



10 pages

COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Friday

March 12, 2010
Volume 121, Number 40
Serving Thomas County since 1888

Fair board pays youth, changes rules

By Vera Sloan

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4-H livestock owners at this year's Thomas County Free Fair will be able to take their animals home at 2 p.m. Friday, the county Fair Board agreed as it changed the rules at a meeting Thursday night.

Not only that, but the board agreed to pay a cash premium to a 17-year-old who had been refused because his dad had taken his pig home early last summer.

Pam Rundel wrote the board about an incident at last year's fair. She said her family had a pig that was to be shown at the Tri County State Royal show the next week, so when her husband saw the horses being released, he took the pig home. However, he returned it to the fair grounds within 30 minutes after being made aware of the rule. As a result of his removing the pig in the first place, the board withheld her son's premium money.

Rundel reminded the board that during last year's fair, horse owners, some of whom are fair board members, met with the horse barn superintendent, and agreed that the horses could be released a day early. The rules in effect then said that all animals were to be released on Saturday morning.

Rundel contended that either the rules needed to be changed, or the horse people should forfeit their prizes and return their pre-

mium checks to the board. She also suggested that the meeting with the horse owners might have been subject to the open meetings act, and that it should have been announced in advance.

The horse owners wanted to take their animals home because the noise from races on Friday nights upsets them.

The board agreed to pay the \$14 premium to Brady Rundel, and approved a change to the rules for the 2010 fair book to read that all animals could be released by 2 p.m. on Friday, after the Round Robin judging.

Blake McLemore, representing the Pickin' on the Plains' Bluegrass and Folk Festival, thanked the board for its cooperation. He said the festival's purpose is to increase awareness of this music to the area and to bring some great musical talent to the people here.

He said his group would like to see more room for camper parking on the fairgrounds and an area to set up wading pools for campers' children.

Clair Schrock, acting board president, said the board would get their heads together and see what they could come up that would accommodate these needs and still fall within the rules. He said maybe the festival group could reserve all the camping spaces and pay for them, then collects from campers.

McLemore told the board some of the bands to be featured at this

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VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Irene Hartwell (from left), Kelli Hankin, Grace Hankin and Megan Hawks, all Citizens Medical Center employees, relaxed after work when the Colby Chamber's monthly Business After

Five came to the new hospital annex on Thursday. Sixteen employees in finance, billing and medical records work in the new offices, built by Miller Construction of Goodland.

Hospital shows off new building

By Vera Sloan

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Seventy five to a hundred people attended the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce's monthly Business after Five get together Thursday afternoon at Citizens Medical Center's new annex building, south of the ambulance garage.

Hospital employees moved 45,000 medical records moved from a 1,956-square-foot area in the hospital to the 5,400-square-foot annex at the end of February. The records weighed a whopping 78,700 pounds, said Chief Financial Officer Kevan Trenkle, and it took 5,000 feet of computer and telephone cable to hook up the new building.

The building houses six private

offices, eight work stations and three transcription offices, plus meeting room and a break room. All patient billing, collections, financial arrangements, medical records, risk management and quality assurance takes place in the new quarters.

Trenkle said there should be enough storage room to cover the next 10 years. The building is part of phase 1 of the hospitals

planned expansion. The second part of phase 1 is an addition on to the northwest side of the main building. That expansion, now under construction, will house an expanded physical therapy department as well as the hospital's mechanical systems and laundry.

Phase II, several years away, will include a new entrance and connect the hospital to the clinic next door to the east.

A lot of waste for one customer



LARRY JUMPER/Thomas County

Farm chemicals brought in by one customer sit in containers awaiting a plan to use them on county road ditches, or if that doesn't work, to be shipped out to Clean Harbors, a national company which disposes of hazardous wastes. The Household Hazardous Waste facility at the Thomas County landfill encourages people to bring their leftover chemicals, paint and the like instead of illegally dumping them somewhere.

Spring forward Sunday

Mark your calendar to make sure you set your clock forward Saturday night, because Sunday marks the change to Daylight Saving Time.

Daylight Time, the practice of advancing clocks so that there will be one more afternoon hour of daylight during the spring, summer and fall months, has absolutely nothing to do with the position of the sun.

It is not observed in Hawaii, American Samoa,

Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands or Arizona, but it is in Kansas and the rest of the nation.

So be prepared to lose an hour's sleep Saturday night, and remember to turn those clocks ahead one hour – or you'll be late for either church or lunch.

You'll gain the hour back when Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, Nov. 7.

Professor poses questions about genetic manipulation

By Kevin Bottrell

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Genetic manipulation of children is becoming more and more of a possibility in medicine, and with it come ethical questions for parents and society as a whole.

Dr. Ron Green, who holds a doctorate in religious ethics and is director of Dartmouth College's Ethics Institute, framed some of those questions at a Max Pickerill Lecture Wednesday night at Colby

Community College.

Green said his purpose was get people thinking critically about changing or improving children's genes, rather than to provide the answers.

"I really do not have answers to these questions," he admitted, noting that manipulating genes holds the prospect of eliminating hundreds of dreaded genetic diseases, but also of "improving" our babies.

Green said there are many hard questions when it comes to genetic manipulation, but he narrowed the list to

five for his talk. One of the most important, he said, is will genetic manipulation increase social injustice by creating two classes of people, those with genetic enhancements and those without?

Green said there are three options: we can let people do whatever they want, we can outlaw enhancements now or we can provide enhancements to everyone. If we choose to provide enhancements with basic health care, he said, we would have to decide what genetic services would be covered. Would we limit it to disease prevention or include enhanced abilities?

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Briefly

Church plans canned-beef feed

The Brewster Community Church will hold its annual canned-beef fund-raising dinner from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday at the church. Donations will be accepted for the Water for Life project, which helps people drill wells in third-world countries. For information, call Janet Pinkleman at (785) 694-2720.

Smoky Hills board coming here

The board of Smoky Hills Public Television will meet at 1 p.m. Thursday at the Thomas County office complex, 250 S. Range. The board travels around the western part of the state to make it easier for members to attend. The public is invited to sit in. For information, call (785) 483-6990.

Series highlights Lent season

The Thomas County Ministerial Association will sponsor another *Lenten Brown Bags and Bibles* pro-

gram at noon each Wednesday throughout Lent with the theme, "The Prodigal Son." Speakers will be W.G. Romine, Redeeming Love Ministries, on Wednesday and Larry Booth, March 24. Come to the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 545 W. Fourth St. Bring your own lunch; beverage and dessert will be provided. Call 462-6342 for information.

Barbershop event March 27

The Colby Tumbleweed Barbershop Chorus will perform two shows at 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 27, in the Frahm Theater at Colby Community College. The show will include the Acoustix quartet and the Prairie Rose Harmony ladies' chorus. For information, call Tom McNutt at 462-2936.

Grant deadline March 31

The Thomas County Community Foundation is accepting grant applications for the first quarter.

Public Relations Coordinator Christina Schmid said proposals can be for any type of project, as long as it is not to benefit an individual, political activity or operating expenses. Nonprofit organizations, public agencies and religious institutions may apply. The deadline is Wednesday, March 31. For information or applications, call (785) 460-9152.

Head Start taking applications

Thomas County Head Start preschool is accepting applications for 3- and 4-year-old children. The program takes applications all year, but children must be 3 by Sept. 1 to start class in the fall. Tuition is free. To apply, call 460-6067.

Start preparing for contest now

The Thomas County 125th committee is holding a "beard and bonnet" contest through Oct. 9. For men, there will be prizes for the longest beard and mus-

tache and for the most unique beard and mustache. For information, call Bob Renner at (785) 462-5279. For women, there will be prizes for the prettiest, most unique and craziest hats and bonnets. For information, call Kathy Calliham, 462-2081.

No couples dance until May

There will not be a singles and couples dance in March or April. The next dance will be a free dance from 6 to 10 p.m. Saturday, May 1, at the Colby American Legion Hall. For information, call Lue Duffey, (785) 855-2341.

