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County budget shows surprise cuts

By Heather Alwin

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There's some spending authority missing from the Thomas County's 2014 budget — over \$330,000 that at least one county commissioner thought the board had approved in work sessions but wasn't in the final budget. Commissioners discussed the discrepancy at their meeting Monday after a reporter asked about it. The amounts approved in the final budget were unexpectedly different from the amounts the commissioners approved during a budget work session in July, everyone at the meeting agreed, but no one would take responsibility for the changes.

Commissioner Baughn said he spent part of his day Friday trying to figure out where the changes came from. "I don't know why this difference," Baughn said at the meeting. The tentative numbers the commissioners approved as a group are not the numbers published and presented back for final approval after Commissioner Paul Steele met with the county's accountant, the group agreed. According to those involved, the county sets its budget in a process that begins in early summer each year:

- First, each county department submits a budget request.
- Second, the commissioners gather in "shirtsleeve" work sessions to develop a tentative budget for the entire county, going through each department's budget line by line.
- Third, Steele, a retired accountant, takes the budget to the county's auditors at Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball, who put the numbers into their computer to

- develop a proposed property-tax levy.
- Fourth, the accounting firm gets the budget back into commissioners's hands by delivering it to Steele.
- Fifth, commissioners are supposed to go over it and make final adjustments.
- Sixth, Steele gives it back to the firm to generate one final proposed budget with summarized numbers for each department.

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Party to help Cooper Barn

Tickets are now on sale for the Party for the Pottys barn dance and barbecue fund raiser to be held Saturday, Sept. 28, at the Prairie Museum of Art and History.

The dance is part of the non-profit organization's continuing efforts to raise money for improvements to the Cooper Barn.

Doors will open at 6 p.m. with a barbecue and the opportunity to view the museum's latest exhibit, "High and Dry: Agriculture on the High Plains."

The evening's opening performance, held in the barn loft, will feature the Mama's Boys at 8 p.m., showcasing the musical talents of Colby's Blake McLemore, Brandon McLemore, Jordan Sharp, Rusty Helin and Brock Wagoner.

At 10 p.m. the Bart Crow Band, a chart-topping group from Texas, will take the stage.

Tickets for the dance, which will be held in the barn, are \$20 and include a meal. They can be

purchased in advance at the museum or at the door.

Reserved tables, available in the loft and downstairs, seat eight and can be purchased in advance or at the door for \$250. This is a table reservation only and does not include admission.

A drawing will be held for a Junior Traeger Pellet Grill, valued at \$400. Tickets for the drawing can be purchased in advance at the museum and at Colby Automotive, 590 N. Franklin, or at the party. Tickets cost \$5 for one ticket, \$10 for three and \$20 for 20.

Proceeds from the drawing and ticket sales will benefit the museum's Barn Aid Campaign to fund Cooper Barn improvements, agricultural programming at the museum and the new exhibit.

The museum is still seeking sponsors for the exhibit and dance. Interested donors can contact the museum's director, Sue Taylor, at praiem@st-tel.net.

New trustee picked Monday

By Sam Dieter

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The Colby Community College board of trustees took on a new member at its meeting Monday night.

Linda Vaughn of Colby took her seat for the first time Monday, replacing Nick Wells, who resigned last month but is still head of the college Endowment Foundation. She was elected after three series of votes among the four trustees present.

Vaughn owns the Wadell and Reed office in Colby and is secretary/treasurer of the Lazy V Cattle and keeps its books. She has been a member of the Thomas County Fair Board and was in the 2001 class of Leadership Thomas County. She holds a securities license and a life and health insurance certification.

Barry Kaaz, outgoing dean of external affairs for the college, and Quinlyn Woofter also showed up to apply for the position. Woofter said she graduated from the college in 2011 with an associate degree and now works in sales at Woofter Construction and Irrigation.

Kaaz is scheduled to step down at the end of October, after his contract was renewed for two months. Board President Arlen Leiker pointed out before the voting that, although Kaaz's salary comes from Kansas State University, it's paid through the college, and Kaaz's benefits go through the college, too.

"We straddle that very fine line,

and make your decision at that point," he said.

The candidates got a chance to say why they should be chosen and answer questions from the trustees before each round of voting. Woofter got two votes in the first round, from Leiker and Bill Shields. Audrey Hines voted for Kaaz and Kenton Krehbiel voted for Vaughn.

Krehbiel pointed out that the new trustee needed a majority, or three votes, so they decided to vote between Vaughn and Kaaz. Three trustees, Shields, Krehbiel and Leiker voted for Vaughn.

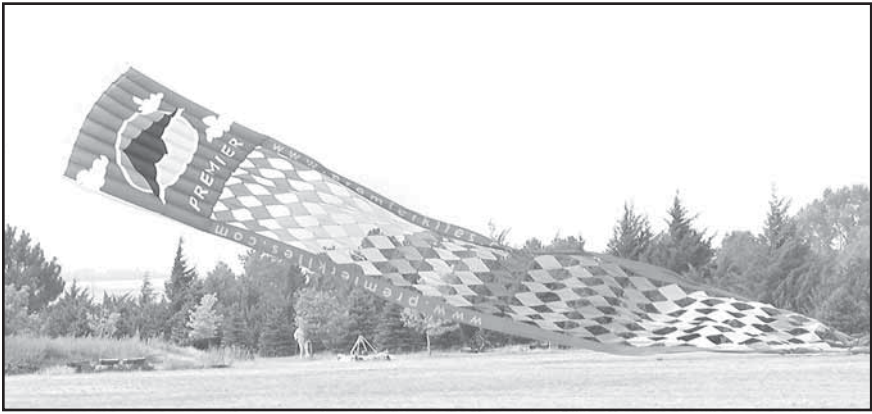
When it came to vote between her and Woofter, Vaughn got votes from Hines, Krehbiel and Shields, and took the seat. She was sworn in and spent the rest of the meeting as a voting member.

Before she was elected, Vaughn told the trustees she had spent her whole professional life working in business and could help the college in that area. She said she was born and raised in Colby, has never left town and never will, and that she sees the college as one of the most important assets to the community, along with the hospital.

"We've made money, we've lost money, and I know what to do in both positions," Vaughn said.

She said she has a lot to learn about being a trustee and does not know much about technology, but added she has a passion for making sure the college stays around, because the consequences to the town's economy would be disastrous if it went away. She said she will run in a general election after Wells' term expires as long as

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EVAN BARNUM and SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press
A 50-foot-long "wind turbine" was in easy reach of playful kids (top) Saturday, at the "Winging it on the Prairie" kite festival north of Colby High School. D.J. Lolowang (above) held a stunt kite up for his friends while they got ready to fly it; the kite takes two hands to fly. The 75-foot-long Rieleit foil (left), lifted itself back up in the air several times after falling to the ground. It stayed attached to the northeast corner of the high school all day and was visible from several blocks away. Ava Mull, 6, and her grandmother, Christina Thompson (above left), relaxed while they flew their kite.

Flying weather boosts kites

By Sam Dieter

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About a half dozen huge kites hovered over the field north of the high school parking lot all day Saturday.

Curt Giebler, of Box Elder, S.D., organized the "Winging it on the Plains" kite festival here. He ran it with the help of his wife Kendra Fager, and daughter

Nicole Weigel, who lives here and helped give her dad the idea of coming to Colby.

He owns the retail vendor Stuff and sells kites made by Premier Kites and Designs. About 600 to 800 people came to the festival, according to his estimate.

"We sold a lot of kites, I can tell you that," Giebler said.

He wasn't sure how many they sold, but Fager said they were almost out. She said several peo-

ple came off Interstate 70 to see the festival.

That could have been because of the "Rieleit Foil," an oddly shaped, 75-foot long kite that was hovering over the high school all day. Several times it fell to the ground, but rose back up on its own. It usually takes four adults to get it in the sky.

"You always know that the wind blows, but when you rely on it, you know, you've got your

fingers crossed," Fager said. She added that the giant kite had to be placed at the north side of the high school because when it was set up by the parking lot it was blowing towards utility lines along Franklin Ave.

There was also a 10 foot-wide, 50 foot-long hollow "wind turbine," which Giebler said could have been lifted 100 feet into the

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Mayor named to state board

The Kansas Mayor's Association has named Mayor Gary Adrian of Colby as its representative for the northwest region.

This is the first year the board has representatives from each of six regions across Kansas.

Regional members will serve as liaisons between the association's board and local members.

Adrian was asked at the last mayors' meeting in Topeka if he would be interested in the

appointment. He said he volunteered because there have been few board representatives from northwest Kansas in years past.

Adrian said the group reviews issues coming up in the legislature and how they will impact mayors and cities.

He said he always takes the side of agriculture, and he doesn't think many lawmakers hear that point of view very often.

"A lot of people don't think there is any-

thing west of Wannamaker Road in Topeka," he said. "They forget about us out here."

Since he has been on the board, he has received two phone calls from the governor's office asking his opinion on immigration and school funding.

The board meets twice a year in person and once a month via conference call.

Adrian's term lasts until April 2015.



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