



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## County talks about pay for workers

By Vera Sloan  
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The county's end-of-the-month bills took a back seat Tuesday to department heads' questions to county commissioners about the already approved budget, which from all appearances will give every employee except one an increase in their 2011 paychecks.

Lane Bruggeman, assistant to the county treasurer Donita Applebury, had a salary increase earlier in the year to compete with what Embark Health Services, which had approached him about a job, promised its employees. At the time, the treasurer was told he would not be considered for another pay hike for the new budget year.

At Monday's meeting, the department heads had copies of a pay scale model the City of Colby uses and told the commissioners they would like to evaluate their own employees and give them a raise based on the job they are doing.

"The county doesn't have job descriptions, and it's not the commissioners' fault," said Sheriff Rod Taylor. "Each department head

should have job descriptions for the purpose of evaluating their employees so we'd have a place to start.

"Then if there is a problem with an employee's performance, there's no raise, and the employee needs to know where he's at in the beginning. And I'm not saying we have to go with this, but we do need to look at the future. If we were to create a new department today, we'd have to have a job description to go by."

Taylor said he had worked for years (for the state Highway Patrol) with a job description and pay scale chart, and it had worked well.

Kathy Ryan, county health nurse, said she had worked in a county where the evaluations system was used and felt it was good. The evaluations were shared with the commissioners, she said, so they would have the information in time to prepare the budget.

Health Director Kasiah Rothchild said retention is important in her department. She said it would be good to be able to tell a new hire that they would start at point A on a pay scale and advance to

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## Stores, pharmacy open for holiday

All city, county, state and federal offices, including the courthouse, post offices, county office complex and City Hall, will be closed on Monday for Labor Day.

The Colby Sanitation Department will not pick up trash that day. Monday's trash route will be picked up Tuesday, and the Public Works Department asks that tipper cans be at the curb by 8 a.m.

All schools will also be closed on Monday and reopen on Tuesday. All banks will be closed.

Downtown Colby merchants will close for the holiday. Great Western Tire, Colby Implement, Colby Ag and Lang Diesel will

all be closed. High Plains Co-op and Cornerstone Ag also will be closed on Monday.

The Oasis Travel Center and Bosselman's will be open. The Loft will be open from 1 to 6 p.m.

Many businesses and restaurants, such as Dillon's, Walmart and J and B Meat Market, will be open, but it might be safe to check on hours. The Walmart pharmacy will be open, but the Dillon's pharmacy will be closed.

The Colby Free Press will not print a Monday edition and the paper's office will be closed. The office will reopen Tuesday, with the next paper on Wednesday.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

With a box of baby quail waiting to get into their new home, called a "Surrogator," Mike Woofter (center) got help from Maurice Sloan (left) and Jennifer Woofter (right) on Monday to assemble the unit that will house 127 baby birds for the next five weeks. The Surrogator acts as a surrogate parent,

keeping the young birds warm and safe until they are ready to be released into the wild where they will become imprinted to their location and hopefully will produce future generations of game birds.

## Businessman plants new quail flock

By Vera Sloan  
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Northwest Kansas has always been rich in wild game, but it may be about to become even richer with the introduction of simple and relatively inexpensive methods to raise the numbers of quail here.

A love of outdoor sports and wildlife habitats enticed Colby businessman Mike Woofter to invest in a couple of "Surrogators" made by Wildlife Management Technologies, self-contained field units designed to help establish a population of game birds.

According to the company, the Surrogator is not a bird release system. It functions as a surrogate parent for 125 newly hatched quail or 65 young pheasants, dispensing food and water, keeping them warm or cool and keeping away predators. The units, which resemble large plastic bins, are



The two-day-old quail chicks have enough food and water in the Surrogator for five weeks, after which they'll be released into the wild.

placed in an area of native grass and underbrush that will give the birds protection from predators,

weather and farm machinery that destroys their natural habitat.

On Monday, Woofter posi-

tioned two of the Surrogator units on land in Logan County and filled them with two-day-old quail.

According to Covey Rise, a quail hunting publication, as early as the 1940s quail enthusiasts began trying to find ways to respond to nationally diminishing numbers of birds. Responses included developing ways to introduce pen-raised birds into the field.

Experimenters discovered that birds raised in one spot and released in another were less likely to survive than those raised and released in the same surroundings. Their natural homing instinct motivates them to live and reproduce where they are raised and released.

The quail hunting publication reported that the birds have more natural survival instinct if they are released at five weeks old or

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## Court nominating process advances under fire from conservative voters

By John Hanna  
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — Kansas moved ahead toward selecting a new state Supreme Court justice on Wednesday, while facing a federal lawsuit alleging that voters' rights are being violated because lawyers unfairly dominate the process.

Nine lower-court judges and four lawyers hoping to fill the high court vacancy met a noon deadline for submitting applications

to the Supreme Court Nominating Commission. The panel plans to interview the applicants Sept. 27 and 28, then submit three names to Gov. Mark Parkinson for him to choose from.

Five of the nine commission members are lawyers chosen for the posts by fellow attorneys. If the governor refuses to appoint one of the finalists named by the commission, the choice falls to the Supreme Court's chief justice. The Legislature has no role.

Four Kansas voters filed a federal lawsuit in Wichita last week, hoping to block the nominating commission's lawyer-members from participating in the selection of the new justice.

But Supreme Court spokesman Ron Keefover said the process will go forward as planned unless a federal court intervenes. Parkinson, a Democrat who leaves office in January, said the process has

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## Run, walk for Recovery Month

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The Thomas County Coalition encourages everyone who struggles with making healthy decisions for a better lifestyle to join in a 5K Walk-Run starting at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 11, at the Colby Community Building.

The coalition is holding the event as an "awareness walk and block party to support National Recovery Month," said Melany Wilks, librarian at Pioneer Memorial Library, and a coalition member helping to plan the event.

Organizations and businesses will have booths set up in Fike Park, and will have information to hand out telling people where they can get help and encouragement for anything that interferes with a physically and emotionally healthy lifestyle, Wilks said.

The coalition comprises business, organizations and people working to prevent and reduce addictive lifestyles and increase people's opportunities to make good choices for healthier living, Wilks said. The group's focus is to start with the young, but it also works with adults who struggle with

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## Briefly

### Convoy kickoff features concert

Special Olympics Kansas will hold a kick-off party for the World's Largest Convoy fund raiser from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, Sept. 10, at the Thomas County Fairgrounds with a barbecue and live concert, followed by fireworks after dark. Donations will be accepted to help with medals, ribbons, equipment and meals for athletes. The convoy will parade through town at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 11. For information, call Jane Mentlick at 443-1682.

### Outdoor skills day on Sept. 10

The Kansas Wildlife and Parks Department and Colby Community College will hold the Northwest Kansas Youth Outdoor Skills Day and Outdoor Expo from 9 to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sept. 10 and 11, at the college and the Colby Trap Club. Activities include shotgunning, archery, compass and map reading, fishing and more. Register at Colby Lumber

by Wednesday. For information, call Wildlife Specialist Matt Bain at 462-3367.

### Wildlife Dept. offering hunter ed

The Kansas Wildlife and Parks Department is offering its hunter education course, required for most people to buy a license, online this year, with a field day from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 11, at the Colby Trap Club. Registration is required. Online instruction and quizzes are available now, with classroom instruction and the test from 5:30 to 10 p.m. Friday, Sept. 10, at Colby Community College. For information or to register, call Wildlife Specialist Matt Bain at 462-7993 or 462-3367.

### Foundation plans fun shoot

The Citizens Foundation will hold a benefit gun shoot at 9 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 12, at the Colby Gun Club, four miles west on U.S. 24, one mile south and

one mile west. There will be help for novice shooters. Registration is \$50. Proceeds will go for medical equipment and education at the hospital. For information, call Tama Unger at the foundation, (785) 460-1214.

### Orchestra looking for players

The Pride of the Prairie Orchestra will have a rehearsal and meeting for new and returning members at 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 13, in the Colby Community College band room. The rehearsal will be from 7:30 to 9 p.m. New musicians are not required to audition; just show up. For information, call orchestra President Mary Shoaff at 462-2159 or email comments@prairieorchestra.com.

### Chronic disease focus of class

Citizens Medical Center will offer a six-week chronic-disease support class Mondays from Sept.

13 to Oct. 18 for people with arthritis, diabetes, heart or lung disease, asthma or the effects of a stroke. The free program was developed by Stanford University. For questions, call dietitian Courtney McCarty (785) 460-4849. Refreshments will be served.

### Museum plans '125' quilt show

A special quilt show celebrating Thomas County's 125th Birthday will be held at the Prairie Museum of History and Art from Oct. 7 to 31. Quilts of any size, pattern or age with a Thomas County connection should be entered at the museum by Friday, Sept. 24. Call (785) 460-4590 for information.

