

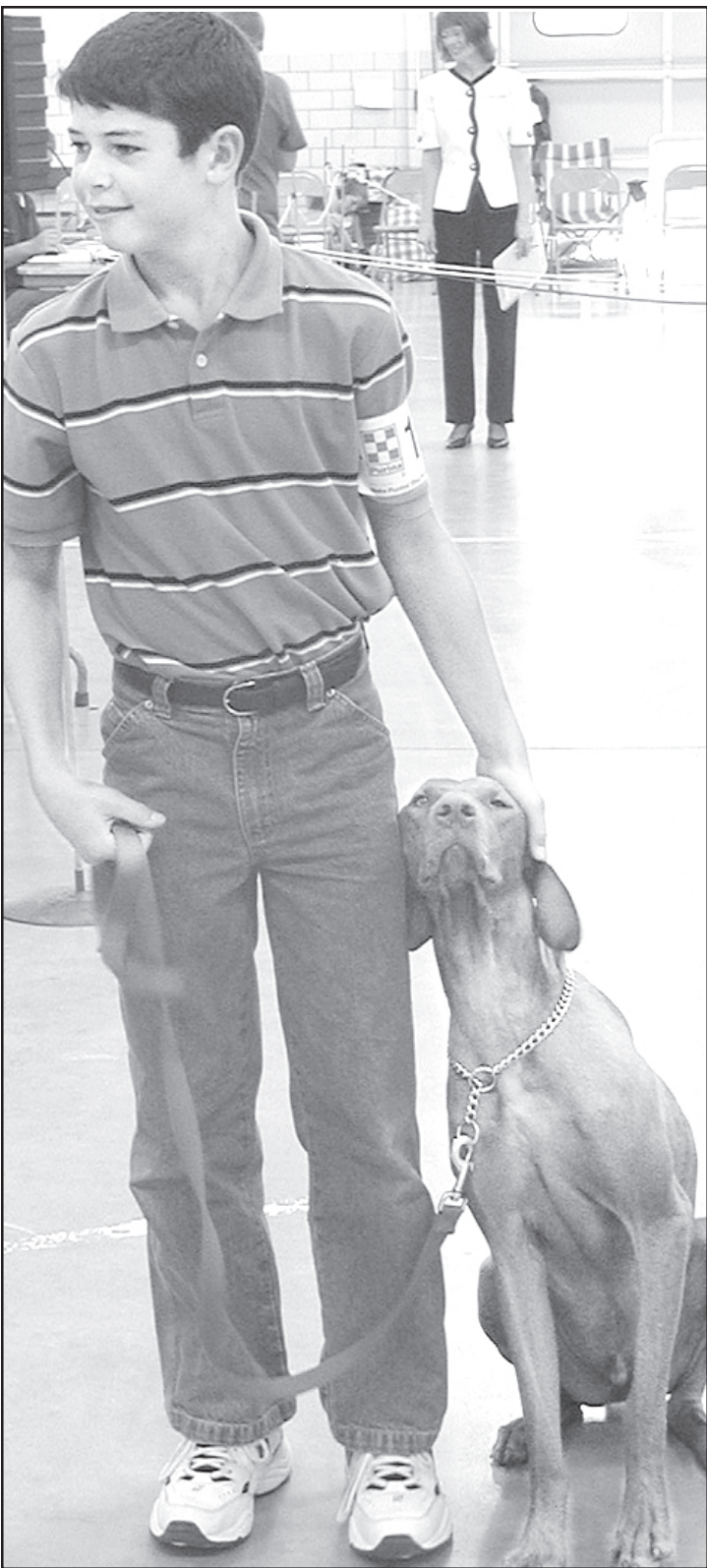


COLBY FREE PRESS

Me and my dog



TOP: Madisyn Haggard, left, and Courtney Bredemeier of Colby and Ariel Severson of Gem and their dogs waited their turn to go into the ring during the 4-H dog show held Saturday at the National Guard Armory in Colby. **RIGHT:** Kellen Ziegelmeier petted his Vizsla after a job well done at the dog show. The dog show was the first event of the Thomas County Free Fair, which begins next week.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Colby has one fun run

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

Anyone wanting to participate in this year's Nine-Run-Run, sponsored by the Thomas County Emergency Medical Services, still has time to register prior.

Now in its 11th year, the event begins at 8:30 a.m., Saturday in Fike Park with registration for walkers and runners. Participants can register the day of the race.

"Nine-Run-Run is for young and old alike, offering something for everyone — whether it's walking or running," said Kenneth Gatlin, EMS director, "and all proceeds help buy needed equipment."

As in year's past, there are four events to choose from to include the 2K fun walk, 2K fun run, 5K run and 10th annual 10K race.

Age divisions, depending on what race an individual takes part, includes 2-9; 15-24; 35-44; 55-64; 10-14; 25-34; 45-54; 65 and up and wheelchair.

Gatlin also talked about the various categories of walking and running.

"The fun walk is designed for the non-competitive walker who enjoys getting out for exercise."

The fun walk starts at 9:30 a.m. with walkers lining up behind the 2K runners.

For those non-competitive runners, the 2K fun run starting at 9:30 a.m. might be just the thing for them, Gatlin said. Medals will be handed out to both male and female winners in each age division.

The 5K run begins at 9 a.m. and is for all ages who enjoy the sport of running. The 5K runners will line up behind the 10K runners and medals will be awarded in this category and the 10K run as well.

The 10K is equivalent to 6.2 miles and is for competitive runners. The race is run on Colby streets offering a tour of the city's many parks, residential and business areas.

Refreshments are provided after all the races and at 10:30 a.m., an awards ceremony is planned.

For questions, call 460-4585 or stop by 1275 S. Franklin Ave.

Lower prices could result from dairy cow increases

WAUSAU, Wis. (AP) — After two decades of steadily declining numbers of dairy cows in America's Dairyland, the trend is slowly reversing itself, farm experts say.

Wisconsin has 1.243 million dairy cows, up about 8,000 from a year ago, not even a 1 percent increase but still significant, said University of Wisconsin dairy economist Robert Cropp.

"It's the first time there has been an increase in cow numbers since

the early 1980s," he said.

"The reason that's good news is that Wisconsin has been losing milk production and losing cows, and it has been a great concern for the industry."

Wisconsin once led the nation in milk production before losing the distinction to California.

Dave Loucks, a 55-year-old fourth-generation dairy farmer from Abbotsford, expanded his herd from 225 cows to 350 cows

and expects to have 400 in the near future. "If you are going to be a progressive nowadays, you have to grow. It is never-ending," he said.

But Loucks thinks the growth in Wisconsin's dairy herd isn't too significant and merely shows the industry has stabilized.

Still, he has noticed more farmers in Clark County near his home.

"The main reason is out-of-state farmers have come in and purchased these smaller farms that had

been retired and putting them back to work," he said.

He also notes a down side to the growth: More cattle means more milk, and that usually results in lower prices and less profit for farmers, Loucks said.

University of Wisconsin dairy economist Ed Jesse said the upswing in cow numbers started last spring, stimulated in part by record milk prices that topped \$20 per hundredweight — or about 12 gallons

— in 2004.

"We are not going to go back to the last 15 years where we were losing cows at a pretty rapid pace," Jesse said.

"That has got to be positive whether you are a dairy farmer looking at the future of the industry or you are a processor looking at the available supply of milk."

Dairy cow numbers peaked at 2.36 million in Wisconsin in the mid-1940s, according to Jesse.

Thomas County has one contested commissioner race

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

Thomas County's only contested race in the Aug. 1 primary election is for Commission District One seat currently held by Ron Evans who will face off against fellow Republican Byron Sowers.

"I truly enjoy being a county commissioner," Evans said. "After 12 years in office, I feel comfortable that I understand the diversity of issues we deal with in county government."

Now in his third term, Evans grew up in Colby. A 1961 graduate of Colby High School, he earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Kansas in 1965, and his master's in business administration from Golden Gate University in 1977, while stationed in California with the Air Force. A retired Vietnam fighter pilot, Evans farms and sells real estate. He and his wife, Sue,



R. Evans



B. Sowers

reside in Colby have one grown daughter.

"I consider it a privilege to serve the people of Thomas County," Evans said.

"We enjoy great quality of life, and our citizens are good, honest, hardworking people."

Evans tenure on the board of commissioners is not the only board on which he's served. Formerly a member of the Colby Board of Education and Thomas County Historical Society, Evans said he believes

it's his duty to serve the public.

"In my opinion, Thomas County is a leader in western Kansas because of our progressive attitude," he said. "I want to do my small part as a commissioner to keep our county strong and a great place to live."

Besides serving on various boards in the county, Evans continues his membership in a variety of clubs such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, college, military, and livestock associations and was past president and current trustee of the Kansas Legislative Policy Group.

Also a member of the Rotary, Evans said he uses skills learned in the club to guide him as a commissioner.

"As a Rotarian, my decisions about county government are based on the Rotary Four-Way Test of the things we think, say or do," he said. "Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to

all concerned?"

"If decisions I make about the county pass this test, then in my opinion, it is good for all 7,900 Thomas County citizens."

Byron Sowers

Sowers is not new to the political scene, having served the past 12 years on the North Randall Township Board of Directors. A member of the Farm Bureau Association, Sowers has served as president the past six years.

"As township board members, we made decisions for the maintenance and control of the roads," Sowers said. "I'm interested in the future of our community and want to see tax dollars spent wisely. We need to keep things simple."

Born and raised in Thomas County, Sowers graduated from Colby High School in 1969. He then went on to graduate from Colby Community College before attending Kansas State University for one semes-

ter where he studied animal science.

A farmer and rancher all his adult life, Sowers and his wife Linda have raised five daughters and two sons, along with 13 grandchildren, the 14th is expected in February. All of Sowers' children continue to reside in or near Thomas County, two of whom have followed in his footsteps and are managers of ranches he owns in Logan and Scott Counties.

"I think Thomas County is a great place to live and would like to maintain the quality of life we have, not only for my generation, but for future generations," Sowers said. An avid supporter of the political process, Sowers encourages everyone to get out and vote in the Aug. 1 primary.

"As citizens of these great United States it's our right and a privilege to vote," he said. "I'm doing this as an example to my family. If they choose to do it someday they'll know it's possible."

Work on restored B-29 nearly complete

WICHITA (AP) — After thousands of hours of volunteer restoration work, a historic bomber is less than two months away from being ready for public display.

The World War II-era Boeing B-29 Superfortress, built in Wichita, will be shown off Sept. 9-10 during an open house at McConnell Air Force Base.

"All of the volunteers are just thrilled about it," said United States Aviation Museum chief executive Tony Mazzolini.

"We're all looking forward to having this happen."

The plane, thought to be the last of its kind that can be restored to flying condition, was delivered in 1945 and arrived in Wichita in 2000 after being rescued from a desert graveyard by Mazzolini.

It is being restored at Boeing Wichita, which is donating hangar space for the effort.

"We want to do this in memory of the guys from World War II, both the people who built them, worked on them and flew them and gave the ultimate sacrifice in them," said Mazzolini.

The B-29, nicknamed "Doc,"

was one of more than 1,600 built in Kansas from 1943 to 1946. It was part of a nine-plane squadron bearing the names of characters from the Walt Disney movie "Snow White."

The fuselage and wing section have been joined, and volunteers are now putting in the control cables and wiring and installing the outer wing section.

The vertical stabilizer is also being restored, but the plane needs new fuel bladders and overhauls of its four engines.

In all, Mazzolini said, it will take another \$1 million to \$1.5 million.

"We think we have probably everything else in control," Mazzolini said.

Mazzolini has not set a date for the B-29's first flight after restoration, but he said it could be flying within one year if the resources materialize.

The plane will also need a permanent home, although the board of the Kansas Aviation Museum is discussing a \$4 million hangar project for the B-29 and other vintage airplanes.

Teresa Day, the museum's director, said officials hope to launch the capital campaign by spring 2007.

Accident injures five

A one-vehicle accident Saturday morning sent five people to hospitals in Logan and Thomas counties.

The wreck took place at 6:15 a.m. at Interstate 70 westbound about 10 miles east of Colby, Highway Patrol officials said.

Gary L. Hinton, Jr., 33, of Pleasant Hill, Mo., was driving a 2003 Chevy pickup pulling a 1996 Jay fold-down camper when the pickup left the south side of the road. Hinton overcorrected and went into the north

side ditch. The pickup then rolled three times before coming to a rest on its wheels. Hinton, along with passengers Mary M. Hinton, 73; Perri Brown, 10; and Memphis Hinton, 1, all of Pleasant Hill, Mo., were all transported to Logan County Hospital with injuries.

Kristi Hinton, 34, also of Pleasant Hill, was taken to Citizens Medical Center with injuries. All were wearing seatbelts, and Memphis was properly restrained in a child seat.