



COLBY FREE PRESS

Racers flip out at Sacred Heart



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Kurt Schroeder flipped a pancake during a Shrove Tuesday pancake race at Colby's Sacred Heart School while first-grade teacher Kim Taylor watched the action. Both boys and girls got to wear the scarf and apron traditional for the race as they ran across the school yard.

Lion mauls man at an Oakley motel

By Andy Heintz
Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkansas.com

A Thomas County man had to be flown to Denver for treatment Saturday after a captive lion mauled his arm at a motel near Oakley.

Sheriff Rod Taylor identified the victim as Bradley Buchanan, who lived and worked at the Free Breakfast Inn on U.S. 83. While the motel is near the north Oakley exit off the freeway, it is several miles into Thomas County.

The sheriff said Buchanan apparently was intoxicated when he stuck his arm into the lion's cage. Owner Jeffery Harsh, in a statement, said he was loading meat for the cats into his car when he heard a scream about 7 p.m.

Harsh said he saw that the gate

to the perimeter fence around the lion enclosure was open and ran to the cage. He saw that Buchanan had his arms over the door, stuck into the enclosure. A female lion named Lady had one arm in her mouth.

"I then began to beat the animal with a steel pipe until the animal released the arm," Harsh wrote. He said he put Buchanan in his car and drove him to Citizens Medical Center. He later was flown to Swedish Medical Center in Denver, Harsh said, and since has been released.

Sheriff Taylor said the cage that houses the lions has some holes that people can stick their hands through. The cage is inside an outer cage, said Taylor, and Buchanan apparently had opened the outer cage to get near the inner cage.

Taylor said Harsh also owns the Free Breakfast Inn. He has three lions and two tigers, said Taylor.

Taylor said owning an exotic, or non-native, animal is against the law in Kansas. Kevin Jones of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks said the state has no record of Harsh registering the animals after the Dangerous Regulated Animals Act became law on July 1, 2006. Jones said the law required owners of dangerous animals to register within 60 days. (Harsh said he once had a federal permit for the cats, but no state license.)

Taylor said the sheriff's department is working with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, an animal rights group, and the

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College gets new feed gear

By Shalee Roundtree
Colby Free Press
sroundtree@nwkansas.com

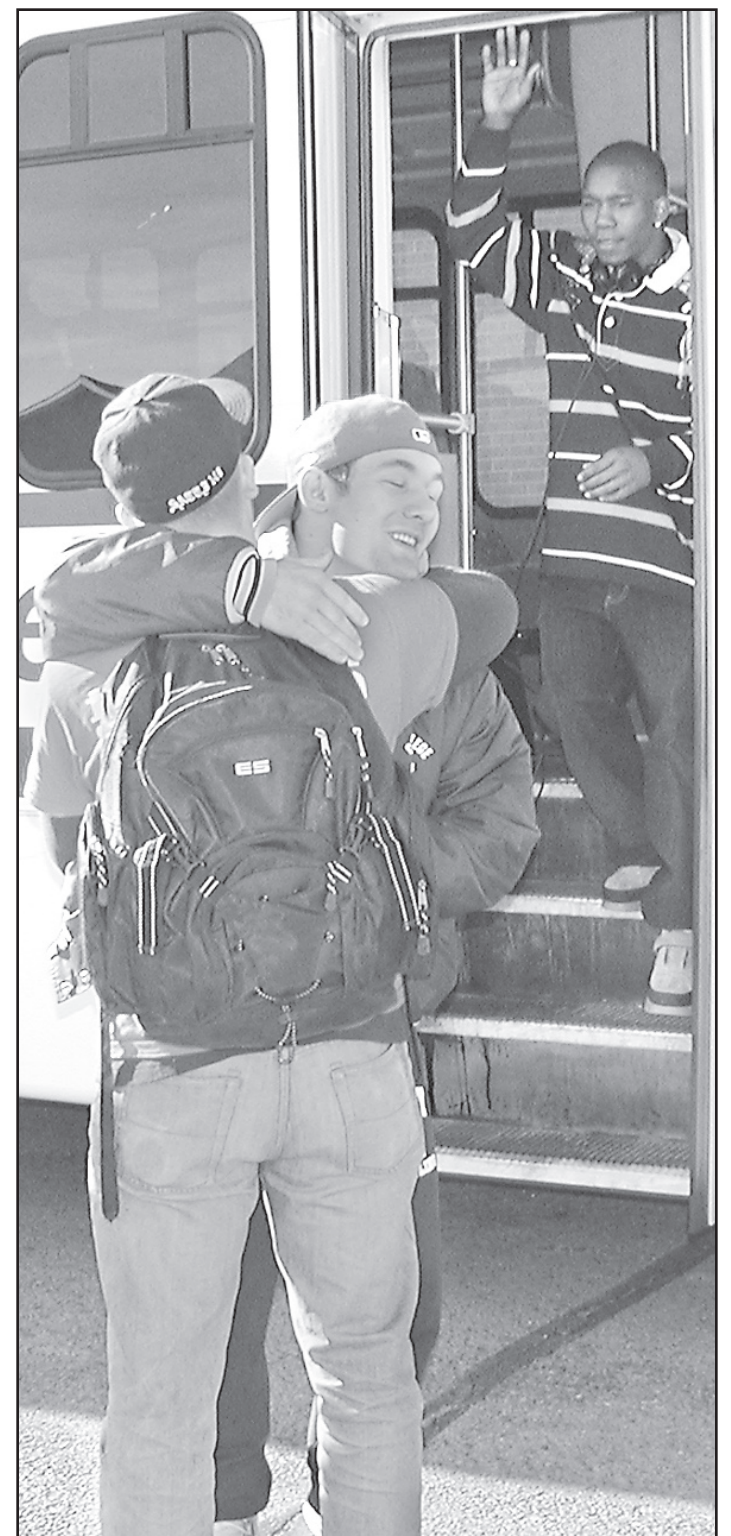
Students enrolled in the farm and ranch programs at Colby Community College are set to get a much-needed new feed truck with the help of area feeders.

Students in the programs hold feed and care for cattle owned by the college. Until the acquisition of the new truck, they had to use an old feed wagon.

"We had a feed wagon that was 30 years old and really started to break down," said Dr. Marcy Ward, beef program director at the college. "It also wasn't very realis-

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Bound for Glory



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Wrestler Jernato Harris waved to the crowd from the steps of the team bus as teammate Ronnie Tetreault got a hug from a friend. About 75 people gathered this morning at the parking lot near the Colby Community College pool to see the 10 wrestlers — all freshmen — off as they left for the junior college national championships in Rochester, Minn.

Group gearing up for 125th

By Marj Brown

Colby Free Press
mbrown@nwkansas.com

Thomas County will be 125 years old in 2010, and civic leaders have started planning the celebration.

Sue Taylor, director of the Prairie Museum of Art and History; Holly Stephens, executive director of the Colby-Thomas County Chamber of Commerce; and Leilani Thomas, director of the Colby Convention and Visitor's Bureau, asked Thomas County Commissioners last Tuesday to sign a resolution designating 2010 for the 125th birthday celebration of Thomas County. The commissioners agreed, and the resolution was attested to by County Clerk Shelly Harms.

"We will be forming committees soon to start planning the county-wide celebration," Stephens told the commissioners.

"One of the things we plan to do very soon is to sponsor a logo contest," Taylor said, "so everyone should start thinking of ideas for the 125th birthday logo. Also, I remember that the newspapers from the 100-year centennial celebration were gathered and bound in hard covers so they could be sold to those who wanted to keep them as collector's items. That's

something that they might want to do again.

"Next year is going to be an exciting year in Thomas County. We are planning several programs at the museum and it will also be the year for the 10th Colby High All-School Reunion. That usually brings hundreds of alumni back to Colby to celebrate with their old friends and classmates."

From Jan. 6 to Feb. 21, Taylor said, the museum will house the Smithsonian traveling exhibit "Journey Stories," featuring Native Americans and new American citizens.

Taylor said she is developing a display at the museum depicting the development of the county through the years as a part of the county's own "Journey Story," to help people better understand how the area was developed.

"Another program planned for the museum on June 2-6," Taylor said, "is the Kansas/Nebraska Chautauqua, 'Bright Dreams, Hard Times: America in the Thirties' with scholars portraying famous Kansans from history.

The women said anyone with ideas for the celebration should contact Taylor, Thomas or Stephens. They will be forming a committee and will need plenty of volunteers, Taylor said.

State reps to be here

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeier and state Reps. Jim Morrison and Dan Johnson will be in Colby to visit with voters and answer questions from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. Saturday at the Quality Inn, 1950 S. Range.

The legislators say they are looking for ideas and comments on issues being debated in Topeka. They will have information on issues being considered and their impact. Everyone is invited.

The men will be in Goodland from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. at Cafe on the Bricks; in Hoxie at 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at the Elks Lodge; in Hill City from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at Frontier Stage, 321 E. Main; and in Plainville from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. at the hospital cafeteria.

Briefly

FFA to flip pancakes Thursday

Eat free at the Colby High FFA Appreciation Breakfast from 6:30 to 8 a.m. next Thursday at the Ag Shop, 240 N. Copeland. Pancakes, bacon or sausage, drinks and door prizes will be offered to mark National FFA Week. For questions, contact Shawna Howell-Hoffman at (785) 460-5320.

School's out, school's out

Colby School District students and teachers will get the day off Friday, when the weather is expected to be a chilly, but sunny, 45 degrees. The break is a reward to all for the district making it's "Adequate Yearly Progress" goals under the No Child Left Behind Act, said Superintendent Terril Harrison.

Group looks for a better life

Living a full life with disabilities is the topic of

a support-group meeting from 1:30-3 p.m. Friday at the Colby United Methodist Church high school classroom. The group is for people with mental and physical disabilities and caregivers. For information, call Doug Finley at 460-2306 or Connie Menges at 460-3112.

Benefit will help girl's family

Friends and family plan a benefit soup supper Friday for Trinity Pfeifer, a second grader at Colby Grade School, who needs hip surgery. She is the daughter of Jason and Angie Stegeman of Colby. Come in for broccoli-cheese or chicken-noodle soup, chili and drinks from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Community Building basement. Donations will be accepted. For information, call her mom at (785) 460-0227.

Pilot safety seminar Saturday

A Federal Aviation Administration safety semi-

nar for pilots will be held in the terminal building at Colby's Shalz Field Municipal Airport on from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. Lunch will be provided. For information, call Mark Ostmeier at (785) 460-4438 or check www.faasafety.gov.

College offers handgun class

Colby Community College, working with Profire professional instructors, will offer Kansas "concealed-carry" handgun training 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday in the Student Union. Training for Utah certification, which allows concealed carry in 36 states including Colorado, costs \$75. Fingerprinting, photos and notarization will be offered for \$30. For information, call Barry Kaaz at (785) 460-5429.

Cancer society to sell daffodils

Once again, the American Cancer Society is selling flowers for its Daffodil Days fund raiser. Colby

project leader Kim Barnett will be taking orders at home, 462-2997; at work, 460-2761; or by e-mail at umcolby@st-tel.net. Prices include a flower bunch for \$10, a "sunshine bouquet" for \$15, a bear and a bunch for \$25. Deadline for ordering is Sunday.

Two 'Pickin' bands to return

The bluegrass bands that headlined the Pickin' on the Plains Festival last year will be back in Colby on Friday, March 6, at the Frahm Theater at Colby Community College. Marshall Allen Bailey and the Silver Bullets will perform at 7 p.m. and Gold Wing Express at 8 p.m. For information, call (800) 611-8835 or 460-7643.

