



# COLBY FREE PRESS



Andy Heintz/Colby Free Press

One of the activities the students participated in at the Agricultural Olympics at the Colby Community College Farm on Wednesday was the agricultural race. Pictured here are Larissa Lashell, Kalley Cline, Justin Gardner and Alison Pilcher.

## Thrills and spills highlight Ag Olympics

By Andy Heintz

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Laughter rang out from the Colby Community College farm on Tuesday as students tossed eggs, pushed hay bales and ran with chickens in an effort to win the several competitions that were being held at the farm.

It was all part of the Agricultural Olympics. The olympics are put on by the Collegiate Farm Bureau and Block and Bridle at the college. The college groups pick four contests student groups can compete in at the farm. The competitions this year were the slicker race, chicken race, egg toss and the agricultural relay.

Marcie Ward, Beef Program Director at the college who oversees the farm bureau, said the competitions were chosen by students in the bureau and the block and bridle group. The contests have stayed the same over the years, said Ward. But she said the two student groups change the agricultural relay a little bit every year.

"The olympics are open to everyone on campus," said Ward.

The contests elicited plenty of emotion and raucous laughter from the competitors and onlookers who came to watch the contests.

In the chicken race each member of a team of four had to hold a chicken and run around a cone planted in the muddy ground. After going around the cone they had to go through some tires akin to what football players do in practice when the coach wants them to work on their foot work. While some students took a tumble while trying to maneuver their way through the tires others lost their footing because they were too busy concentrating on holding on to the chicken. A collective gasp followed by laughter occurred from the crowd every time someone fell down while holding a chicken.

Several comical moments also happened during the other contests as students crashed into each other during the slicker race (where students run an obstacle course while holding a saddle), spilled water during the agricultural relay and



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Morgan McNeal runs with a chicken cradled in his arms during the chicken race. The students also enjoyed an egg toss and the slicker race.

had egg's splatter in their hands during the egg toss. While some groups were more successful than others in the contests, everyone seemed to be having fun.

One team that competed in the contests was composed of all faculty members. Ward said she hoped that next year there would be an entire division consisting solely of faculty members.

The olympics started in the 1980's. Ward said it ended for a while in the late 1990's, before starting up again four years ago.

## Briefly

### Relay team to hold bake sale

Citizens Medical Center Relay for Life Team is having a Bake Sale in front of Wal-Mart at 11 a.m. Saturday. Stars and luminaries will also be available. For information, contact Tracy Munk at 460-4814.

### Coaches to talk with players

A parent-player meeting for next year's Colby High football team will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, in the high school auditorium. Students interested in football who will be in grades nine through 12, and their parents, should attend. For information, contact coach Chris Gardner at 460-1390.

### District to hold retirement party

The Colby schools' board of education and administration are having a retirement reception from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Monday at the office at 600 W. Third St. Two teachers are retiring, Nancy Baker and Sue

Nielsen. Also retiring are custodian Richard Koel and food service assistant Betty Unruh. For information, see their ad in today's papers, or call the office at 460-5000.

### Commissioner meeting moved

The Thomas County Commissioners will be holding their Monday meeting at 8 a.m. in the conference room of the Thomas County Office Complex at 350 S. Range instead of the County Courthouse. The public is encouraged to attend. For more information call the county clerk at 460-4500.

### Ball league sign-up due soon

Registration for adult softball leagues is due by next Friday, and swim lesson sign up is due by Wednesday, May 27. Girls basketball registration is due next Wednesday. Players and parents should check their information on activities to get signed up

# Area residents examine economy

By Kevin Bottrell

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Concerned citizens and local leaders took a moment to brainstorm ideas for the future of Colby and Thomas County at the Economic Development Alliance forum Wednesday.

According to Director Rick Patrick, the alliance is in the middle stages of revising the strategic plan that will provide direction for the next three years.

Those in attendance included representatives from the Colby City Council, the Thomas County Commissioners, the Colby School

Board, the Economic Development Alliance Board, the Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, Citizens Medical Center, the Convention and Tourism Board and several local business owners and concerned citizens.

Two representatives from the Kansas Department of Commerce attended the meeting to act as facilitators. James Foster of the Office of Rural Opportunity and Dan Steffen, Business Development Project Manager, provided direction and experience to the meeting.

Steffen outlined several areas in which an economic development corporation can benefit a

city. Business development, he said, especially recruitment, is often what people associate with an economic development entity.

"Recruitment is the most expensive and least effective means of economic development," Steffen said.

A more effective way of expanding a city's economy is to help existing businesses expand, he said. Economic development can also help facilitate trade, both interstate and international and help with workforce development and tourism.

"It is whatever your community

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## Fort Hays State University considering tuition increase

HAYS (AP) — Fort Hays State University President Edward H. Hammond has proposed a 7.5 percent tuition increase.

He said Wednesday that the extra money is needed as the school seeks to prepare for a 12

percent budget reduction.

If the tuition proposal is approved by the Kansas Board of Regents, undergraduate resident students would pay \$98.20 per credit hour, a \$6.85 increase.

Hammond hopes the tuition increase can make up about

\$1.5 million of the expected \$4.5 million budget deficit. Another \$1 million is anticipated from university growth.

The other savings are coming from a combination of measures, including increasing class sizes in virtual courses.

## Board discusses derby rules

By Andy Heintz

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Ron Koegler, groundskeeper at the Thomas County Fairgrounds, said that new rules need to be made at the fairgrounds demolition derby or it would keep losing cars.

At the Thomas County Fair Board meeting Thursday, Koegler suggested changing the rules in a way that allowed both welding and non-welding cars to compete at the derby. He said he thought less requirements would lead to more people competing in the Derby.

Thomas County Supervisor Clair Schrock said Bob Kuhn, owner of Kuhns House Moving said his company would be arriving on Monday to move the solar house at the fairgrounds on to a concrete foundation.

Board member Audrey Hines said the solar house's foundation had been crumbling and they either had to move it to a solid foundation or tear it down. She said once it is moved onto the concrete foundation it will be used for storage.

Schrock said the 2009 Northwest Kansas I-70 Rodeo Series will be begin in a couple weeks. This year's rodeo schedule is as follows: Wallace, May 23-24; McCracken, July 10-11; Hays, July 14-15; Atwood, July 21-22; Oakley, July 23; Hoxie, July 24-25; Colby, July 27-28.

In other business, the board: • Listened to Schrock as he showed them this year's rodeo series posters that were made by Coors.

"Smaller posters with the names of the rodeo's sponsors will be passed out to businesses and to people as they enter the fair," Schrock said.

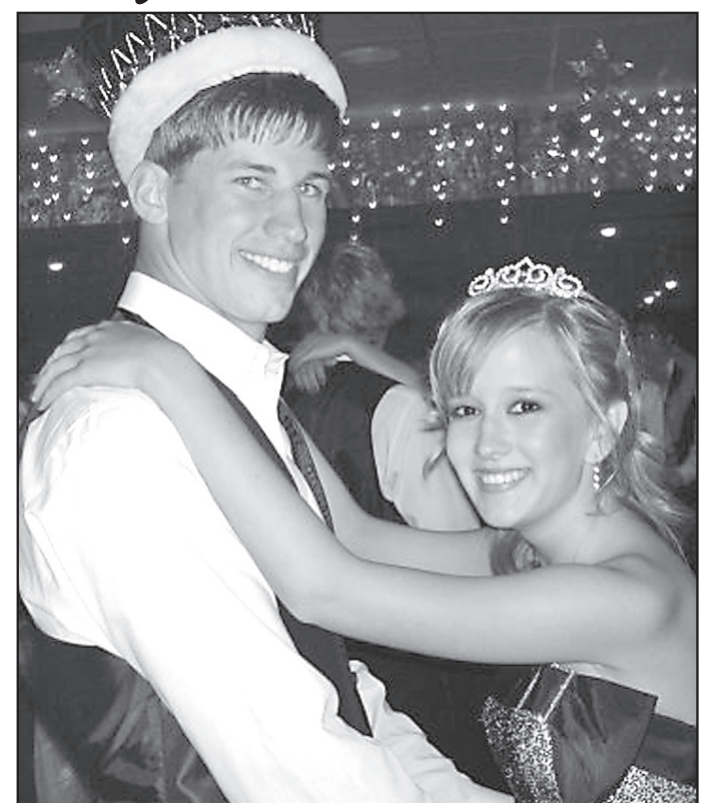
• Heard board member Bill Shields say he had been contacted by a person who wanted the minimum weight for yearling bucket

calves to be lowered from its current weight of 900 pounds. The topic was discussed but, according to Shields, it was too late to make any changes.

• Audrey Hines said Ginther Construction and Farms sponsored

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## A royal dance



Kaitlyn Albers and Tyson Miller were crowned 2009 prom queen and king for Colby High School on Saturday. This year's prom was held at City Limits Convention Center. The theme was "A Red Carpet Event."

