higher prices for consumers. Several senators have called on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission to restrict the volume of “index” trading in the wheat futures market on the Chicago Board of Trade.

The agency “is seriously considering this recommendation ... (and) will continue to closely monitor the performance of the wheat futures contract,” commission Chairman Gary Gensler told the Senate subcommittee at a hearing Tuesday.

Panel chairman, Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., said such a review “is badly needed.” Several other members, representing farm states, voiced concern about the impact of market problems on wheat farmers.

But an official of the company that operates the Chicago Board of Trade, where wheat futures are

traded, opposed such constraints and disputed the panel’s findings.

Charles Carey, vice chairman of CME Group Inc., said new restrictions on index trading “are more likely to be harmful to the functioning of our markets than helpful.”

Commodity indexes are made up of futures contracts for delivery in different months. Index traders sell financial instruments whose values change along with the value of the index on which they are based.

Index traders buy wheat futures to help offset their risk from selling the instruments to third parties. That pumps billions into the market and lifts demand and prices for wheat futures, the Senate investigation found. The trend has been especially pronounced since 2005.

The trading volume in wheat futures has created a large gap between prices in the futures and cash markets for actual grain. It has prevented the normal convergence between the two at the time when the futures contract expires and delivery is due, the subcommittee’s report found.

Speculation in the wheat futures market has dis-

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## Kids show off at 4-H revue

Rachel Juenemann (above photo, left), 15, a member of Colby Comets 4-H Club, was declared fashion review grand champion for her skirt and sleeveless top combination at the 4-H Style Review Tuesday at the Colby Methodist Church. She was named reserve champion for clothing construction for her skirt. She is the daughter of Sara and Steve Juenemann of Colby. Amy Wilson (above photo, right), former Miss Rodeo America, emceed the event. Dustin Reed (right photo), 14, is sure to attract lots of attention at Colby school sporting events this year when he wears the black vest and orange tie he made with duct tape for his arts and crafts projects for the fair. He was received a special merit award for his creation. Dustin, another member of the Colby Comets, is the son of Jason and Melissa Reed of Colby.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

## Briefly

### Fair parade entries due Friday

The Thomas County Fair parade will start at 5:30 p.m. next Tuesday at Eighth Street and Franklin Avenue and go through downtown, then turn west to the fairgrounds on Cedar Street. If you would like to have an entry, call or stop by the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce office at 350 S. Range, 460-3401, for an entry form. These must be returned by 5 p.m. Friday.

### County bus off Thursday

The Thomas County transportation van will not run Thursday because the driver will be attending meetings. For questions, call the Thomas County clerk’s office at 460-4500.

### Family group plans concerts

The Rochester Family, a gospel vocal group, will

### Step right up; help needed

The Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Com-

### Salvation Army has fans

The Thomas County Salvation Army representa-

merce and the Thomas County Amusement Association need about 60 volunteers to man game booths at the carnival next week. Shifts will be from 6:45 to 9 p.m. and 9 to 11 p.m. Volunteers will be taking tickets and running the games. For information or to sign on, call Holly Stephens at 460-3401.

### College bus will haul vets

Colby Community College it making its bus available to veterans who’re not able to walk in the Fair Parade on Tuesday. The bus will leave from the American Legion Hall at 1850 W. Fourth St. at 5 p.m. and return to the Legion when the parade is over. For questions, call the college information office at 460-7836.

tive has box fans available for anyone who needs them. Call Sue at 460-4842 if you need a fan.

### Coach offers tennis camp

The Colby Eagle Net Slammers Tennis Camp will be from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Monday to Wednesday, Aug. 3-5, at Fike Park. Children 6 to 12 can sign up no later than Monday, July 27. The cost will be \$25, which includes a T-shirt. No late registrations. For information, call tennis coach Jennifer Rall at 462-0320.



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