



26 pages

# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Area crops in trouble from heat, flooding

By Vera Sloan

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Where else but Western Kansas, can a county have burning crops one day and be declared a flood disaster area by the end of the day?

That's what happened in Gove County on Monday, when rains forecast for the Colby area headed east with a vengeance causing flood damage on crops that were drying out in the heat.

"The dryland corn in Gove, Logan and Trego counties is a little disappointing

right now," said Ryan Inman, crop technologist for Servi-Tech in Colby. "Its burning bad in some areas, and even some spots in southern Thomas County."

After plentiful rains and cooler days in June and July, August turned out hot and dry, leaving dryland crops thirsting for water. In the beginning stage of growth, the roots didn't have to go deep to find moisture. When it turned dry, the shallow root system was left with no surface moisture reserve to sustain the plant to feed the ear.

The Kansas Agricultural Statistics report, released on Monday, listed 18 per-

cent of Northwest Kansas as being very short of surface moisture, 30 percent short, and 51 percent as adequate.

Sub-soil moisture figures for Northwest Kansas show 17 percent to be very short, 27 percent short and 56 percent as being adequate.

Inman said the dryland corn crop shows 1/8 to 3/4 starch line now, meaning early stages of dent to late stage dent of the kernels on the cob.

He predicted farmers to be harvesting their dryland crop in about four weeks.

Irrigated crops are a different story. For the most part, where earlier hail wasn't

a problem, some experts are saying the corn looks as good as they've ever seen it look.

Ross Sloan, manager of the Farm Services Office in Colby, said he believes the overall condition of the corn crop seems to be pretty good, with a lot of storage needs. He noted there are 153,957 acres of dry land corn in Thomas County and 68,457 acres of irrigated crop.

"Corn acres have replaced wheat and grain sorghum acres in Kansas this year," said Brian Olson of the Kansas State Research Office in Colby. "Right now, this year's crop doesn't appear to be quite

as good as last year's crop. The corridor along highway 36 and east toward Hays isn't as good as from Thomas to Wallace County. The heat has hurt it some, but pollination wasn't hurt because although it was hot, we didn't have the high wind during pollination."

With cash prices for old crop and new crop within two cents of each other, \$3.72 and \$3.74, farmers are going to want to keep as much corn in home storage as possible before going to the elevator.

With wheat planting less than a month

See "CROPS," Page 3

### Truck crashes on Fourth Street



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Rescue personnel inspect a pickup truck that crashed Wednesday on Fourth Street. The truck left the road on the south side, hit a driveway and rolled several times. The driver, Troy Quen-

zer, 15, of Colby, was injured and taken to Citizens Medical Center where he is reported to be in good condition. Quenzer had been wearing a seatbelt at the time of the crash.

## World's Largest Truck Convoy to arrive Sept. 11

In two weeks Colby will once again hear the rumble of the World's Largest Truck Convoy heading into town.

The convoy, which raises money for Special Olympics Kansas, will be on Saturday, Sept. 11. Organizer Jane Mentlick said there will be two legs of the convoy this year. The east leg will leave Mitten's Travel Plaza in Oakley at 10 a.m. and the west leg will leave Wilken's Truck and Trailer at 9:45 a.m. (Central Time), both heading for Colby. Both legs will come together on Horton Avenue near Oasis Truck Stop.

At 11 a.m., the trucks will form a parade and make a circle of downtown Colby. From Horton they will head north on Range Avenue. They will turn right on Fourth Street and head down to Franklin Avenue. They will continue on Franklin and then turn right on Davis Avenue – by Colby

High School – and head west to Range Avenue, where they will turn north again and head to the Thomas County Fairgrounds.

After the convoy gets to the fairgrounds there will be a lunch and auction for truckers, athletes and the public.

Truckers who want to join the convoy can contact Mentlick at 443-1682, Tom Sloan at (785) 675-8540, Jack Collins at (785) 675-8375 or Daryl Goetz at (785) 673-4336. A minimum donation of \$100, a valid driver's license and proof of insurance are required.

The day before, the Special Olympics will hold a kick-off party from 5 to 7 p.m. at the fairgrounds. There will be a barbecue and a live concert followed by fireworks after 9 p.m. Donations will be accepted for the Special Olympics to go toward medals and ribbons, meals for athletes, training for coaches and equipment.

## Wind farm company meets with landowners Wednesday

By Vera Sloan

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Central-Thomas County landowners got good news and bad news from wind farm developer Acciona at a meeting Wednesday night.

The bad news about energy prices is that they are down. The good news is that Kansas is a state where investor-owned utilities such as Weststar and Kansas City Power and Light are allowed to purchase renewable sources of energy which includes wind

energy.

More good news is that the wind farm that has been in the works for an area in Thomas County, near Colby since 2006 appears to be on the move.

Landowners got the news Wednesday from Peter Kennon and Tiff Thompson of Acciona, a Spanish company. Thompson, who previously worked for Clipper Windpower, a California wind turbine manufacturer and developer, has taken on the job of project manager for Solomon Forks Wind Farm in

See "WIND," Page 3

## Highway work to begin next week

Two resurfacing projects on U.S. 83 and U.S. 24 in Thomas County are tentatively planned to begin next week.

Beginning at the U.S. 24 Junction, the 11-mile project along U.S. 83 will consist of a two-inch surface recycle and two-inch asphalt overlay – ending at the Sheridan County line.

Along U.S. 24, a second project will begin at the east city limits of Colby and extend 8.5 miles to

the U.S. 83 Junction. The surface treatment for that job includes a one-inch mill and 1 1/2 inch asphalt overlay. Center line rumble strips will also be installed along both U.S. 83 and U.S. 24 as part of the construction.

Contracting firm APAC-Kansas, Inc. Shears Division, of Hays, is the prime contractor for both projects.

A pilot car operation will halt and direct traffic through both

construction zones during daylight hours. Local travelers will need to plan on a short delay during their travels. The wait should not exceed 15 minutes on either construction project.

"As always, we ask that the traveling public exercise caution while driving through road work zones in Kansas," said Public Affairs Manager Kristen Brands.

See "HIGHWAY," Page 3

### Suspicious vehicle spotted



A surveillance camera set up at Beulah Cemetery caught sight of this dark-colored sport utility vehicle towing a trailer leaving the cemetery at 11 p.m. last Friday. Police Chief Randy Jones said a similar vehicle was reported near the cemetery the night of Aug. 9 when vandals pushed over headstones. Anyone with information on the vehicle should call the police department at 460-4460. Jones said the department does not currently have anyone in custody in the case.

### Thomas County's fall sports teams

inserted in this edition of the Colby Free Press

## Briefly

### Red Cross coming to get blood

The American Red Cross will hold a blood drive from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, at the Colby Community Building, 285 E. Fifth St. Donors must be at least 17, or 16 with a parental consent form. To reserve a time to donate, call (800) 733-2767. Walk-ins are welcome.

### Church to picnic at the park

The College Drive Assembly of God Church will hold a free Family Day picnic with games, inflatables, face painting and more from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday in Fike Park. For information, call the church at 462-8234.

### Firefighters collect for charity

The Colby Fire Department will collect donations for the Muscular Dystrophy Association from 9 a.m.

to 1 p.m. Saturday at Dillons, Walmart and at the intersection of Fourth Street and Franklin Avenue. For information call Assistant Fire Chief Sean Hankin at 460-4454.

### Legion to serve breakfast

The Colby American Legion will hold a pancake and sausage feed from 7 to 11 a.m. Saturday at the American Legion Post. For information, call Tracey Galli at 462-0450.

### Church plans rally this week

Trinity Lutheran Church is planning a rally at 9:30 a.m. Sunday in Fike Park. There will be Bible games for all ages and a pot luck lunch at 11:30 a.m. Bring a favorite dish, lawn chairs and bug spray. In case of bad weather, all the activities will be held at the church. For information, call the church office at 462-3497.

### Catholic youth delivering fruit

Sacred Heart Catholic Youth Organization fruit sale orders can be picked up from 4 to 9 p.m. Wednesday at the 4-H building. There will be a limited amount of extra fruit boxes available for purchase that day. For information, call Megan Augustine at the rectory, 462-2179.

### Library reviews baseball book

Pioneer Memorial Library will hold a book review for "Are We Winning," by Will Leitch as part of the *Booked for Lunch*, lecture series at noon Wednesday at the library. Nancy Saddler will be the book reviewer. For information, call Melany Wilks at 460-4470.

### Extension center offers field day

The K-State Research and Extension Center will

hold a free horticulture field day from 6 to 8 p.m. next Wednesday at the center. The program includes a tour of the Prairie Star annual flower trials and discussions with K-State specialists on insects, turfgrass, tree selection and more. Registration begins at 5:30 p.m. For information, call (785) 462-6281.

### City to honor retiree

The city of Colby will have a retirement reception for Gary Berens from 3 to 5 p.m. Thursday in the council chambers at City Hall. Berens is retiring after more than 30 years in the city electric department. For information, call City Hall at 460-4400.

