

Welcome College Students



10 pages

COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Monday

August 17, 2009

Volume 120, Number 128

Serving Thomas County since 1888

Board touts success of County Free Fair

By Andy Heintz

Colby Community College
aheintz@nwkanas.com

The Thomas County Fair Board judged the 2009 county fair as a big success when members reviewed the pluses and problems of the event at a meeting Thursday evening at the 4-H building.

"The whole community came together to make this deal work," said board member Bill Shields. "It was a tremendous fair."

Shields said he thought this year's judges at the livestock contests were some of the best he had ever seen.

"Judges did a tremendous job and did what they were hired to do," he said, noting that this year's fair had specialized judges for each species.

Darrel Dible told the board that the Golden Plains Booster Club and the Rexford Lions Club had increased their proceeds from work at this year's fair.

The board approved holding next year's fair from July 26 to July 31. They also approved Ashley Morrow holding a horse "fun day" for 4-H students on Saturday.

Colby resident Bob Rundel asked the board to pay him the premiums that had been denied to his kids at the fair. Rundel said his children received blue ribbons for

their hogs at the Thomas County Swine Show.

The board said the premiums were denied because Rundel took the family's hogs home on Friday night without talking to anyone on the fair board. The hogs were not supposed to be taken home until Saturday. Premiums for blue ribbons are \$7 each.

Rundel said since people were allowed to take their horses home on Friday night, he figured all animals could be taken home.

"Why didn't you ask any questions?" said Shields.

Rundel said he didn't think he had to

authorize it with the board.

"It creates a problem when you let some livestock leave and some not," he added.

Shields said the horse owners had presented their case in a constructive manner through horse superintendent Jay Todd. Clair Schrock, board member and county road supervisor, said the horses were allowed to be taken home because of the possibility of severe weather and because the horses would have been too close to the racetrack.

Board members were worried they would get spooked by the noise, he said. The other livestock at the fair were located in barns farther away from the track,

Schrock noted.

The board voted to deny Rundel's premiums, with only members Audrey Hines and Tom Chain in favor of paying.

Todd, a Rexford resident, said there was initially some confusion about when the horses could be taken home.

Todd said he originally thought everyone could take their horses home Friday night.

He said he was told the board had decided to not allow the horses to be taken home until Saturday. Todd said he spoke to board members, who then decided that horse owners could take their animals home on Friday night.

City council votes to put sales tax increase on ballot

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkanas.com

The Colby City Council decided Tuesday to let voters decide on a three-fourths of 1 cent city sales tax to pay off the new fire station and a proposed new swimming pool complex.

The tax, which would be collected for 10 years, will be voted on at a special city election in November.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said the tax would be used to offset the bond payments for the new fire station (\$2.5 million) and a new swimming pool (\$5 million). If passed, she said, the cost of

the fire station would be taken off the property tax — which the city might then be able to lower — and added to the sales tax.

The current city sales tax is one fourth of a cent, she said. The addition of three-fourths of a cent would make the city's tax a penny for every dollar spent.

Armstrong said the sales tax rate now is 6.55 percent, including the state levy. If voters approve the increase, it would go to 7.3 percent.

"The extra money needed to pay bonds would come from revenue generated from the sales tax instead of from the property tax," said Armstrong. If

See "COUNCIL," Page 3

Retirement apartments revamped to assisted living

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press
vsloan@nwkanas.com

The owners of Fairview Estates have decided to covert underutilized retirement apartments into assisted-living units, providing what they hope is a much-needed service in the Colby area.

They have revamped one section of the apartment complex to provide for seven private rooms and five semi-private rooms, making room for 17 people who need some help with everyday living. The private rooms are one bedroom, and the semi-private units have two. Each unit has its own bathroom.

The facility received its state li-

cence July 22.

Manager is Gary Stewart, a certified operator, and Oakley native. He says he has worked in long-term and acute-care services for 17 years and holds a degree in social services. He has lived in Colby the past five years.

The Fairview Estates complex was built by a group of area investors and incorporated as Fair View Retirement Community Inc., said Stewart. It opened Dec. 10, 2000. It is managed by Rural Health Development, Consulting and Management Group, out of Culbertson, Neb.

Fairview's board decided to get into the assisted living field at the beginning of this year, said Stewart. The center enrolled its first

resident on Aug. 3, with six more spots spoken for.

Stewart said the facility is approved for Home and Community Based Services, which includes Medicaid.

"We will have 24-hour nursing staff available for medical needs, and the residents will receive three meals each day, and two daily snacks."

Nursing staff and the manager will provide activities. The facility purchased the county's old van to take residents shopping, to community functions and to medical appointments, he said.

Stewart said the board is considering plans to expand once the current space is filled.

Gove man found guilty of murder

WaKEENEY (AP) — A Gove County jury has convicted David A. Stevenson of first-degree murder in the death of his father, who was found crushed under the bed of a farm truck though witnesses say he earlier had suffered possibly fatal head injuries.

The six-man, six-woman jury deliberated about four hours Friday before convicting David Stevenson in the March 13, 2008, murder of his 85-year-old father, Walter Stevenson.

The jury was transported from Gove County to Trego County for the two week trial because the

Gove County courthouse was considered too small. Mark Kendrick, a Kansas Bureau of Investigation agent from Colby, was a principal investigator on the case and testified at the trial.

The death initially was believed to be a farm accident, after Walter Stevenson's body was found wedged between the bed of a truck and its frame.

But the jury determined he died after he was struck several times in the back of the head and then was placed under the bed of a truck in a shop on his farm in Gove County to make it look like an accident.

Briefly

Seminars focus on special needs

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas is offering a free seminar on "Special Needs Trusts," focusing on how to provide for a person with special needs, at 3 p.m. or 6 p.m. Thursday in room 106 at the Colby Community College Student Union. The speaker will be Randy Clinkscales, an elder law and special needs attorney from Hays. Seating is limited. For information, call Raenette Martin with Developmental Services at (785) 462-3400.

Soccer signup ends Thursday

The deadline for Colby American Youth Soccer Association registration is Thursday. The program, for kids age 5 to 18, costs \$40. Adult volunteers are needed to coach and referee. Games will start on Sept. 12 and the season will run for seven weeks. For information or to register, call Emily Griffin at 460-0647.

Yearbooks available at school

Colby High School yearbooks for 2008-2009 will be available in the journalism room Thursday. Extra yearbooks may be purchased for \$50. For information, call sponsor Donna Henry at 460-5300.

Gem Lions' hog roast next week

The Gem Lions Club will hold its annual hog roast next week from 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 26, at the Gem Community Building. Entertainment will feature the Jeff Wagoner Family, the Bugbee Sisters and other area entertainers. Donations will be accepted for the meal, with the proceeds used for community projects. The Lions also will be accepting used eyeglasses and hearing aids. For information, call Ken Poland at 462-7809.

Western artist's work at museum

The work of nationally known artist Keith Avery

is on display at the Prairie Museum through the end of August. Avery's realistic items include detailed paintings and drawings of horses and cowboy life. The exhibition is open during regular hours. Call (785) 460-4590 for information.

City picking up grass clippings

City crews continue to pick up grass clippings. Clippings must be at curbside by 8 a.m. on your regular trash day in a separate tipper can from household trash. Put clippings in the tipper loose, not in plastic bags. For questions, call the Public Works office at 460-4420.

Music Boosters plan picnic

The Colby Music Boosters will hold their annual potluck picnic at 5 p.m. Saturday at Fike Park. Anyone with a music student or an interest in music is welcome; bring a side dish to share, table service and

lawn chairs. The Colby Music Boosters promote and keep the public informed about the music programs in Colby schools. Drinks will be provided. For information, call Becky Schiferl at 460-0121.

School calendars offered for \$5

Colby Public Schools pocket calendars will be available at the grade school's "Sneak Peak" from 5 to 6 p.m. Wednesday and at the Colby High School volleyball and football scrimmage on Friday, Aug. 28. The calendars, which cost \$5, are a fund raiser for the Colby Music Boosters. For information, call Kris Lemmon at 460-6586 or any Colby music teacher.

Spreading the word



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press
Riccardo Spadaro, of Santa Barbara, Calif., played his guitar and sang "In the Name of the Lord" near Sonic at 1835 S. Range on Thursday afternoon. Police stopped by to check on him, but said he was clear. Spadaro said he has been hitchhiking across the country singing religious songs.



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 8 9 8 3