



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Pride VS. junk

### Resolution to decade-old problem is being realized

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS  
*Colby Free Press*

LEVANT — With more junk cars than residents, Levant citizens are fed up.

But an end may be in sight after coping with one man's junk for over a decade.

Residents in this unincorporated town have tried for more than a decade to remedy a situation created by Tom Hillary's salvage yard through the Thomas County Sheriff's Office and Thomas County Commissioners. Only until last weekend have they been able to see some satisfaction.

The sheriff's office began on Sunday the task of towing away more than 50 vehicles which have been parked illegally for years.

"We tagged the vehicles for removal early last month," said Jim Engel, Thomas County deputy, "which gave Mr. Hillary 48 hours to relocate the vehicle that are parked illegally."

Due to the volume of cars that must be towed, only nine were taken away on Sunday. The vehicles are

being taken to Wagoner and Sons Salvage Yard in Colby, he said.

Plans were in place to move several a day until the problem was corrected.

One of the primary reasons the sheriff's office didn't act on the violations any sooner than now was because Hillary was hospitalized in Denver due to severe illness, Engel said.

The sheriff's office was told that once Hillary was out of the hospital, he would make plans to remove the cars last weekend with the help of a friend, but as of late Saturday, none of them had been removed.

It was at that point the sheriff's department took over and set up the plans for Sunday, Engel said.

This morning, an upset Hillary confronted the Thomas County Commissioners at their meeting.

He told them he had made plans to move the cars by next weekend and was upset because they started the project without his notification.

"I know there has been a great deal of confusion about the situation, and I want us all to sit down in public forum and iron out the details," said Sheriff Jones.



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Thomas County Deputy Sheriff Jim Engel oversaw the towing of vehicles from the Levant property of Tom Hillary on Sunday afternoon. The sheriff's

Hillary said that his daughter had come from Denver while he was in the hospital and Jones had given him an extension.

"Your daughter did not come to see me and no agreement was made. Somewhere someone is lying," said Jones.

After much discussion over the miscommunication, a plan was set forth to have all of the tagged vehicles moved by 5 p.m. on Sunday, July 21. If they are not, the Sheriff's Department will come in and do it.

"I want to make it clear that I'm not going to come back to the commissioners or you over this problem. If they are not taken care of by the deadline, I am

going to call the wreckers directly and take care of it," Jones said.

Thomas County owns and maintains the actual roadway and the right-of-way, Engel said in citing the law governing such situations.

"If there is a parked motor vehicle or other object on the roadway or the right-of-way, the Thomas County Sheriff and his deputies have the right to post the vehicle or object for removal at the end of a 48-hour time period," Jones said.

Jones said over the years the complaints over Hillary have been dealt with, but the problem continues to creep back up.

"Without being an incorporated

department started the removal after Hillary's original Saturday agreement failed to materialize.

town, Levant must rely on the Thomas County Commissioners, the Thomas County Sheriff and the Thomas County Attorney, to handle situations like these," said Dan McKiski, East Hale Township Clerk.

McKiski continued, "I feel that the commissioners have been worthless in helping us with the situation."

McKiski and others say they are tired of looking at the mess and just want their town to be clean.

Although action is now being taken, many Levant residents talked about their complaints and the problems that have arisen.

"My family has lived in the community for almost 19 years, and the prob-

lem just gets worse, especially as people get more complacent," said Alice Collett.

Thomas County Commissioner Glen Kersenbrock said of the situation, "Tom has been very sick, and we have taken that into consideration. Life is short anyway so people need to be a good neighbor"

Commissioners Ron Evans and Duane Dawes both agreed with Kersenbrock saying the commissioners don't want to be unnecessarily cruel to Hillary while he is ill.

Residents are aware of Hillary's illness, but recognize that the dura-

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### WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley areas

**The numbers**  
Sunday's high, 91  
Low this morning, 62  
Year ago today, 91 and 63  
Temperature at 10 a.m. today, 79

Rainfall past 24 hours, 0.00  
Month's rainfall, trace  
Soil temp, 83  
Records for July 15: 108 in 1925 and 47 in 1898

**The forecast**  
Today's high is expected to climb into the mid-90s with brisk southerly winds. Tonight, clear, lows in the mid-60s, south winds up to 15 mph. Tuesday, sunny, highs in the upper 90s, south winds 10-20 mph. Tuesday night, clear, lows in the upper 60s. Wednesday, sunny, highs in the upper 90s. Look for highs of 102 on Thursday and Friday. Colby and Mingo precipitation deficits detailed in the "It's Monday" column on page 2. (*Temperatures and precipitation are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, unless otherwise noted. Forecast is from the National Weather Service.*)

## Thomas County rodeo princess addresses fair board

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS  
*Colby Free Press*

Members of the Thomas County Fair board had the opportunity to listen to the achievements of Lisa Jones, Thomas County's 2001 Rodeo Princess at Thursday night's meeting.

Jones, who is running for Thomas County Rodeo Queen this year, told members how the opportunity to participate in rodeo pageantry has enhanced her life.

"Being involved in the pageants has helped a lot," she said.

"It has helped me with my speaking skills, and has prepared me in many other ways such as meeting new people, learning to use my time wisely,

and getting the opportunity to travel," Jones said.

Jones said that she feels the Thomas County Rodeo is as big an event as many other well known rodeos.

She encouraged the board to come up with a theme and possible logo to help promote the rodeo.

Jones said the theme and logo would help make a name for the rodeo and draw in larger crowds.



Lisa Jones

In the absence of President Mark Miller, Vice President Mark Anderson presided over the meeting.

A concern was also raised at the meeting about the public's knowledge of the Thomas County Amusement Association.

Nancy Rundel, board member, said she was concerned that people in the community thought the amusement association was a part of the fair board.

The group expressed the fact that people need to know that they are separate entities that will be working closely together to better the Thomas County Free Fair.

In other business:

• Mutton bustin' will be held this

year both nights before the Rodeo.

• A Powder Puff division will be added to the demolition derby.

• Rundel told the board about some tears on the Quick Lube sign on the back of the catwalk.

The warranty on the sign will be checked into.

• The board established that the fairgrounds lock-down times should remain at 11 p.m. due to the fact people exiting the grandstand events may want to look at exhibits or eat in the commercial building.

• The triple sink for the kitchen in the Thomas County 4-H building has come in and will be picked up from Hays on Wednesday. Larry Brown's

bid of \$130 was accepted and he will be installing the sink shortly.

• Colby Community College has still not removed their manure pile from the county fairgrounds.

Consequently, the board established that this needs to happen in the next week or the college will forfeit their \$500 deposit.

• The climbing wall will be available during the week of the fair and the board has arranged to have a couple of other rides from Lebanon to be here as well.

• The board agreed to ask Sheriff Tom Jones to hire two deputies to work security at the grandstands each evening of the fair.

## Hays minister pleads no contest for possession in drug case

HAYS (AP) — With several members of his congregation in the courtroom, a Hays clergyman pleaded no contest to a methamphetamine charge.

Daniel A. Dominguez, 37, was arrested May 21 in his home adjacent to the Church of Christ, which hired him early last year.

Originally charged with four offenses, he entered the no-contest plea Friday to a single count of possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute.

The charge carries a possible sentence of 14 to 51 months in prison, but the prosecution has asked for 18

months of community corrections, Ellis County District Judge Ed Bouker told Dominguez. No sentencing date was set.

According to court documents, police received a tip that Dominguez was using methamphetamine and sent an undercover agent to talk to him about

making a batch of the drug. Dominguez agreed to supply some of the ingredients on condition that he get some of the meth for his own use.

Four days after Dominguez handed over the supplies, the drug investigator gave him a plastic bag containing a white powder, telling him it was meth-

amphetamine. Dominguez put the bag of powder into his pocket, and police moved in to arrest him.

Dominguez served as minister of a Church of Christ in Marshall, Mo., before being hired by the Hays church, according to a member of the Hays congregation.

## Briefly

### Special concert at Oakley

OAKLEY — Scott Brown of "Brand of the Cross Ministries" will be holding a free Christian concert at 7:30 p.m. at the Logan County grandstand in Oakley on Tuesday. In addition to singing, his concert schedule is laced with rodeo competition. Brown is from Ringgold, Ga., and travels the country performing. As a rodeo cowboy, he has recently qualified in steer wrestling for the Southeastern circuit finals of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association. Everyone in the area is invited to attend his performance.

### Blood drive slated next week

The Thomas County American Red Cross is sponsoring a community blood drive from noon until 6 p.m., Wednesday, July 24 at the Comfort Inn meeting room, 2225 S. Range Ave., Colby. To make an appointment, organizers ask that participants call -800-GIVE-LIFE and walk-ins are welcome.

### Post offices seek applicants

Every few years the United States Postal Service accepts applications for those interested in taking entrance exams for positions ranging from carriers and clerks to mail handlers, mail processors and mark-up clerks. This opportu-

nity is now available in the Colby and surrounding area post offices, said James McDonald, Colby postmaster. Beginning today and through Friday, July 26, people interested can either apply by calling 1-866-999-8777 or 1-800-800-8776 or using Internet at [www.usps.com/employment](http://www.usps.com/employment) and referencing "Announcement No. 31915."

### School board meets Tuesday

The Colby school board will meet Tuesday, July 16 at 7 p.m. in the board room of the administration building. Items on the agenda include re-organization of the school board for the 2002-2003 school year, approval of handbooks for students and teachers, approving the school district's membership in the Western Plains Arts Association, waiver of certain policies to allow state and local law enforcement agencies to utilize the administration building for training purposes; approval of out-of-district student requests and approval of agreements for Head Start for 2002-2003. The public is invited to attend.

### Teams sought for Relay for Life

Teams are now forming for this year's annual "Relay For Life" event in Thomas County to benefit the American Cancer Society. "The event is a fun-filled, overnight event that mobilizes communities throughout the country to cel-

brate survivors, remember loved ones and raise money for the fight against cancer," said Tina Dreiling, team captain chairman. "Relay for Life," will be begin at 7 p.m., Friday, Aug. 16 and conclude at 7 a.m., Saturday, Aug. 17. All activities will be held at Dennen Field. For questions on how to organize a team, call Dreiling at 462-8677.

### Drought/water issues focus of city

The Colby City Council will hold its regular meeting on Tuesday, July 16, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers. Items on the agenda include regulatory actions under the drought/emergency contingency plan and approval of 2001 charge-offs and review of set-offs. For questions, call 462-4410.

### Nine-Run-Run apps available

The Thomas County Emergency Medical Services is hosting its seventh annual Nine-Run-Run, which will be held on Saturday, Aug. 3, beginning at 7 a.m. with registration. Those interested in participating in either the 10K run, 5K and 2 K fun runs, or the 53K bicycle ride, are encouraged to call the office at (785) 462-4585 or stop by the facility at 1275 S. Franklin, Colby to pick up a registration form.



## Thumbs Up!



READERS: "Thumbs Up" will appear on the front page each Monday herein. We felt it would be a good, positive way to kick off each week. In the past, this weekly salute appeared in the Friday edition. Thanks! — Tom A. Dreiling, Publisher

✓Kerry Wark — first president of the newly organized Thomas County Amusement Association.

✓Lucille Jennings — for your courtesy and accommodation while our camera person was in the museum at Oakley.

✓Nancy Elizabeth Barrett Walker — on your ordination.

✓Nine-Run-Run Organizers — good luck with this year's event.

✓Lucille Bruns and Pat Koster of Winona — Kris certainly made you proud.

✓Shad Sanders, Jamea "Sanders" Sale and Pat Ziegelmeier — very good Picnic in the Park performance.

✓Shirley Malcolm and Betty Amos — nice honor.

✓Mark Pursel — a well-deserved \$10,000.

✓Scott Hubbell — a really cool 'Sound of fame.'

✓Willis Funk of Oakley — enjoy the Free Press.

✓Chandler Wieland — welcome back!

