

How Northwest Kansas fits into '08 Olympics

Maybe, just maybe. A month or so from now, television sets around the world will be tuned in to the Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, China. Among all the competitors one will have a Northwest Kansas connection.

In our headlines earlier this week, we reported on how former Colby Community College wrestler Daniel Cormier qualified for the U.S. Olympic wrestling team. Cormier had done it before, in 2004.

It's tough to get to the Olympics, just ask Colby native Eric Luedke who was beaten out of the qualifying tournament. Luedke also had brilliant success in his own right at Colby High, Colby college and the University of Iowa — with a rich history of success in wrestling.

Northwest Kansas wrestling fans know Cormier. He was incredible as a Trojan under head coach Steve Lampe. Cormier, from Louisiana, won national championships as a Trojan. He went on to wrestle at Oklahoma State University, a powerhouse in Division I college wrestling.

Cormier, and Lampe, deserve more credit than they receive for making Colby college wrestling what it is. Purely based on national tournament appearances, Trojan wrestling is easily the best athletic program Colby college has. Easily. Even more reason why Lampe is an excellent coach is considering the conditions his program is under.

Lampe is not afraid to tell anybody that he wants his program in better surroundings — from a true-practice room to an even better place to hold meets. Colby college wrestling meets are held at the Colby Community Building, and occasionally at Colby High, but a program of this magnitude deserves a better place to show off.

Cormier will show off to the rest of the world how good a wrestler he is.

Maybe, just maybe, the broadcaster, or other media outlets reporting on Cormier in August, will make a reference to Colby and people will be curious to know how good Lampe has his program and what our town, and Northwest Kansas in general, is like.

Good luck, Daniel.

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press.

Thumbs Up

To... Corporal Brandon N. Otter, on the honor bestowed by the Army. You made a lot of folks proud. (e-mail)

To... All who gave blood at the latest drive. You helped save lives. Thanks. (by telephone)

To... Relay for Life participants. A wonderful demonstration. (e-mail)

To... the ladies at Lyle, for the quilts you made for the wounded troops in Iraq. (e-mail)

(To submit a name or names, please e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, call 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. And again, thanks for your continuing input. -td)

Your political connection

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- ★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514
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- ★ **State Rep. John Faber**, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7500

What's on your mind? Share it with a letter to the editor. (Signature, phone # for verification, required.)

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Despite 'apology,' my message was clear

I never give unsolicited advice. Okay, I might, OCCASIONALLY, make a suggestion or two. But, it's only because someone really needs my advice. Today there are three young men who might not appreciate my wisdom nor my willingness to share it.

Friday night I was scheduled to walk from 10 to 11 p.m. in Norton County's Relay for Life, a fund raiser for the American Cancer Society.

The skies looked threatening and I assumed the Relay had been moved to the alternate site at the National Guard Armory.

Jim was going to walk with me and we pulled into the Armory's parking lot at about 9:55 p.m. Even though we didn't see very many vehicles, we parked and headed to the front door. There were three young men standing outside smoking cigarettes.

I thought to myself, "This isn't right. This event is for cancer research."

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



As we approached them I said, "Don't you guys know that smoking is the No. 1 cause of cancer? I don't think you ought to be smoking out here."

They kind of stammered and stuttered, "Yes, ma'am," and stepped aside. We went on into the Armory and were surprised to not find anyone there.

A young officer came out to greet us. When we asked about Relay for Life he didn't have a clue what we were talking about. "Oh, no!" I thought. "Those guys aren't with the relay. I owe them an apology."

We exited the Armory and as we walked

past the three smokers I said, "I'm sorry. I thought you were with Relay for Life. Maybe I shouldn't have said anything but — you still shouldn't be smoking."

Well, it was sort of an apology.

-ob-

This weekend, Jim's dad received the news we had feared. He is going to lose his leg. The circulation was cut off for too long and the damage too extensive for the doctors to be able to save it.

But, with typical forthrightness, Dad has accepted the idea. He has already decided he will get one of those electric mobility units. With some modifications at his house and a ramp, he should still be quite independent.

As he told us about it he said, "There's no fool like an old fool. I never should have tried to climb that panel."

What happened to Dad is two-sided: It would have killed a lesser man.

But a lesser man would have never tried it in the first place.

I'm available for another quilter's retreat

Summer is time for camp. Or in my case a "retreat." Not too long ago Cindy asked if I would be interested in going to Yoder for a quilter's retreat. Sounded great. We each got a table to work on, a bed to sleep in and most importantly all our meals and snacks were provided.

Grandma Hagman has a tradition of giving a quilt to each grandchild when they graduate from high school. It worked pretty well for the first 4 or 5. Elizabeth's was a year or so late. Brandon got his for college graduation. With Patricia (the youngest) due to graduate from college in December, Grandma asked me to piece together some scrap blocks. She was not completely sure of the origin of the blocks. They were done either by Junior's grandmother Hagman or his great grandmother Wiehl.

Sorry if I lose you non-quilters here: the blocks are amazing, eight pointed stars. Each ray was apparently pieced by a foundation method using newspaper. There are still pieces of paper in some of the seams. These are not 1930 reproductions, they are the real thing!

To finish out the blocks, unbleached cotton flour or sugar sacks were used. Although some are so porous, I'm not sure that could have been the original use. Perhaps cornmeal? Some have faint writing on them but nothing is decipherable.

These blocks are intriguing but they are not the perfection today's quilters achieve with their rotary cutters and fancy machines. The stars were done on a sewing machine, the corners by hand.

They are cut off grain and the blocks were anything but square. I had an idea for setting the blocks on point, which required I tear some of the corners out

Back Home

Nancy Hagman



and add another fabric back in. The little original flaws fit in pretty good with my usual modus operandi! I would not have thought of trying to straighten any of it out.

Then Patricia gets the ring and decides I must make her wedding dress. Thoughts of quilting went by the wayside.

Cindy's offer was just what I needed to get back on track. We needed six people for our little foray. A cancellation caused to expand our search from the area. I asked my sister Sue. She said she would try to get off work as she had a project. I remembered her project. I recollected she started it about 20 years ago. She was insulted; 'twas only 15, she replied.

Whatever, I promised we would get her whipped into shape. She then began referring to our retreat as Quilter's BOOT CAMP!

Off to Yoder we go. We marked a tire with numbers. Everyone put a dime in the pot and each time we stopped whoever's number was up got the pot. With five women and many shops en route there were plenty of opportunities. I didn't win once except for the time we couldn't decide which number it was and they felt sorry for me! Still it was fun!

Our hostess, Janet, was Mennonite. For our evening meals she had helpers who were Amish. The first night, Miriam left before we got the opportunity to thank

her. Janet explained that she had a church event to attend and was anxious to get there and tell the other women about us. Hmmmm...what was she going to tell them we wondered?

We went into Yoder to do a little shopping Wednesday morning. An Amish woman who worked in one of the stores smiled when she found out we came from Janet's. She had heard about us. Hmmmm...what had she heard?

We were not really worried. We were certainly curious about them and their ways. It is only natural they would be curious about us. Janet told us we were the first group she had hosted that did not ask where the TV was. Mennonites have TV's; but none of us expected TV at boot camp, er retreat!

Besides the fun, the shopping and the eating, we all got some serious work done. Sue got one block on her "quilt-as-you-go" project done and another started. Cindy got a whole mini quilt done. So cute, she is calling it "a box of chocolates!"

Sherry managed to stay on task better than any of us and got the most accomplished. Penny and Nancy had beautiful projects, ideas and skills to share. I got my blocks torn apart and sewn back together. After a day of rest (funny how I needed rest after a retreat) I finished the borders. It's ready to quilt!

Better get started on the wedding dress! Except I got so many ideas I'd rather be quilting! I want to go back, once a month or so. Maybe a wedding retreat!

I know there are lots of quilters, scrap bookers, and all around crafty people out there. If you want a wonderful experience check out www.yoderhaus.com and if you need someone to complete your group, CALL ME!

OpinionLine: (785) 877-3361, or 6908