



Dog shooter gets probation, expenses

By Andy Heintz

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Rodney Zimmerman pleaded guilty to cruelty to animals last month in Thomas County District Court in the shotgun wounding of a neighbor's dog in a subdivision west of Colby, agreeing to pay \$257 in costs and receive a six-month probation.

Stanley Strange had filed charges against Zimmerman for allegedly shooting his dog Coco for messing in Zimmerman's yard in November. Zimmerman was ordered to pay court costs of \$172 and the dog's veterinary bill of \$85.

Judge Richard Rees placed him on unsupervised probation for six months or until all costs have been paid.

"The case was amended from a felony to a misdemeanor," said County Attorney Bruce Flipse. "The victim (Strange) agreed with the decision."

If Zimmerman is found guilty of cruelty to animals again, Flipse said, he can be charged with a felony.

The dog had followed Strange's daughter down the block in their neighborhood at the rural County Acre Estates subdivision off of County Road 15 when she went to see a friend, said former Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn. The daughter returned a little later without the dog. She heard a gun shot when she got back to the yard. She said Coco came back limping and bleeding, Baughn said.

Strange said he called Zimmerman, who admitted he had shot the dog. He said the man told him he'd shot the dog "because it had pooped in his yard."

"What worries me is that he will be shooting at an animal when kids are walking by," Strange said. "There are a lot of children in this area."

Strange said when he asked Zimmerman if he would be paying for the vet bill, he said "heck no."

Strange was not the only person who has had trouble with the occupants of Zimmerman's house. Kathy Tubbs said a man living there had threatened to kill her 12-year-old chocolate lab for messing in the yard. Tubbs said the dog had wandered over to the man's property one day. She said the dog had only been there for

five minutes when she came and got it.

"I apologized to him and told him that if the dog ever peed in their yard, I would be willing to clean it up," she said. "He just kept telling me to get off his property."

She said another man eventually came out of the house and said that he would shoot the dog if he ever saw it on his property again.

"It's a sad, sad, situation," Tubbs said. "I have lived here for 22 years, and never had any problems until they threatened to kill my animals."

Fire fighters move their stuff into new station

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City Manager Carolyn Armstrong told the Colby City Council on Tuesday a walk-through inspection on the new fire station last Thursday had helped develop a punch list on interior items to finish, but the department could move in the next day.

Armstrong said that she, Mayor Ken Bieber, council President Jim Brown and architect Glen Strait went on the inspection. Everyone felt the department could move in before the details were finished, she said.

So the firefighters moved into their new home on Wednesday. Armstrong said the station should be completed by Friday, May 1.

Councilman Tom Waldschmidt said he saw the station at 1125 S. Country Club Drive serving Colby for a minimum of 30 years.

In other action, the council told several owners that they needed to clean up their property to comply with city ordinances.

Scott and Jan Barnum were given 60 days to clean up a property north of East Eighth Street and east of Martin Avenue, between the alley and the railroad right of way.

Armstrong said that there are a few ways the council can take action against people who refuse to

clean up their property.

"We can take them to court and try to have a fine imposed on them until they clean up the property," she said, "or the city can go in and clean up the property and charge a special tax to its owners."

Pictures of the Barnum property revealed concrete blocks and wooden panels stacked and scattered in the yard in both organized and disorganized piles.

Scott said that while he had made some progress on cleaning up his property, it was hard to do much in the dead of winter.

"You improve some things, but not dramatically," said Waldschmidt.

"There's been a whole lot more than minimal work done," Barnum replied.

Gary Walker, part-time code enforcement officer, agreed some progress had been made.

The council approved authorizing Beiber to sign an order of violation declaring the conditions on 840 S Garfield Avenue in violation of the environmental code. The property is owned by Edward and Anna K. Newell.

A report by Walker said vehicles and parts are scattered about the premises and an unregistered vehicle is parked in the alley. The Newells were given 30 days to alleviate the conditions on their

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VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Sing out for those in home

Fifty members of the Soaring Singers from grades 2 to 5 at Colby Grade School entertained residents at the Colby Care Center and Prairie Senior Living Center on Tuesday. The group, directed by Jennifer Koel and Vicki Nichols, will give concerts at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 21, and at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, April 22, at the grade school auditorium. Dana Inloes is the accompanist.



Voters elect mayor, council on write-ins

With no one on the ballot, voters in Menlo and Gem had the opportunity to write in the names of anyone they wanted for city council and mayor in the general election Tuesday.

In Menlo 13 people voted for a mayor, and nine of them wrote in Troy Stats' name, according to information from the voter tabulation machine.

The same voters wrote in 65 names for five council positions.

Winning the most votes were Brandon Beckman, 9; Richard Fields, 8; Ron Hazelett, 8; and Robbie Meyers and Brent Beckman, 5 each.

Over in Gem, there were three open council seats. Voters wrote in 36 names.

Top vote getters were Larry Higerd and Monica Miller, 8 each, and Margaret Flannagin, 7.

All vote totals are unofficial and must be canvassed and certified by the Thomas County commissioners when they meet at 9 a.m. Monday. At that time the commissioners will decide whether to accept or reject nine provisional ballots.

Everyone is allowed to vote. If there is a question as to whether the voter is correctly registered, a provisional ballot is provided.

Briefly

Federal deadline pushed back

The cutoff date for Environmental Quality Incentives Program applications in Kansas to be considered for fiscal year 2009 money has been extended to Friday by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. For information, stop by the county office or call (785) 462-7671.

Racing for Christ is Sunday

The Racing for Christ radio controlled car club will race at 2 p.m. Sunday at the First Baptist Church, 615 W. Webster. The club will be giving a radio-controlled car away this month. Come find out how to win. For information, call Kent Higerd, 462-3440.

Assembly plans egg hunt

The College Drive Assembly of God, 245 W. Collee Drive, plans a huge Easter egg hunt for kids 10

and younger from 1 to 2:15 p.m. Saturday. Registration will open at 12:45 p.m. Organizers plan a coloring contest with prizes for the winners, games, songs and more prizes to give away. Come join the fun. For questions, call Michelle Hillery, 443-1395.

Lifeguards can renew skills

A review class for lifeguards on cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and using an automatic external defibrillator for professional rescue will be held at 9 a.m. Friday and at 9 a.m. on Thursday, April 16, at the Colby Community College pool. Call the Thomas County Red Cross at 462-7161 for information or to enroll.

Seniors plan potluck

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck dinner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or have a partner in a nursing

homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share. Table service and beverages will be provided. The building is handicapped accessible, with an elevator by the east doors. For information, call the church at 462-6342.

Come to library for lunch, talks

The Pioneer Memorial Library plans book reviews, talks by authors and lunch at noon each day for National Library Week next week. The library plans book reviews each day, with authors for three and two by local reviewers. A free lunch (really!) will be served at noon. (Participants can give a donation if they wish.) Book reviews begin at 12:15 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Seniors plan potato bar

The Senior Progress Center will have a potato

bar, raffle and bake sale from 5 to 6:30 p.m. next Thursday for the spring fund raiser. For questions, call Kaila DeBoer at 460-2901 weekdays before noon.

School plans scrapbook event

Heartland Christian School is having a "scrapbook extravaganza" from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, April 18. Cost is \$30 for all day and \$15 for half a day, including three meals, eight-foot tables to use, prizes and lots of fun. Call Deena Bandy at (785) 460-6419 to reserve your table.

