



COLBY FREE PRESS

10 pages

Colby bank hit by a con artist

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Two bank tellers in at least two different towns were caught off guard by a quick change artist, and his "get-away driver," who managed to lift an undisclosed amount of money in both Colby and Limon, Colo.

Police officials here are not sure if the pair has pulled the scam elsewhere, but they are asking everyone to be on the look out for the suspects.

The incident in Colby was reported at about 11 a.m., Thursday, said Gary Shull, Colby Police Department investigator, after Farmers and Merchant's Bank called in the theft.

"Technically, the man in the bank would be considered a quick change artist," Shull said, "and when he is arrested he will probably be charged with theft by deception."

The way the quick change artist worked in both Colby and Limon was that he came into the banks with \$50 bills and asked the teller to exchange them for \$100 bills. Then the man decided the \$100 bills were too big and asked for \$20 bills instead, said Shull.

The deception occurred when after the teller had counted out the \$100 bills and had them laying on the counter, she then reached down to a lower shelf underneath to get more \$20 bills.

It was at that point, Shull said, that the con artist was able to lift some of the \$100 bills off the stack without the teller knowing he had done it.

After counting out the \$20 bills, the teller put the \$100 bills in the drawer unaware that the suspect had "lifted" some prior to the final exchange.

It wasn't until later that the teller realized the theft, he said.

As of Thursday, Shull said, the suspects were seen driving a black Jeep Cherokee with possibly gold-colored striping and no luggage rack on top.

"The license plate was a white background," he said, "with numerical ones in the plate number."

The suspect in the bank is described as having a dark complexion, wearing a short sleeved dark green over white T-shirt. He was wearing either glasses or sunglasses on top of his head and his shorts were khaki-green, according to witnesses.

"He appeared to be 27 to 33 years old," Shull said, "and his English



A camera at Farmers and Merchant's Bank in Colby caught the "quick change artist" on film. The unidentified man, along with his driver, are wanted for questioning in Thursday's incident. Anyone with information should call the Colby Police Department at 462-4460, said Gary Shull, police investigator.

was hard to understand." Other features included dark hair, about 5'5" tall, medium build, wearing a loose fitting watch on his left wrist and a ring on his right hand. He had no facial hair.

Witnesses could not describe the "get-away driver," waiting in the Jeep.

"We initially sent broadcasts to area agencies to watch for these suspects and later it was expanded to all Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado authorities," he said.

The second incident the police in Colby became aware of happened at a bank in Limon, Colo., at about 1:45 p.m. (CDT).

"It was the same type of theft," Shull said.

It wasn't that the tellers here or in Limon were confused by the quick change artist's request, Shull said today, it was more like the man just took the money off the counter while the teller was preoccupied making the money exchanges.

In both situations, there were no threats or injuries to the bank employees or customers.

For questions or to report any information, call the police department at 462-4460.

Tire(d) guys



Brad Wildeman, Colby High School's head football coach, held a football camp on the practice field at the school Monday through Thursday of this week. The camp was open to all middle and high school athletes with drills and fundamentals highlighted. One such drill involved a tractor tire relay race between the linebackers and

running backs. The exercise was to test "core strength" and promote teamwork. One of those involved in the drill, Andrew Toth, lifted the tire end over end while Dusty Quenzer (left) and Brady Strange (61) shouted words of encouragement to keep him on task.

PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Barbecue still part of fair week

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

There's still going to be a free barbecue at the Thomas County Free Fair.

The barbecue will be at 5:30 p.m. next Wednesday at the fairgrounds. It will include barbecued beef and all the trimmings.

Thomas County Fair Board member Audrey Hines said more than 2,700 people attended last year's feed.

Despite some controversy over Farmers and Merchants Bank not sponsoring this year, Hines said the barbecue will still be a fixture at the fair.

"We don't want any hard feelings about the barbecue," she said.

The McDonald Lions Club will be preparing the meat and the Colby, Rexford and Brewster clubs will help serve at the event, Hines said.

"We wanted it cooked on the fairgrounds," Hines said.

She said the board doesn't want people to think that the barbecue

isn't a Thomas County event.

"They (the McDonald club) know what they're doing," Hines said. "They came to us." It will be a fund raiser for the club.

She said there was a fair bidding process because the Lions Club and John Anderson, who has done the barbecue in the past, both submitted proposals. Anderson gave a higher proposal and the fair board selected the McDonald Lions Club to cook the meat instead because their proposal was lower.

She said the board asked Farmers and Merchants Bank if it wanted to sponsor, but they declined.

There won't be a major sponsor for the event. Hines said the barbecue normally costs about \$7,000 to put on. However, two steers have been donated — one fed out by Hoxie Feedyard and another by Cranston Cattle of Colby.

Hines said if anyone had any comments or questions about the barbecue they can contact her or any of the other members of the fair board.

Carnival help is still needed

The Thomas County Amusement Association is looking for approximately 70 volunteers to run games during the week of the Thomas County Fair.

Games will run from 7-11 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and from 7- midnight on

Friday and Saturday. Games will be ready, but will need just a little bit of help with prize set up around 6:30 p.m.

"We are looking for individuals, any group or organization or families. All interested parties should call Jada Tubbs at 462-3401.

Thomas County Fair SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Saturday, July 26, 9:00 a.m. - Open Class Horse Show

Sunday, July 27, 1:00-5:00 p.m. - Booth Construction

Monday, July 28, 8:00-10:00 a.m. - Booth Construction

9:00 a.m. - 4-H Horse Show

7:00 p.m. - Dog Agility Competition in the Livestock Arena

Tuesday, July 29, 7:30 a.m. - 4-H Livestock Weigh-In

11:00 a.m. Deadline for entry of 4-H Exhibits

8:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. - Open Class Entries Taken

11:30 a.m. - Judging of all 4-H Exhibits

2:00 p.m. - Open Exhibits Judged

2:00 p.m. - Cat, Rabbit, Hand Pet & Poultry Show

5:00 p.m. - Model Train Club (USD Bldg.)

8:00 p.m. - PRCA Rodeo

Wednesday, July 30, 8:00 a.m. - 4-H Swine & Sheep Show

3:00-9:00 p.m. - Antique Tractor Show & Shine display

4:00 p.m. - Farm Bureau Assoc. Pedal Tractor Pull Regist.

5:00-6:45 p.m. - Pedal Tractor Pull

5:30 p.m. - Free Barbecue - come and enjoy!

8:00 p.m. - PRCA Rodeo

Thursday, July 31, 8:30 a.m. - 4-H Dairy, Bucket Calf & Breeding

Livestock Show

8:00 p.m. - Demolition Derby

Friday, August 1, 9:00 a.m. - 4-H Round Robin

3:00 p.m. - Buyers's Appreciation BBQ - 4-H Livestock Sale

7:00 p.m. - Thomas Co. Fair Races

Saturday, August 2, 10:00 - Parade. The parade will start south on Franklin to 5th St., east on 5th to Lake Ave., south on Lake to 3rd St., west on 3rd St. to Franklin Ave., south on Franklin to Cedar St., and west on Cedar to the fairgrounds.

12:00 p.m. - Pioneer Day - Colby VFW

7:00 p.m. - Golden Harvest Hybrid Modified Shoot Out & Super Stock



More of the same

Saturday...Partly sunny. A slight chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs near 102. South wind around 10 mph.

Sunday...Partly sunny. A chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 90s. Chance of rain 30 percent. Monday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 80s.

By the numbers

Thursday's high, 102

Low this morning, 68

Records for the date, 113 in 1940 (hottest July reading on record for Colby), 48 in 1911

Month's precipitation, 0.17

Year's precipitation to date, 11.04

Water Usage/Colby

July 24 = 3.893 million gallons

The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other figures from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, located on the western edge of Colby.

Entering
the fair
parade?

Call
462-3598

Briefly

College board to meet Monday

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will hold a special meeting on Monday at 5 p.m. in the board room in Thomas Hall. Items up for discussion include certificate of participation bids, a lease purchase resolution, electrical bids, approval of contracts and agreements, resignations and the budget.

Mud volleyball tourney planned

The Colby Jaycees are planning a co-ed mud volleyball tournament on Saturday, Aug. 9, beginning with registration at 9 a.m. There will be no pre-registration and the event is open to those 21 years and older. The tournament will be held behind the Jaycee Center located just southwest of the Colby Animal Clinic, 810 E. 4th St. For questions, call 462-7781.

Railroad club to open during fair

The Northwest Kansas Model Railroad Club will be open

again this year during fair time, said John Donelan, club member. Visitors are welcome to stop by their display beginning Tuesday, July 29 through Friday, Aug. 1, from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Colby School District's administration building, 210 S. Range. Anyone planning to view the model trains are asked to enter through the fire exit on the west end of the building.

Colby schools to enroll

Enrollment for students returning to Colby Public Schools is Tuesday, Aug. 5, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the commons area of Colby High School. Information packets will be mailed next week and school officials ask that if someone doesn't receive it to call 460-5000. Enrollment for new students is Wednesday, Aug. 6 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the respective buildings.

Forms available for Nine-Run-Run

The Thomas County Emergency Medical Service is host-

ing its 8th annual Nine-Run-Run and the second annual Nine-Ride-Ride events on Saturday, Aug. 2, at Fike Park. This year's event will help raise money for ambulance equipment, organizers said, and registration will begin at 6 a.m. for bikers and 7 a.m. for the runners on the day of the run. For an entry form or other information, call the Thomas County EMS at (785) 462-4585 or stop by the office at 1275 S. Franklin, Colby, Kan. 67701.

Extension office to close for fair

The Thomas County Extension Office, 350 S. Range Ave., Colby, will be closed the week of the fair, Monday, July 28 through Friday, Aug. 1. Extension personnel will be a fair. Call (785) 462-4582 or e-mail: dscholtz@oznet.ksu.edu

Levant reunion plans told

The Levant reunion will be held on Sunday, Aug. 3 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Quality Inn, Colby. Dinner will be served at noon. For more information, call (785) 462-6012.

