



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Angry cow takes police on long chase

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

It's not every day a cow takes a tour around Colby's backyards and alleyways, but on Sunday afternoon that's exactly what happened. Actually, it wasn't a happy cow, according to Dr. Russell Bowers and others trying to lasso the animal down and return her to the clinic. "She had a cervical prolapse," Bowers said, which required emergency measures.

In fact, the older Hereford's owner, David Tole, told Bowers it took quite a while to get her into the trailer that day. Once at the Colby Animal Clinic, Bowers said the animal got of the gate and the chase was on.

At first, both Tole and Russell tried to catch the animal, but it didn't take long for others to get involved. Officers Richard Barrett and Jerad Lang, both on duty, saw the cow at Second and Chickamauga Streets and within minutes they called two more off-duty officers, Ron Alexander and Kevin Diercks to assist.

Tole also called three horseback riders to help.

In response Jesse Vincent, Jerry Vincent and Bob Bixenman trailed in their horses from Levant and took chase — cowboy style.

After being sighted on Second, the cow went to Third and Grant Streets, chasing a family back into their home. She then went west on Third Street and stayed in a yard across from Colby Middle School until the riders arrived on the scene.

From there she started making her way across Fourth Street and into more yards.

The animal was "cross" for any number of reasons, but whatever those reasons were she was extremely ill-tempered, Diercks said

today. Some of her anger may have had to do with the pain she was in, Bowers said, but fortunately, the animal didn't cause too much, if any, property damage.

"I was just glad nobody got hurt," Bowers said.

The animal crossed Fourth Street without any problem and throughout the ordeal avoided being hit by a car or charging other cars or people, Diercks said.

"She evaded capture through several alleys and yards and it wasn't until she was cornered in a small orchard in the 500 block of West Eighth Street that we finally were able to get her down."

Although police have chased down other cows, pigs and horses, Diercks did say that this was probably the longest chase he had ever been involved with — lasting almost two hours.

Once the animal was subdued, Bowers said he repaired the prolapse and the cow was still down today — more than likely due to exhaustion from Sunday.

On somewhat of a more serious note, Diercks did say that when animals, like this cow escape, residents should get out of the way and stay in their houses.

"Cows and horses can be very dangerous when they are scared and this particular cow was also in a lot of pain," he said.

Aside from a few crushed flowers, plants, and patches of scattered manure, the cow chase ended without serious incident. Diercks also clarified that the cow did not have "mad cow disease," just that it was a mad cow.

For questions about what to do in situations like the one Sunday or to call-in unusual situations, the dispatch number for police is 460-4460.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

It almost looked like a scene from "Rawhide" had it not been for the residential backdrop. **ABOVE:** One scared and hurting Hereford managed to avoid capture for almost two hours on Sunday — making her way through backyards, alleys, and even across Fourth Street. **BELOW:** Jesse Vincent, Jerry Vincent and Bob Bixenman, on horseback roped the cow and safely returned her to Colby Animal Clinic. Dr. Russell Bowers is in the middle with the cow. Colby resident Daniel Morris took the photo.



Member of BTK killer's public defense team haunted by case

HUTCHINSON, Kan. (AP) — Sarah McKinnon spent hours each day with Dennis Rader, helping to guide him through the legal process that ended with his sentence to 10 life terms for a series of sadistic murders that terrified Wichita for decades.

Now, the Reno County woman wonders how long it will take for life to return to normal — if it ever does.

"I'm still trying to find my stride," McKinnon told The Hutchinson News for a story in Sunday's editions. "I'm still trying to find where regular is — where I left off six months ago, where normal used to be."

Adding to the strain, she said, is that attorney-client privilege prevents her from discussing too many specifics.

"It's not like you can call your best friend or your mom and dump it on them," she said. "Because of this case's high profile, I've had to carry it inside of me. And now that it's said and done, I can't just spill my guts."

"I've seen things I never wanted to see," said McKinnon, who has lost 25 pounds since the Sedgwick County Public Defender's office took the case in March. "I have information I never wanted, and I have things inside of me that I don't want

... but it's stuff I have to keep until the day he dies."

Rader, who pleaded guilty to killing 10 people from 1974 to 1991, was sentenced in August. McKinnon said she had mixed emotions when she was asked to join Rader's defense team.

"I didn't know what I was going to say," she said. "But I thought, 'I give my best to everyone else. I can give my best for this guy, too.'"

That meant spending five to six hours at a time with Rader, talking not only about his case but about his personal life.

"I spent the most time with him, by far,"

McKinnon said. "For the first couple of months, I spent nearly every day with him."

Rader was an officer in his church, a Boy Scout leader, a family man who repeatedly characterized himself as a good person — when he wasn't living up to the self-taken nickname that stood for "Bind, Torture, Kill."

"Mentally, it was challenging to have those two things coexist," McKinnon said. "It would've been easier emotionally to process the things he had done if he wasn't the human being I saw."

As the case wore on, McKinnon's husband, Reno County District Judge Steven

Becker, noticed the strains.

"For the first few weeks, she would bring it home and we would brainstorm legal issues, and it was stimulating," Becker said. "Then after a few weeks, instead of bringing the case home, she was bringing her client home. We weren't talking legal issues, we were talking about her client — and I'll confess, it didn't take long before I was tired of her client in our home."

Family obligations became formalities, McKinnon said, as she became more and more absorbed in the case. And disturbingly, she said, she began to see aspects of Rader's personality in others and in herself.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Weeding for fun

Adri Stevenson and Nathan Stevenson of Oakley and Austin Russ of Colby pulled weeds at Pioneer Memorial Library Friday. They and more than 20 other students in the Christian Family Educators group took part in "Joy Day," completing several service projects around town. This is the second year for the event. Other students participating were Abby and Aston Russ of Colby; Leighton Rinehart of Colby; Akayla and Jacob Trundle of Colby; Shandee Nelson of Atwood; David Hunt of Rexford; Adam and Leigh Ann Maurath of Oakley; Will Clark of Oakley; Luke, Claire and Katie Friess of Hoxie; Shania and Brianna Quenzer of Brewster; Miranda, Keith and Casey Simmering of Ludell and Abigail, Savannah and Thomas Shubert of Mingo.

Pets have resting place

SALINA (AP) — When Katie Wood died at the age of 14, her grieving family didn't know where to bury her.

Salinan Patti Wood comforts her son K.P. as they visit the grave of their dog Katie on Monday at Faithful Friends Memorial Garden near Solomon.

The thought of having Katie cremated, knowing her ashes would be put in a plastic bag and scattered across a garbage-strewn landfill, horrified Patti Wood, her husband, Kevin, and son K.P. They discussed burying her under a favorite bush in the back yard of their Salina home but were afraid a future owner might accidentally dig up her grave. They wanted their beloved dog, a 70-pound English setter-blue healer mix, to be in a special place. But where?

Then a friend told the Wood family about Faithful Friends Memorial Garden, a pet cemetery in rural Dickinson County.

For just \$75 to \$100, the Woods found they could purchase a 2-by-4-foot or 3-by-5-foot cemetery plot on two acres of privately owned property. For another \$115, they could select a customized granite headstone from Kansas Monument in Ellis or choose a metal marker for just \$7.50.

Patti Wood said the opportunity to put Katie in a real cemetery filled with dozens of other revered pets helped give her family a sense of relief and closure.

"It's really hard to put into words how we feel about this cemetery being here," she said. "We know Katie will be at peace and rest well forever."

The Thomas County Courthouse will be closed Wednesday from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. so employees may attend the Memorial Service for Deputy Cory Wang.

