



COLBY FREE PRESS

More information is expected today on area manhunt

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Thomas County law enforcement officials got a break on Friday in connection with the manhunt that started with a gas skip last Wednesday in Grinnell and would later escalate into an ordeal whereby a local girl was held at knifepoint and tied up in her home south of Colby.

Sheriff Tom Jones said today that a fingerprint match had been found on the Mazda pickup on Thursday, which was also a stolen vehicle out of Wisconsin. This new development in the case, Jones said, was credited to a senior Kansas Bureau of Investigation agent in Great Bend, who discovered one of many good prints allegedly belonging to the male suspect taken from the pickup. Jones would not release the name of the man or where he was from, but did say he had just turned 21.

Since Wednesday, authorities have been looking for a man and woman.

The man, prior to identifying him through fingerprint analysis, was described as 5'7" tall, slender with brownish-blond hair. Authorities said he also has neck tattoos of oriental writing. The woman was said to be 120 lbs., with shoulder-length blonde hair and a noticeably freckled face.

"These two folks are not smart," Jones said. "They've just been lucky, and as of Friday, their luck is dwindling."

This morning, Jones said, his office was following up on some leads they received over the weekend while also filling out the prosecution paperwork on the entire incident.

Last Friday, the suspects were still thought to be driving a Jeep Cherokee stolen Wednesday in Hoxie, which followed the theft of a Ford Escort belonging to the 17-year-old Colby girl held at knifepoint.

More information was expected to be released later today, Jones said.

Minority population high in state prisons

WICHITA (AP) — Minorities account for about half of the jail and prison population in Kansas, new census figures show.

The figures also show that the percentage of people behind bars who are black is six times the percentage of black people in the overall population.

In its 2000 census, the U.S. Census Bureau found that Kansas has a minority population of 16 percent and a minority prison population of 47 percent.

The census also showed there are about 16,703 inmates in Kansas, and that about 34 percent of them are black. Blacks accounted for 5.7 percent of the state's population.

Criminologists say the racial disparity between the nation's prison and general populations has existed for years.

"For as long as I can remember, there has been a disparity with respect to race," said Brian Withrow, director of the Midwest Criminal Justice Institute at Wichita State University. "On its face, it looks as if it's a racial disparity — and it is."

"But socioeconomic status is a much better predictor" of who ends up behind bars.

The fact that minorities tend to be poorer than whites accounts for much of the disparity, criminal justice professionals say. The U.S. Census Bureau reported this year that the median net worth in the nation's white households

was \$49,030 in 1995. The median net worth — the value of assets minus debts — was \$7,073 in black households.

In Kansas, lawmakers tried to eliminate what they saw as racial bias in the criminal justice system in 1993, when they adopted new sentencing guidelines. The guidelines included a sentencing grid carrying specific penalties for every crime and criminal history score. The guidelines replaced a 23-year-old sentencing system that gave judges and prison officials broad discretion in determining how long criminals would remain behind bars.

When the guidelines were enacted in 1993, 39 percent of Kansas Department of Corrections inmates were black. The figure dropped to 38 percent by the end of 1997, to 37 percent by the end of 1998 and to 36 percent by the end of 2000.

Although critics say the figures show the guidelines are not working, they did have one positive effect, said Barbara Tombs, executive director of the Kansas Sentencing Commission.

"When two people come with the same crime and the same criminal history score, they're going to get the same sentence," she said.

Sedgwick County District Judge Greg Waller, a former member of the Sentencing Commission and a critic of the current sentencing system, said other factors contribute to the racial disparity in state prisons.

Council tentatively approves residential fence

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

The Colby City Council at its recent meeting found themselves in a quandary when Patrick and Mary Jane Stubblefield wanted to put a privacy fence on a street right-of-way at 285 S. Chickamauga.

The proposed fence would have

caused cars to pull out into the street to see oncoming cars; however, they also had to deal with a fence that was already there and blocking traffic.

"I've got real mixed feelings about this," said councilman John Bremenkamp. Both he and councilman Darrel Follis had looked the property over and thought the new fence would



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

ABOVE: Jane Johnson, (right), was one of the organizers for this year's Thomas County Relay for Life event. Shown with Jane, is her son, Doug Johnson, and his wife Melissa, reviewing various announcements,

along with the itinerary for the Friday and Saturday activities. BELOW: Earl Oard (right), Colby, who is a cancer survivor for more than 15 years, spoke with his friend, Jim Bartlett.

Relay event raises nearly \$10,000

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The Thomas County Relay for Life raised nearly \$10,000 for the American Cancer Society during the two-day event that started Friday night and concluded Saturday morning at Dennen Field in Colby.

Julie Brush

Although there were less participants than in year's past, said Debbie Quagliano, team recruiter, those attending had a lot of fun and about 600 luminaries were lit honoring those who are still fighting or have lost their battle with cancer. Julie Brush, event coordinator in the northwest Kansas area, said she was pleased with the local organizers.

"Bob and Shirley Coleman, who did most of the work this year, are awesome people," Brush said, "and the only reason this event keeps going is because of the volunteers and survivors concerned about cancer, which is the second leading cause of death in this country."

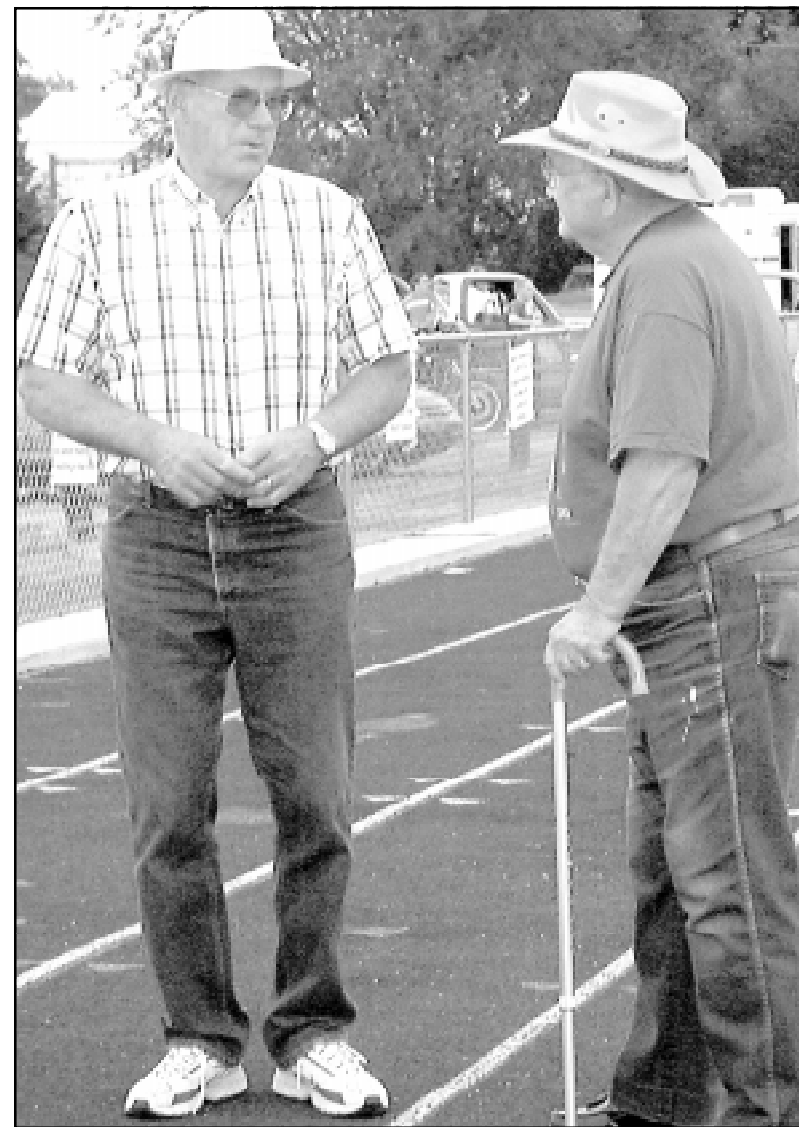
One local man, Earl Oard, said he was diagnosed with prostate cancer some 15 years ago. If not for the con-

tinued support of events like these to fund research for a cure, he might not have been here to celebrate his recent 60th wedding anniversary with his wife, Mary.

"There are so many success stories of strength and courage," said Brush, "that we want to make sure Thomas County's event gets bigger each year and volunteer recruitment is so important."

Along with the Coleman's work this year, others involved in the Relay for Life included Jane Johnson, Doug Johnson, Dave Jennings, and Mindy Hengen and Bill Luetke (providing music through CK Productions). Committee members were Brian and Debbie Quagliano, Cheryl Schwarz, Chuck and Dana Dempewolf, and Betty Secrest. Colby Police Officer Scott Sitton and his K-9, Capone, gave demonstrations, Joyce Armstrong from Goodland sang the National Anthem, Reed Hartford gave the opening prayer and Brush dedicated the event and offered a history of the relay committee. Others were recognized as corporate sponsors, relay participants and helping with set up and take down.

Brush said there are three more relays planned with the next one being held in Goodland on Friday, Aug. 17 and in Downs on Saturday, Aug. 18. The St. Francis Relay for Life is planned for Saturday, Aug. 25.



Throughout the nine-county area Brush oversees, many of those had record-breaking events. In Ellis County, for example, she said more than \$80,000 was raised to benefit the American Cancer Society and in Ness County, the total was \$25,000 on its

relay. "We need lots of volunteers to make this fund-raiser work," she said, "and there are so many ways a person can help with this annual event."

For questions or to volunteer, call Brush at (785) 454-3904.

Briefly

Weather: Very pleasant

Very nice weather is in store for the Colby area this week, according to the National Weather Service. Tonight, expect partly cloudy skies, lows 60-65 and south winds 10-15 mph. Tuesday, mostly cloudy, a 30 percent chance for thunderstorms, highs 85-90 and south winds 10-20 mph. Tuesday night, cloudy, a 40 percent chance for thunderstorms and lows in the lower 60s. Wednesday, thunderstorms possible, highs 75-85, and Wednesday night and Thursday, dry, lows 55-65 and highs 75-85.

Colby's weekend temperatures: highs, 92 on Sunday, 87 on Saturday and 77 on Friday; lows, 59 this morning, 58 on Sunday and 58 on Saturday. Total precipitation for the month stands at 0.05 inches.

The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 83 degrees. The records for Aug. 13: 107 in 1936 and 40 in 1920. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Awareness team meets Friday

The Community Awareness Team will meet at noon, Friday, Aug. 17, in the student union at Colby Community College. At the meeting, members will be discussing upcoming events, along with the need for volunteers to help with Red Ribbon Week, the team's All-Star Challenge, Great American Smokeout and other activities. The team, said Janet Worthy, coordinator, is continually looking for new members or people wanting to help with a specific event and, if interested, call her at 462-8152.

Meals On Wheels needs help

The Meals On Wheels program, a service of Citizens Medical Center, is again in need of volunteers. The program receives no outside financial support. Recipients pay a minimal fee for a hot, nutritious meal delivered to their home. Volunteers generally sign up for one day per week, every other month. However they do have some volunteers who share a position, i.e. each delivers three months out of

the year. A list of substitutes is available when a scheduled time is not convenient. If you can help, or are interested in finding out more about the program, please call Jeanene Brown, director of education/volunteers at Citizens Medical Center, Inc., (785) 462-4850.

Armstrong asked if the Stubblefields would be agreeable to an angled fence, giving drivers a better view.

The Stubblefields agreed and the council voted to approve a fence in the right-of-way, subject to approval by Armstrong and Greg Swob, city building inspector.

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before you can see traffic," he said.

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College board meets today

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will meet at 5 p.m. today in the Thomas Hall Administration Building. The budget hearing is the first item on the agenda. Refunding of money for Certificates of Participation will be discussed. Vehicle bids will be opened. Resignations and contracts will be approved. The board is expected to go into closed session to discuss negotiations. The board will also discuss any other item any member wishes to discuss. The meeting is open to the public.

Final enrollment Tuesday

Sacred Heart School is having its final enrollment on

Tuesday, said Dave Evert, principal. Times for enrollment and the walk-through will be from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. For information, call the school office at 462-2813.

Volleyball meeting Monday

There will be an informational meeting for students interested in Colby Middle School volleyball at 4 p.m., Monday, Aug. 20, in the elementary gymnasium, said Liz Strand, coach.

An optional practice is planned at 4 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 21 and official practice begins the first day of school, Wednesday, Aug. 22, following classes.

Childhood testing offered

Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center, Oakley is offering early childhood intervention testing, including eyesight, hearing and learning disability testing. All test are free. For more information or an appointment, call 785-672-3125.

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