



10 pages

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Motorcycles could race again at fair

By Marian Ballard
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The Thomas County Fair Board voted to allow a local consortium to lease the fairgrounds arena for flat-track motorcycle races during the fair again this year at a meeting March 10 at the 4-H building.

Mike Tubbs and Jim Oliver, representing a group which worked to get the show together last year, said the group would like to lease the arena and take full responsibility for organizing the event so that part of the proceeds would be available for next year's purse. The men said the group felt that they had worked hard to get the races to come together last year, but were left without seed money for a 2011 purse.

While last year's event was arranged by a joint effort from flat-track enthusiasts and the fair board, the board held the contract with the promoter, the largest initial expense amounting to about \$3,500. The races brought in over

\$10,000, but cleared only \$4,000 after expenses.

The board acknowledged the group's work, but noted that the money cleared by the races had gone to pay expenses for the fair as a whole. They also noted that work was shared between the board and the motorcycle group.

After considerable discussion, the board voted to lease the arena to the group for \$500 on Thursday, July 28, provided they agree not to be on the track between 5 and 8 p.m. and show proof of \$1 million liability insurance. They need to agree to the terms by April 1.

In a phone interview Wednesday, Tubbs said the group was organized on Sunday, March 13, as "Ride 'n' Slide Racing," with Mark Ostmeyer as its head, to develop flat-track motorcycle racing here. He said the group has not yet learned from the promoter, Cycle Zone Racing, whether the firm will accept a one-night contract for the Thursday date.

See "RACE," Page 3

Impressive specimens



ROBERT HANZLICK

These two tom turkeys were caught roaming Thomas County as turkey season begins in Kansas on April 1 for archery and last weekend. The pair had better keep a low profile, however, youth hunters and April 13 for firearms hunters.

Brewster church to raise money for rural water cause

By Vera Sloan
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Clean drinking water is something people pretty much take for granted in Thomas County.

Not so for half of all people in poverty-stricken countries, who face severe health

problems from unclean water.

The men of the Brewster Community Church want to help bring safe water to some unknown place with the proceeds from their fourth annual Canned Beef Dinner from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday at the church, 511 Third St. in Brewster.

"The men of the church buy good cuts of beef from the Brewster Community

Grocery and pressure-can it," said Mike Pinkham, "just like the home-canned beef of years ago. And for those who remember those days, they'll remember how good it is."

Pinkham said that along with the canned beef will be mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, corn and a salad, and homemade cake and pie.

"It takes over \$4,000 to drill a well," he said, "and we take donations for the dinner in hopes to get enough money to drill at least one well."

Over a million and a half children die each year from water-borne illnesses, says Water for Life, an international program dedicated to bringing clean water to a people in the Third World. One well can

serve 1,000 people for drinking water, gardens and watering their animals, the group says. Pinkham said the crowds at the supper keep growing each year. This year, the men bought 200 pounds of meat. Everyone is welcome to come to Brewster for Sunday dinner.

For information, call (785) 694-2720 or (785) 694-3335.

More pancakes, please



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Colby Dodge cooks poured more pancakes for the lunch crowd at the dealership's Premier Event pancake feed Thursday. The dealership said they had a tremendous turnout.

Road work to begin on U.S. 83

Workers will begin resurfacing U.S. 83 and K-383 through Sheridan County, from east of Rexford to the Decatur County line near Leoville, on Tuesday, with delays of up to 15 minutes expected through mid-May.

A crew from APAC Kansas out of Hays will be milling up about a half inch of the old pavement, then covering the road with 1 1/2 inches of new asphalt for about 12 miles, said Kristen Brands, district public affairs manager for the

Kansas Department of Transportation in Norton. At the curves by Rexford, the company will mill up two inches and pave 2 inches.

Centerline rumble strips will be ground into the highway throughout the project, she said. The rumble strips are installed on two-lane roadways to warn drivers that they are drifting across the center line to help avoid head-on collisions.

During daylight hours, traffic will be reduced to one lane around day's work zone and guided by

a pilot car. Travelers should plan on a delay of 15 minutes or less, Brands said.

The \$1.5 million project is part of T-WORKS, the transportation program passed by the Kansas Legislature last May. Engineers say the job should be completed by mid-May.

For questions, contact Area 4 Engineer Robert Weiss in Oakley at (785) 672-3113 or robertw@ksdot.org, or Brands at (785) 877-3315 or kristenb@ksdot.org.

House rejects tax repeal proposals

TOPEKA (AP) — Kansas House members turned back efforts Thursday to repeal the last year's 1 percent sales tax increase and a second effort to make the increase permanent while phasing out income taxes.

Both measures were part of an effort by conservative Republicans to fulfill campaign promises to cut taxes.

"We need to undo the mistake we made last year," said Rep. Lance Kinzer, an Olathe Republican.

Others said Kansas needed to cut its budget before it started cutting taxes.

"This state is not going to get its financial house in order until we cut spending," said Rep. Owen Donohoe, a Shawnee Republican. "If you vote for this,

you need to vote for cutting spending. That's what we have to do."

The bill to cut the statewide sales tax rate from 6.3 percent to 5.3 percent failed to get enough support to get a final vote in the House. It went down 80-39, meaning it is likely dead for the session.

Rep. Jana Goodman said legislators were right to support letting taxpayers keep their money.

"You don't stimulate the economy, you don't fix anything by taking money out of their pockets," said Goodman, a Leavenworth Republican.

From July through January, Kansas lost 7,600 seasonally adjusted jobs, according to the most recent

See "TAX," Page 3

Briefly

Bluegrass benefit Saturday

A benefit dance and concert for the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass Festival from 7 to 11 p.m. Saturday at City Limits will feature Marshal Bailey and the Silver Bullets. Cost is \$10 for adults, free for children under 12. Tickets are available at the Dillon's branch of Farmers and Merchants Bank or the Colby Convention and Visitor's Bureau. For information, call 460-7643.

Red Cross looking for blood

The American Red Cross will hold blood drives from noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday and 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Colby Community Building. Vegetable soup will be served both days. The Colby High School National Honor Society will be helping. For information, contact coordinator Bev Vaughn at 462-3861.

Second-grade musical changed

The Colby Grade School second-grade musical, postponed from March 8 due to weather, will be performed at 2:30 and 7 p.m. Tuesday. For information, call music teacher Jennifer Koel at 460-5100.

Chickenpox shots available

The Thomas County Health Department will be offering chickenpox vaccinations for \$14 until the end of June for anyone 1 and older. The department says anyone who did not have chickenpox after age 1 should get two doses. For information or to make an appointment, call 460-4596.

Churches offer Lenten series

Soup and Scripture, sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, will be held at noon each Wednesday through Easter at Smoffee's in

downtown Colby. Speaker for next week on "Who is This Jesus?" will be W.G. Romine II, pastor of Redeeming Love Ministries of Colby. Cost is \$5, including tax. For information, call Jarrod Spencer at (785) 443-2403 or your pastor.

School to hold open house

Heartland Christian School will have a preschool and kindergarten open house from 6:30 to 8 p.m. next Friday. All parents of children who will be kindergartners next year — or age 3 or 4 and ready for preschool — are invited, along with their children. Hands-on activities in the classroom will be followed by a parent information meeting in the Heartland library. For information, call the school at 460-6419.

Group plans candidate forum

The Colby Community College Faculty Alliance

will hold a candidate forum for Board of Trustees candidates at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 29, in the Cultural Arts Center on campus. Questions for the candidates may be e-mailed to bob.selby@colbycc.edu or deb.bickner@colbycc.edu.

Preschool enrollment March 29

Puddle Duck Preschool will have an enrollment open house for the 2011-2012 school year from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 29, at the school, 520 W. Fifth St. The school is open to all children 3 to 5. For information, call teacher Amy Jennings at 460-2603.



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