



COLBY FREE PRESS

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They're off to the big show!

Colby Community College students and faculty held a pep rally for Coach Steve Lampe and the wrestlers shortly after noon today in the student union as they prepared to leave for the national championships in Rochester, Minn. Lampe, pictured in the forefront, introduced the wrestlers who will be competing in the National Junior College Athletic Association Tournament beginning Friday. The Trojans qualified a full team. A large number of fans showed up for the send off.

MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Orange alert brings many questions to Red Cross

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The questions continue. Following the recent heightened alert — orange — by the federal government, many people in Colby and Thomas County have been calling the Red Cross office with questions about what this means and how can they protect themselves against terrorism.

“We are at an orange alert status,” said Molly Oliver, Thomas County American Red Cross disaster chair. “This means we are at high risk of terrorist attacks.”

Oliver said the local Red Cross Chapter has handouts that can help

people and their families prepare for the unexpected, along with information and procedures on disaster supplies, kits, planning and more.

“The key is to eliminate stress by being informed and prepared and the more we all know the more comfortable we can be during this time,” Oliver said.

Along with calling or stopping by the local office, Oliver also said everyone should be aware of the five action steps when preparing for a disaster.

Those steps include making a family disaster plan, building a kit in the event of a disaster, get train-

ing on first aid, CPR and disaster education courses, volunteer by giving your time and giving blood to ensure adequate blood supplies will be available.

“It’s important to have a family disaster plan,” she said, “because disasters can strike quickly and without warning. It can force you to evacuate your neighborhood or confine you to your home.”

Disasters can knock out water, gas, electricity or telephones and people need to have a plan since relief workers cannot reach everyone right away, Oliver said.

Highlighting some of the steps or questions when considering a disaster plan, people first need to know how to prepare and they can do that by calling the Red Cross office.

They should also know the town’s warning signals and what they sound like, what to do with animals since they are not allowed inside shelters, and what to do if an attack or disaster occurs while at work or when children are in school.

Other advice offered included teaching every family member how and when to shut off utilities at the main switches, determining the best escape routes from the home, finding safe places depending on the disaster and stocking emergency supplies.

Everyone should practice the plan, Oliver said.

Children should be quizzed every six months, fire and emergency evacuations should be done often, water and stored food should be replaced every six months and testing of smoke alarms and fire extinguishers at least once a year.

For specific effects of chemical and biological agents, Oliver and Mary Smith, Thomas County Red Cross director, recommended people contact the Centers for Disease Control at: www.btcdc.gov, the U.S. Department of Energy at: www.energy.gov, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at:

www.hhs.gov, Federal Emergency Management Agency at: www.ms.fema.gov, or Environmental Protection Agency at: www.epa.gov

For local information, Smith said to call the Thomas County Red Cross Chapter at (785) 462-7161 or 462-6133 or stop by the office at 350 S. Range, Colby.

Information is also available through the American Red Cross website: www.redcross.org.

Residents of Thomas County can also call 866-GETINFO, which is a source of information for preparedness activities during this heightened alert, Oliver said.

Chase covering two counties ends with Colorado pair in jail

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

A high speed chase covering more than 40 miles across two counties ended near the Levant exit on Interstate 70, Colby police officials said.

Two Colorado men were arrested and charged with felony fleeing, attempting to elude a police officer, reckless driving and possession of

stolen property.

Mark Bryan Alexander, 45 and James Eldren Rosencrans, Jr. 19, both of Colorado Springs, were arrested late last week and are still being held at the Thomas County jail.

In addition to charges here, the two men are also believed to have stolen a car in Jefferson County, Colo. and Cheyenne, Wyo., said

Gary Shull, Colby police investigator.

Authorities in Wyoming told Colby police that Rosencrans and Alexander were also alleged to have dumped the stolen car from Jefferson County after a police chase there as well.

Prior to the chase, the suspects were first sought by Sherman County officials who notified other

area law enforcement agencies of a gas skip, advising them to be on the lookout for a white Ford Tempo.

A Colby police officer spotted the car on Interstate 70 traveling eastbound near one of the city’s interchanges, Shull said.

When the officer called other law enforcement officials for help, the chase ensued near the Oakley exit about 14 miles further east.

In an attempt to escape from authorities, Alexander exited the interstate, crossed the bridge and headed back westbound still on Interstate 70, Shull said.

Colby officers, deputies from the Thomas County Sheriff’s Office and the Kansas Highway Patrol tried to stop the car by spiking the tires.

“Ultimately three of the tires

were deflated,” Shull said, “and the car continued traveling west to the Levant exit, then headed east on U.S. 24.”

A deputy with the Thomas County Sheriff’s office was able to get in front of the car, forcing it to stop in the 1100 block of U.S. 24, he said. Shull said the two men could also face more charges in Colorado, if extradited.

Ouster of county treasurer sought

TOPEKA (AP) — The district attorney filed petitions to oust Shawnee County Treasurer Rita Cline from office Monday, alleging she improperly used public money to finance a senior-care franchise.

But Cline called the allegations a personal vendetta by District Attorney Robert Hecht.

“It’s an absolute lie and he knows it,” Cline said of Hecht. “Ain’t nobody stole any money, except perhaps him. I know I ain’t stole any money.”

Hecht’s office filed three petitions Monday in Shawnee County District Court, seeking Cline’s suspension from office while the ouster is being heard, her removal from office permanently, and the return of \$10,000 Cline took from her office’s Motor Vehicle Fund to pay her attorney, Don Hoffman.

Hecht said he hopes the court will set an ouster hearing within two weeks.

The petitions accuse Cline and Kate Carty, former manager of the

treasurer’s motor vehicles office at the White Lakes Mall in south Topeka, of conspiring to defraud the county for personal gain.

Hecht says the pair used the \$21,915 Cline authorized to buy out Carty’s employment contract to finance a senior-care business the pair started in Springfield, Mo.

Cline said she is considering filing a civil lawsuit asking for damages for harassment.

She said Hecht is undermining her legal authority.

Open meetings act faces changes

TOPEKA (AP) — A bill endorsed by a House committee Monday would require advisory committees and task forces created by incoming governors to have open meetings.

The measure was inspired by criticism of a “top to bottom” review of state government initiated by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius after her election last November. Five teams appointed by Sebelius held 18 closed meetings before she took office in January.

The House Ethics and Elections Committee endorsed the bill on voice vote, sending it to the House floor for debate.

The bill originally applied to any task force or advisory committee created at the state or local level by an official or someone who has just been elected.

Under the bill, advisory panels, task forces and commissions appointed following the election of the incoming governor would be subject to the open meetings act.

Briefly

Sacred Heart sets enrollment

Sacred Heart School will be holding kindergarten and pre-school enrollment on Wednesday, March 5, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the school lobby at 1150 W. 6th St. School officials ask that parents or guardians bring a copy of their child’s birth certificate, immunization records, social security number, and physical. For questions, call 462-2813.

Kindergarten enrollment scheduled

Kindergarten pre-enrollment for the 2003-04 school year at Colby Grade School is from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday in the conference room at the school. For questions or what paperwork is necessary, call 465-5100.

Childbirth education series to begin

The next Colby Childbirth Education series will start on Thursday, March 6 will subsequent classes scheduled on March 20 and 27, and April 3. They will be held in the Health

Science Building on the Colby Community College Campus. More information is available at 462-6845, ask for Tina Schrick.

Red Cross classes planned

The Thomas County Chapter of the American Red Cross announces the following classes: a first aid course from 6 to 10 p.m., Thursday, and a two-day instructor training course on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 11 and 12, with times to be announced. Classes will also be offered by arrangement for a “Ready, Set, Roll” class to train drivers in the emergency response vehicle drivers and an introductory class to disaster services. To enroll, call the Red Cross office at (785) 462-7161. Courses are held at the Thomas County Office Complex.

Cemetery board meets Thursdays

The Colby Cemetery District board meetings will be held

on Thursdays for the next couple of months, reminded Relda Galli, board member. The meetings will continue to be held at the Thomas County Courthouse beginning at 2 p.m. Board members should note that Thursday meetings include March 20 and April 24. For questions, call Galli at 462-3670.

Regulations affect local landfill

New Kansas Department of Health and Environment regulations, dictate that only trees and shrubs will be allowed in the Thomas County landfill burn pile. All other wood products, including unpainted wood and pallets, must be placed in the construction and demolition area, said Larry Jumper, supervisor. All debris that enters the construction and demolition area is subject to the \$10 per ton tipping fee, with a \$2 minimum, he said.

Landfill hours noted

The Thomas County landfill’s winter hours are: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.



Expect snow

Tonight...patchy fog with a slight chance of snow, otherwise cloudy. Lows near 10. East wind around 10 mph. Chance of snow 20 percent. Wednesday...snow likely. Total accumulation. around 2 inches. Highs in the mid 20s. East wind around 10 mph. Chance of snow 60 percent. Wednesday night...cloudy with a slight chance of snow. Lows in the upper teens. Chance of snow 20 percent. Thursday...mostly cloudy. Highs in the lower 30s. Thursday night...cloudy with a slight chance of snow. Lows near 20. Chance of snow 20 percent.

The numbers
Monday’s high, +8
Low this morning, -4
Soil temperature, 33
Year ago, 25 and 14
Month’s snowfall, 5 inches
Month’s precipitation, 0.36
Records, 77 in 1917 and -20 in 1960

