



COLBY FREE PRESS



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Richard Kyle put together the fountain drink machine at the Rexford Country Store which he plans to open this month. Closed since October 2003, Kyle purchased the building late last year

and remodeled the building including Golden Plains school colors and the Bulldog mascot. Kyle plans on having typical convenient store inventory, gasoline and car repair.

Rexford to get convenient

By John Van Nostrand
Free Press publisher

People in and around Rexford are wanting a convenient store so bad, they are visiting one that is not even open yet.

Rexford resident Richard Kyle is in the process of giving the people what they want. He is reopening the Country Store on U.S. Highway 83 this month.

"We had about 300 people stop by around the New Year's holiday," Kyle said. "We even opened the bathrooms for them. I'm excited to get it open."

A retired Colorado state patrolman, Kyle was interested in going into business two years ago. He moved to Rexford in August 2002. At that time he had a truck

repair shop in Mingo and was interested in doing something more.

"But I didn't want to run it by myself," he said.

Kyle's brother, Kevin, retired from his government job in the Northwest and Richard asked him if he would be interested in running a store with him. Kevin moved to the Rexford area.

"We looked at the store a couple of times," Richard said. "Kevin has retail experience and we said we can try this." The duo agreed in November to open the store.

The building is owned by Co-Ag, which closed the convenient store in October 2003. After approving a lease from Co-Ag, remodeling the store began in late December.

Richard, 57, said The Country Store will be a traditional conve-

nient store offering snack food, assorted beverages, some grocery items, dairy items, hot sandwiches, pizza and gasoline.

Co-Ag still owns the gasoline pumps and Co-Ag will be responsible for them. The gasoline pumps can be used with credit cards after hours. Richard also wants to offer car repair in the adjacent garage.

Richard said response from the Rexford community is appreciated. He said several school students have volunteered with remodeling work. Richard knows some of the high school students because he also drives a school bus and activity bus for Golden Plains school. The store features Golden Plain's school colors and the bulldog mascot.

"They want something," Richard

said about Rexford people. "It was quite a loss when Co-Ag closed it."

The store will be open seven days a week and expects to have extended hours during summer and harvest season. Richard said he and his wife, Deb, Kevin and his wife and another couple will be the only employees.

"We want to keep it as family as possible," Richard said. "When you have something like this, you are married to it."

Richard is also taking full responsibility for the store. He paid for the store and remodeling out of his own pocket.

"I'm not going to fail with someone else's money," he said. "The only way it won't work is if the door isn't open."

Interstate 70 has history of shootouts

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Shootouts along the Interstate 70 corridor are nothing new to Thomas County residents. While the Jan. 25 shootout did not occur in Thomas County, authorities Friday ruled its victims' deaths as justifiable.

Ellis County Attorney Tom Drees stated Friday in a written release a Kansas Highway Patrol Trooper and Ellis County Sheriff's Deputy have been cleared in the Jan. 25 shooting deaths of Aaron Millenson, 18, of Englewood, Colo., and Alicia (Wingate) Cardall, 26, of Salt Lake City, Utah.

About an hour after Millenson and Cardall went through Colby, the trooper and sheriff's deputy tried to stop them east of Hays when Millenson fired at the trooper and deputy. The trooper and deputy's return fire killed Millenson at the scene. Cardall later died at the Hays hospital.

Drees said he determined the deaths of Millenson were caused by Millenson's actions.

"Millenson's use of deadly force against both officers resulted in the officers' use of deadly force against (him)," Dress said. "Cardall's death was a result of her close proximity to Millenson as he fired upon law enforcement."

The duo was wanted for questioning by Utah authorities in connection with the Jan. 14 murder of a Holladay, Utah man. At the time, Colby Police Chief Randy Jones said he didn't believe they stopped in Colby during their trek across Kansas.

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn said local authorities were asked by Colorado authorities to be on the lookout for Millenson and Cardall because they were believed to have been "armed and dangerous."

The shootout was investigated by the Ellis County authorities, Kansas Highway Patrol and Kansas Bureau of Investigation.

21st anniversary of traumatic day

Monday, Feb. 13 marks the 21st anniversary when Thomas County authorities waged battle against one of the state's most notorious killers.

Daniel Remeta, along with Lisa Dunn, James C. Hunter, Jr. and Mark Walter murdered their way across the area until stopped only miles north of Colby.

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn remembers events surrounding that fateful day.

"It changed everybody's behavior," Baughn said. "Prior to that time nobody was too interested in locking things up and that changed

everything and dealers sold more guns and ammunition. We felt pretty isolated out here."

The first death was Larry McFarland, manager of the Stuckey's restaurant located at the Interstate 70 exit at Grainfield.

Later that same day, Levant grain elevator workers Rick Schroeder and Glenn Moore were killed execution style along a dirt road by Remeta.

Also shot and wounded were Thomas County Undersheriff Ben Albright and elevator manager, Maurice Christie.

Remeta was apprehended at an unoccupied farmhouse near Atwood, Dunn sustained non-life threatening injuries and Walter was killed. Prior to making their way to Kansas, the group killed two other people, one in Florida and Arkansas and injured another.

On May 13, 1985, Remeta pleaded guilty to murder and was given four life sentences. He was executed by electric chair March 31, 1998, in Florida.

Dunn served almost nine years in a Kansas prison after being convicted for being Remeta's accomplice.

She was released from prison after being declared a battered victim of Remeta during a second trial. She was tried for murder and sentenced to 20 years in prison in Arkansas, being released for time served.

Hunter's murder conviction was overturned in an appeal during which he claimed he'd been one of Remeta's victims.

He reportedly died of a heart attack four days after being released from prison.

More recent I-70 shootout

On Jan. 23, 2003, Gerald N. Bryant and Brian E. Berry made their trek across Kansas, a shootout took place on Interstate 70 near Oakley.

The incident involved Thomas and Logan County Sheriff's officers, Colby and Oakley police officers and the Kansas Highway Patrol.

According to court records, a routine traffic stop turned into a high speed chase and resulted in a trooper returning fire and wounding Bryant, 32, of Inyokern, Calif. A passenger in the car, Berry, 32, also of Inyokern, was captured midway through the chase after he bailed out of the car. Both men were charged and convicted in federal court in Wichita on drug charges and charges surrounding the shootout.



M. Baughn

City council to review police car bids

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

The Colby City Council will consider buying two new police cars, approving resolutions and more during its meeting at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, in council chambers.

Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, said there was only one bidder and that a second bidder brought in

their bids 20 minutes late. The council could discuss this matter further.

In addition, the council could approve a resolution authorizing membership for the sixth year in the electric mutual aid program with the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency. Although the city has not yet needed the aid of the electrical communities, Armstrong said, it could at some future date.

Another item the council is expected to talk about is the communication dispatch service for Rural Fire District No. 4, based on grant money it received. Armstrong said the district received grant money that would allow the Colby dispatchers the ability to provide 24-hour-per-day emergency fire call pager and dispatch communication services. No price for the service

has been determined, but should the council approve a resolution, fees could be established at that time.

Stamped plans for commercial building construction and establishing parameters for it, along with approving a preliminary agreement for crack sealing and concrete repairs at Colby's Municipal Airport, are also on the agenda.

For questions, call 460-4410.

State parks suffer from lack of funding

WICHITA (AP) — Kansas ranks last in the nation in state funding for its 24 parks, according to the National Association of State Park Directors. And it's getting worse.

Funding cuts have affected everything from basic park maintenance, like lawn mowing and keeping bathrooms clean, to the number of rangers available to patrol the parks.

"Things are getting critical," said Doyle Niemeyer, manager of Fall River and Cross Timbers State Parks. "It's hard to keep things going when your costs keep going higher and higher, and your funding keeps going lower and lower."

Cuts to ranger patrols are a particular worry for Butler County Sheriff Craig Murphy, whose territory includes El Dorado State Park, where the population during peak

"It's hard to keep things going when your costs keep going higher and higher, and your funding keeps going lower and lower."

Doyle Niemeyer,
Cross Timbers manager

holiday weekends equals that of the fifth largest city in Kansas. Fights, thefts and alcohol abuse aren't uncommon.

But parks have dropped some patrols to save salaries and gas.

"If they cut back on rangers, then I'm going to have to pick up the slack, and I don't have the manpower to do it," Murphy said.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Giant contraption

A giant trap built by the Colby Trap Club was hauled through downtown Colby late last week on its way to be painted at Butch's Body Shop. Because of its size, the trap required a police escort to go through town, and will be used at club events to allow more shooters to participate.