



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Scary scene But no injuries in rollover

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS
Colby Free Press

It wasn't quite as bad as it appeared to passersby, and it's not all that common to see a semi laying on its side in the middle of a highway. But that was the scene confronted by Interstate-70 travelers in south Colby Thursday afternoon.

Traffic was slowed down to a snail's paced for nearly four hours after a semi rolled across the east-bound lanes of I-70.

The truck rolled at 4:25 p.m. and skidded across open lanes leaving only a small passage for through traffic.

According to the Kansas Highway

Patrol, the semi was removed from the roadway shortly after 8 p.m..

Both the driver, Mary Voelker, 38, of Corpus Christi, Texas, and her team driver, Gregory Ozant, 37, of Cedar Park, Texas, escaped uninjured.

A Kansas Highway Patrolman said today that while driving, Voelker, "barley dropped off" the pavement into the median. After over-correcting, she lost control of the semi. Ozant was in the sleeper of the truck at the time of the accident.

Officers worked to maintain through traffic in the partially open lane on the north, while the contents of the semi trailer, which was clothing, was removed.



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Emergency personnel worked at the scene to remove the driver, Mary Voelker, from the semi. Voelker was uninjured.

Thomas County's future includes giving smallpox vaccinations

By DARREL PATTILLO
Colby Free Press

A vaccination program against the smallpox virus is expected to get underway in Thomas County in the near future, according to Kathy Ryan, director of the Thomas County Health Department.

"I don't have a definite date yet," she said. "It will be into 2003 before we start."

Ryan said that initially first responders will be inoculated. "These will be key law enforcement personnel, hospital workers, and health department personnel."

These are people that would be immediately affected if they had to respond to a disaster."

She said 300 to 400 first responders would be vaccinated at first. This would be followed by a second group of 300 to 400 secondary personnel.

"Keep in mind that's for all of Thomas County," Ryan said. The vaccine will be offered to the general public, but she said it won't be until close to

2004.

She added that Thomas County isn't considered a high-risk area, but that she is following guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control, in Atlanta, Ga. and that the county does have its bio-terrorism plan in place.

"Our plan is a county-wide plan that deals with procedures in case of an attack," Ryan said. "It's a constantly evolving plan. This isn't something you can just write and then put on a shelf."

Communication will be the key in any kind of situation, Ryan said. "We need to make sure that we have better communication with the state in the event of a disaster. I have a pager that I carry just for that kind of situation."

Ryan recommended that even if you are old enough to have been vaccinated as a child against the smallpox virus, you should consider getting another shot. "Immunity wanes, of course, as you get older," she said.

Smallpox vaccination was stopped in 1972.

Sebelius might have to back off of promise

TOPEKA (AP) — Two months after she promised an "absolute commitment" to education, Gov.-elect Kathleen Sebelius isn't sure she can avoid proposing cuts in spending on universities, community colleges and technical schools.

Sebelius said Thursday it is too early for her to know what she'll propose for higher education — or other parts of state government. She said most of her time recently has been spent on fiscal issues.

"It's a grim situation, so I'm not prepared at this point to tell you how we're going to end up, because I don't know exactly where the bottom lines are going to end up," Sebelius said.

Current Gov. Bill Graves has imposed two rounds of budget cuts and taken other measures to prevent a deficit in the state general fund projected at \$312 million for June 30. The \$4.1 billion general fund is the largest source of money for government programs and where the state deposits most of its tax dollars. The entire budget, including federal dollars, is about \$10.8 billion.

The higher education system's appropriation of state tax dollars for the current fiscal year has been cut by \$33.6 million, or 4.8 percent.

Sebelius said she will not propose

any cuts in state aid to public schools, which consumes more than \$2.3 billion.

Asked whether she plans the same for higher education, Sebelius told reporters, "I don't know at this point, frankly."

The commitment that I made throughout the campaign was I would not cut public education, which was defined as really K through 12."

But after an October 16 meeting during the campaign with the state's Board of Regents, Sebelius said her commitment to public education included higher education.

Her remarks were notable because her Republican opponent, Tim Shallenburger, wouldn't promise during the same meeting to avoid cuts in higher education.

Sebelius also told the regents she remains committed to finding extra money promised by legislators when they reorganized the state's higher education system in 1999.

"Part of what we have is an opportunity to make some fairly dramatic shifts in this state, to reframe the way we see government, the way we deliver services," Sebelius said during the October meeting.

"My priority is that begins with an absolute commitment to education."

Leno aids McPherson College

MCPHERSON (AP) — Jay Leno fans who visit the replica set of "The Tonight Show" that is part of a new attraction in New York City will be supporting a car restoration program at McPherson College.

The school in this central Kansas community has gained national attention for teaching students how to restore antique and classic automobiles.

Leno, an avid classic car collector, for several years has helped fund scholarships for students enrolled in the school's automotive restoration technology program — touted as the only program of its kind offered at a four-year college. The proceeds from the attraction, which opened last weekend, will help fund more scholarships. NBC designed several replica television sets, where fans can pay \$5 and get a picture taken with the likeness of a star.

At "The Tonight Show" set, Leno fans can pay for a picture that makes them appear to be a guest on Leno's show.

"It was just wonderful to be remembered by Jay," said Bob Knechel, the college's vice president.



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

A semi blocked traffic in the eastbound lanes of Interstate 70 in south Colby for nearly four hours Thursday afternoon. Officers working the

accident directed traffic around the end of the semi trailer in the north lane, although it was blocking half of that lane as well.

Administration wants U.N. to authorize war

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration, concluding that Saddam Hussein is not serious about disarmament, turned to convincing the U.N. Security Council that it should declare Iraq in violation of world demands and authorize war.

"This situation cannot continue," Secretary of State Colin Powell said Thursday in describing Iraq's weapons declaration, submitted two weeks ago, as 12,200 pages of lies, gaps and omissions.

Unless Iraq "comes clean" in the weeks ahead, "I'm afraid we should be very discouraged with respect to the prospects of finding a peaceful solution," Powell said.

If military conflict is now more likely, it is not imminent, other senior U.S. officials said.

President Bush will spend the next five or six weeks in pursuit of more evidence against Saddam while mass-

ing troops outside Iraq for a potential winter assault, these officials said on condition of anonymity.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld has yet to sign the deployment order, but the officials said as many as 50,000 U.S. troops may be sent to the Persian Gulf region in early January to reinforce the 50,000 U.S. military personnel already there.

The United States will continue to analyze Saddam's self-inventory but has so far concluded that its omissions constitute a "material breach" of the U.N. resolution that compelled Iraq to disclose its deadly weapons, Powell said.

Although the term "material breach" is widely interpreted as a prelude to war, Powell said there is no "calendar deadline" to disarm Iraq by force.

Bush was expected to offer his own public comment on Iraq's declaration, largely echoing Powell, during a meet-

ing Friday afternoon with U.N., Russian and European Union diplomats who are in Washington to consult on the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

Bush could also use the meeting to lobby the foreign ministers and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Iraq, White House aides said.

Powell and John Negroponte, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, were taking the lead in what White House spokesman Ari Fleischer called the "deliberate and consult" phase of Bush's showdown with Saddam.

This crucial stage comes to a head Jan. 27 when the U.N. weapons inspectors report their findings and Bush decides whether to go to war.

Negroponte said he would consult with the Security Council and other American allies, while Powell promised the United States would give U.N. inspectors additional intelligence to make their hunt for Iraq's allegedly

hidden weapons "more targeted and effective."

Powell also insisted that the inspectors spirit Iraqi scientists and their families out of Iraq, where they might testify freely — and in safety — to Saddam's pursuit of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, as allowed for under the U.N. resolution.

U.S. lawmakers counseled against a rush to war.

The top Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Ike Skelton of Missouri, commented that Iraq's incomplete declaration, by itself, "is not enough to justify military force."

Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Thursday that it is "important the United States stay patient here, stay within the framework of the United Nations, work with allies, and see where we go."

Looks like Lott likely to face test

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Bill Frist of Tennessee won public endorsements from three GOP colleagues in his emerging bid to supplant Trent Lott as Senate Republican leader, as Lott continued his stubborn but tenuous battle to retain his No. 1 job.

Frist, a staunch ally of President Bush and the man who headed the GOP's successful effort to snatch control of the Senate in last month's elections, said he will "likely step forward" and challenge Lott should most sena-

tors support his bid. Virginia GOP Sens. John Warner and George Allen said Frist was definitely a candidate.

In addition, candidacies were possible by Republican Sens. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky or Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania. Both men have been among Lott's staunchest supporters.

For his part, Lott wasn't backing down.

Two weeks after lamenting that segregationist Strom Thurmond had lost

his 1948 presidential bid, he made calls from his home state of Mississippi to senators in hopes of retaining the leadership post he has held for six years.

"Trent Lott will be the majority leader in the next Congress," Lott spokesman Ron Bonjean said.

The 51 GOP senators in the Congress convening Jan. 7 plan to meet the previous day to decide who will lead them, and it will take 26 votes to prevail.

Briefly

Reminder for recyclers

The Thomas County Recycling Center is reminding everyone that Christmas wrapping paper, gift bags and cookie tins can be recycled at the facility, 720 E. College Dr. (located under the City of Colby's blue water tower). Recycling officials are also asking that people depositing wrapping paper and gift bags, use the chipboard bins and for cookie tins use the tin bins. For questions, call Lynette Koon, (785) 462-7482 (Ext. 39).

McLemores to perform Sunday

In appreciation to the community for support of the "Pickin' on the Plains" Bluegrass Festival, the McLemore Family will present a holiday concert starting at 7 p.m., Sunday, at Fairview Estates. Admission is free and the public is cordially invited to attend.

Pool holiday hours noted

The Colby Community College swimming pool, which closed

on Tuesday, will remain closed through today. The pool reopens on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 21-24, for open swim from 4 to 6 p.m. and again on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 26-29. The pool will be closed until further notice beginning on Monday, Dec. 30. For questions, call the college at 462-3984.

Prairie Senior party is Saturday

Prairie Senior Living Complex will hold its annual Christmas party for friends and relatives of the residents on Saturday, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the facility. There will be refreshments and entertainment during the two-hour celebration, officials said.

Landfill hours announced

The Thomas County landfill will be closed on Christmas day and the day after, said Larry Jumper, supervisor. The landfill will be open at its regular hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday, Tues-

day and Friday of Christmas week. The landfill will also operate on its regular weekend schedule of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. For questions, contact Jumper at 462-8139.

City announces holiday schedule

The City of Colby sanitation department will not be operating on Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 24 and 25 due to the Christmas holiday. For residents whose normal trash day is Tuesday or Wednesday, it will be picked up on Thursday along with the Thursday route, said Gerry Bieker, public works director.

For questions call the Public Works Department at 462-4420.

Delivery scheduled for Saturday

SHARE delivery is set for Saturday at 9 a.m. in the Sacred Heart School gym. Items in the share include: bacon, breaded chicken tenders, fish, little smokies, ground beef, potatoes, baby carrots, lettuce, broccoli, apples, oranges, tangerines and red pears. For questions call Anna Fyfe at 462-3733.

WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley area

The numbers
Thursday's high, 45
Low this morning, 12
Year ago today, 49 & 13
Temperature at 10:45 today, 38
Records for Dec. 20: 73 in 1894,
-13 in 1924

The forecast
Tonight, cloudy, lows in the upper teens, north winds up to 15 mph. Saturday, partly sunny, highs in the lower 40s, north winds again up to 15 mph. Saturday night and Sunday, clear, lows in the upper teens and highs right around the 40-degree mark. Monday, partly cloudy early, then becoming cloudy, a very slight chance for light snow, highs in the mid 30s.

