

Weather

Jail capacity below need

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data," said Baughn, "and it looks like the number of arrests are remaining pretty constant with the exception of detainees for bench warrants and probation violations, which have increased."

Arrests can vary based on the number of officers on patrol, said the report, generally increasing as the number increases.

For example, the Sheriff's Department is short two officers right now, and Dr. Beck notes that arrests might increase some if the department was able to fill those posts.

Colby police put more inmates in the jail than other agencies, said Taylor, followed by the sheriff's office, then the Kansas Highway Patrol, then court services (probation) officers and others.

These numbers also rely on the court system, including prosecution levels by the county attorney and the judges' willingness to put offenders in jail, the report notes.

In an interview, says the report, County Attorney Kevin Berens indicated he would like to see more vigorous sanctions for probation violators that would include putting 80 percent of misdemeanor-level violators in jail.

Although the report says that Thomas County has lost population over the last few decades and is expected to continue to lose, leading to a possible decrease in arrests, the report says that doesn't mean the jail should be sized smaller than its current needs.

"I think 30 beds is a practical number for what we're dealing with," said Undersheriff Marc Finley, adding that he had 19 inmates in custody last week.

Finley said it isn't just the jail's number of beds that are important. The layout and size of cells also plays an important role in a jail's functionality.

After speaking with the architect who works with Beck, Finley said, the two-man cells may not be optimal for the future jail. He suggested several four-person and one-person cells instead.

Beck's report also favors alternatives to traditional two-person cells, since research indicates that there are more conflicts between inmates when they are housed in two-person cells. Four- and six-person cells allow inmates to avoid conflicts, it said.

In addition to its small size, say county officials, the current jail has many safety issues that mitigate for a new facility.

"Not only is the current jail limited in space," says the report, "but it is not (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, has security problems that cannot be remedied because of outdated hardware and was poorly designed in the first



HEATHER ALWIN/Colby Free Press

The utility chase at the current county jail is crowded, holding plumbing, heating and cooling and other lines and equipment. According to a recent report, the chase is too small to let workers repair problems with ease.

place."

"We've gotten out of this report what we wanted," said Baughn. "We're pretty static, and it looks like we're not going to change much over the long term."

Commission Chairman Paul Steele mentioned at last week's meeting that county boundaries could eventually be changed if the state Legislature decides to combine counties.

"If county configurations change, that will affect us in the long run," said Baughn.

"I don't think we want to count on other counties' numbers," said Finley. "I think we need to plan on Thomas County."

Baughn and Finley discussed the need to add staff if the new jail is built.

"If you put 30 beds in here, or in any facility, our jail staff is going to increase considerably," Finley said.

"That's a given," Baughn agreed.

Staffing shortages have long been a problem at the jail, due to budget cuts from the county and difficulty hiring workers.

One jailer just cannot feed inmates, take an inmate to court and book a new inmate all at the same time, said the sheriff.

Briefly

The deadline for Briefly is noon the day before.

Methodists plan potluck on Christmas Day

The Colby United Methodist Church plans a Christmas potluck meal and fellowship at noon next Wednesday. Everyone is invited to bring a Christmas dish to share, along with a favorite board or card game. For information, call Kim Barnett at the church, 460-2761.

Economic Development board plans meeting

The Thomas County Economic Development Alliance board will meet at 8 a.m. Thursday at the county office complex, 350 S. Range, Suite 12. For questions, contact Kayla Faus at 460-4511.

Food for Thought to feature Kansas writer

December's Food for Thought program will feature Kansas writer Joyce Thierer on "Our Land, Our Food" at noon Thursday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History, 1905 S. Franklin. Call the museum at 460-4590 for information.

Living Nativity scheduled for this weekend

A Living Nativity Scene in memory of Theron Johnson will be staged from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Jane Johnson Ranch, 2626 K-25, at the intersection with County Road Z. Hot cider and cookies will be provided and donations will be accepted for the Genesis-Thomas County food bank. For information, call Cade Carter at 462-7525.

Trash crew off Christmas, Christmas Eve

Colby city offices will be closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, Tuesday and Wednesday, and city workers will be off. The residential trash route for Tuesday will be picked up on Monday. The Wednesday route will be collected on Thursday.

The city sanitation trucks will not be running on New Year's Day, Wednesday, Jan. 1, either. Residential trash will be picked up on Thursday, Jan. 2. For information, contact Omar Weber at the Public Works Department, 460-4420.

The Thomas County Landfill will be closed Tuesday and next Wednesday for Christmas Eve and Christmas, reopening at 9 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 26. For information, call Larry Jumper at 462-8139.

Tree of Hope supports area animal shelter

A Tree of Hope supporting the Northwest Kansas Animal Shelter is at the Farmers and Merchants Bank. For a donation of \$10, your pet or loved one's name can be on a keepsake magnet displayed on the tree. Call Angie Harris at 460-1078 for information.

Library will take food to pay your fines

The Pioneer Memorial Library's Christmas "Foods for Fines" campaign runs through Monday. Bring canned or packaged food for Genesis-Thomas County to pay your fines. For information, call the library at 460-4470.

Mingo church plans Christmas Eve service

The Mingo Bible Church will have its first Christmas Eve candlelight communion service at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday. It is open to everyone. For information, call Pastor Tom Peyton at 462-2992.

Church women selling fresh nuts

The women of Ascension Episcopal Church are selling fresh holiday nuts, including pecans, walnuts, cashews and variety packs. For delivery, call Martha Hullett at 462-2505, or pick some up at Colby Canvas.

Grant applications due by Dec 31

The Thomas County Community Foundation will accept applications for its fourth-quarter grant cycle until Tuesday, Dec. 31. Go to www.thomascountycommunityfoundation.com for an application or call Executive Director Melinda Olson at 460-9152 if you have questions.

Tickets still on sale for Hope benefit

Tickets are on sale for the Northwest Kansas Foundation for Hope's annual New Year's Eve banquet at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 31, at the City Limits Convention Center. Tickets are \$40 each or \$280 for an eight-person table, including a social hour, dinner, auction and dance. Contact Pat Sloan at 443-3261. Tickets normally sell out, so get yours early.

Foster parenting classes set for January

Foster parenting classes by TFI Family Services will begin Wednesday, Jan. 6, in Colby, with the time and location to be determined by interested families' schedules. Immediate training also is available. Call Vicki Beiser at (785) 443-0650 or (800) 279-9914.

Monday: High, 62; Low 20
Tuesday: High, 59; Low 21
Precip: Monday None
Tuesday None
Month: 0.02 inches
Year: 14.46 inches
Normal: 20.86 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)
Sunrise and Sunset
Thursday 8:00 a.m. 5:23 p.m.
Moon: waning, 95 percent
(U.S. Naval Observatory)

Selden gathers for 125th anniversary

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announced right before Santa arrives. Three winners will receive prizes of \$50 Selden Greenbucks each.

The event is sponsored by the Selden Community Foundation, Selden businesses, the town's Christmas Committee, civic groups and the city.

Selden was established in 1888, just after the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad was built through the county. The location had been the R.J. McCroskie homestead. Families and buildings were moved from three smaller towns, Old Sheridan, Shibboleth, and Jackson, to

be near the railroad. The town was named after Selden G. Hopkins, one of the founding members of the town company.

The first school was a one-room building, but a two-story school was soon built with two classrooms on the first floor and the second floor used as a church and town hall. This building burned in 1893. Another building went up around 1907, with a larger brick school built in 1921. This building mysteriously burned in 1965.

Students finished the year in area schools, returning to Selden from 1966 to 1968, with the last graduating class in 1968. Selden currently has a one-story build-

ing for the Golden Plains Elementary School, serving kindergarten through fifth grade.

The Methodist Church was chartered in 1897, with the first building put up in 1902. The current building was built in 1952. Baptist and Catholic churches were built in 1906.

Selden has had several newspapers over the years. The Sheridan Times was brought from Old Sheridan to Selden and renamed The Selden Times. The next papers were the Selden Courant, which was published from 1901-1912. The Selden Observer was published from 1912-1932 and the Selden Independent began publication in 1931, followed

by the Selden Advocate in 1937. Copies of most of these newspapers have been donated to the town by the Kansas State Historical Society and are housed at the Selden Public Library.

Several major events have occurred in Selden, including a devastating tornado in 1904 and a major hail storm in 1959. Over 200 people and 40 businesses now call Selden home. Several early businesses are still in operation, including Karls Cash Store, established in 1921, and Pauls Furniture, which began around 1923.

LOCAL TV Listings Sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Table of TV listings for Thursday Evening, December 19, 2013. Columns include time slots (7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30) and various channels (KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, etc.)

AmericanProfile // CELEBRATING THE AMERICAN SPIRIT // Table of TV listings for Friday Evening, December 20, 2013. Columns include time slots (7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30) and various channels (KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, etc.)