



COLBY FREE PRESS

12 pages

Another day at the fair



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Fairgoers were treated to a variety of events at the Thomas County Fair on Thursday night. **ABOVE:** Taylor Finley was pulled off his feet during the bungee jump pull game, one of the more popular games at the fair. The Colby Lions normally operate the game, but American Youth Soccer was helping out last night while the Lions worked the

demolition derby. **BELOW LEFT:** Colby firefighters quickly extinguished a small fire in Chris Herrs' car at the demolition derby. Pictured are, from left to right, Chief Bob McLemore, Herrs, and firefighters Chuck Plumisto and Brandon Sabatka. **BELOW RIGHT:** Dalen Schlageck practiced his kick at the American Youth Soccer booth.



Fun continues

Fair board pleased with attendance

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

According to Mark Miller, Thomas County Fair Board President, the lack of a carnival hasn't hurt the grandstand shows or parade this year.

"Monday and Tuesday's rodeo crowds were fantastic," said Miller. Attendance was up a few people during both nights from last year's gate receipts, he said.

Miller said Tuesday's parade was the biggest he could remember. "I don't get to see the parade, being in front," he said, "but I heard nothing but positive comments."

The only downside Miller said he could see was the heat. "I think the barbecue Wednesday was down because of it." High heat and humidity kept people away from the annual event, put on by local business, community groups and the fair board.

The open events, in the solar building, were up according to Miller. "It was just fantastic, usually that building is not too busy, but this year it was full."

Open events are for garden fruits and vegetables, models, paintings and other items not in a specific category.

As for the carnival, Miller said the groups running booths, including the Colby Community College girls basketball team, Colby Lions, Shriners and American Youth Soccer had really stepped up and helped the board.

"We really appreciate all they've

//

...the crowds were fantastic."

Mark Miller, president
Thomas County Fair Board

done," he said.

Melda Moore, with the Colby Lions, said the bungee jump pull seemed to be a very popular attraction.

"We had 223 kids go through on Tuesday night," she said, adding that was the biggest night. Contestants try to see how far they can pull against a bungee cord before being pulled back into a padded chute.

Other events include skill events such as a basketball and baseball throw and a soccer kicking booth and a moonwalk for younger kids.

According to Laura Cook, fair board secretary, the games and booths will be there through Saturday night.

Thomas County Fair Board members are Mark Miller, president; Mark Anderson, vice-president; Laura Cook, secretary; Fred Stephenson, grounds manager; John Cranston, David Pabst, Marty Crampton, Nancy Rundel, Sue Draper, Vera Sloan, Gary Garrett, Stan Strange, Darlene Hatfield, Jim Malcolm, Darrel Dible, Cheryl Baird and Bill Shields.

House approves patients' rights legislation this week

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rallying behind President Bush, House Republicans passed patients' rights legislation that scaled back lawsuits against HMOs that the Senate-passed version would allow.

Potentially bruising House-Senate compromise talks were certain.

The administration celebrated the slim House approval of a deal brokered between Bush and Rep. Charles Norwood, R-Ga., who made the agreement without involvement of his original Democratic and moderate Republican allies.

The vote "brings us an important step closer to ensuring that patients get the care they need and that HMOs are held accountable," Bush said in a Thursday night statement that celebrated a second congressional triumph in as many nights. On Wednesday, the president won House approval for major elements of his energy plan.

For his part, Norwood said after the vote: "Like it or not we have to work

with this president, who has to sign this bill."

The bill grants patients a range of guarantees from health plans such as payment for emergency room visits, the right to appeal denials of care if they're harmed and access to courts, through more-limited avenues than the Senate's Democrats offer.

The fight over patients' rights will continue because congressional negotiators from the House and Senate must reconcile the bills' differences, mainly over how patients get to consumer-friendly state courts and how much money juries can award. There was no immediate word on when this House-Senate conference would begin, but in his statement, Bush pledged to extend "the hand of cooperation" to work out details. The Bush victory comes five weeks after Senate Democrats and his chief GOP nemesis, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, pushed their version of HMO reform through the Senate before the Fourth of July holiday.

Thomas County Fair 2001 Schedule of Events

Tonight

7 p.m. **RACES** Cruiser Classic

Saturday - August 4

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Release of livestock and clean up of barns. Release of all 4-H & Open Class Exhibits

11:30 a.m. Pioneer Day - VFW

7:00 p.m., **RACES** Thomas County Insurance Modified Shoot Out

Monday - August 7

7:00 p.m. Fair Clean-Up

Hepatitis outbreak prompts vaccination effort

HUTCHINSON (AP) — With the Kansas State Fair about a month away, Reno County health officials are launching a vaccination effort against an outbreak of hepatitis A that has afflicted 58 people since last fall.

Health department director Judy Seltzer told county commissioners Wednesday that she has two or three weeks to "build a wall of protection" in preparation of the fair's Sept. 7th opening.

"If we can concentrate our efforts now, we can close this window of infection before the fair begins," Seltzer said. The department is hunting down at-risk people for inoculation and encouraging restaurants to vaccinate their employees. Fair Manager Bill Ogg said he was concerned that the hepatitis A outbreak, if it continues, could hurt fair attendance. But he praised Seltzer's efforts to "take a proactive and progressive stance to put

this to bed."

Ogg said he has received several calls asking whether it was safe to come to Hutchinson.

"I'll tell anyone it's a safe and healthy and fun place to come to," Ogg said, adding that fair officials will re-emphasize the importance of cleanliness to concessionaires before the fair begins. Details of the hunt for at-risk people, those with the greatest risk for contracting or transmitting the disease,

were still being worked out. But getting to one of the most at-risk communities, drug users, is expected to be difficult, Seltzer said.

"It's not like we can post a sign saying 'vaccines today for drug users,'" she said. "We'll work with our contacts in the jail, in the (Kansas Department of Corrections), with drug rehabilitation centers and from our known contacts. You may see us in some strange places."

Briefly

Weather: No change

The weather outlook for the Colby area tonight is calling for lows in the mid 60s with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. On Saturday, highs will again near the 100 mark with winds from the south at 10 to 20 mph. Saturday night, the story sounds the same, with lows in the mid 60s and again the chance of thunderstorms at 20 percent. Sunday highs are expected in the 95 to 100 range with a chance of thunderstorms and lows in the mid 60s. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Fundraiser/giveaway postponed

The Adaline Delzeit fundraiser, sponsored by the Colby Jaycees, is being rescheduled to Sunday, Jan., 27, 2002. The drawing for the 2000 Grand Prix, and \$1,500 cash, which served as the fundraising tool, will be given away on that date in January. Originally, the drawing was planned for Saturday (Aug. 4) during the Thomas County Fair races;

however, due to low volume in ticket donations, the organization opted to hold the giveaway for a later date. For information or tickets, call Lori Haberer, at 462-6557.

Nine-Run-Run Saturday

The Sixth Annual Nine-Run-Run is planned for Saturday and entry forms are still available for the event, sponsored by Thomas County Emergency Medical Services, according to Kathi Wright, one of the coordinators. Events include a 5K run, 2K runs and walks and a 10K race. Registration will be at 8 a.m., followed by the 10K and 5K runs at 8:30. The 2K run and walk is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. and the awards ceremony is at 11. Cost is \$15 for runners and \$12 for walkers and includes a T-shirt. For questions, call Thomas County Emergency Medical Services at 462-4585.

Singles dance today

The Colby Singles Group will hold its regular monthly dance tonight from 8 to midnight, according to Don Birzer,

organizer. The entertainment will be provided by Montana Express, Kearney, Neb., and the dance is open to any single people or alumni. For information, call Birzer at 462-2127.

School physicals cancelled

Due to a scheduling conflict, the physicals planned for Colby Public Schools on Monday, Aug. 6, have been cancelled. The physicals will not be rescheduled, said Jeff Quenzer, Colby High School activities director/assistant principal and all athletes must have a physical on file before they can participate in practices that begin on Monday, Aug. 13. For questions, call 465-5300.

Commissioners meet Monday

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet Monday, Aug. 6, beginning at 9 a.m. in the courthouse. Thomas County Undersheriff Mike Baughn is on the agenda at 9:30 a.m., followed by the Sherman County Commissioners at 11 a.m., discussing household hazardous waste usage. All meetings are open to the public.

College board to meet

A special meeting of the Colby Community College Board of Trustees will be held on Monday at 4:30 p.m. in the fireside lounge of the student union to discuss "negotiations and other items."

Watermelon feed set

The Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce is holding a free watermelon feed as part of the Krazy Daze promotion from 4-8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9 on Franklin Avenue. Local merchants will be conducting a sidewalk sale, also. For more information, or to reserve booth space, call the chamber at 462-3401.

Preschool plans open house

An open house enrollment is planned at Puddle Duck Preschool, 520 W. 5th, from 4 to 7 p.m., Wednesday, Aug. 8. For information or questions, call Amy Jennings, director, 462-2603 or 462-8388.

