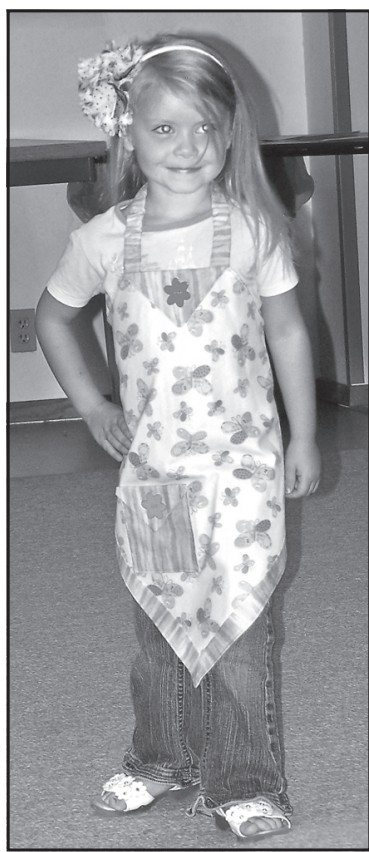




COLBY FREE PRESS

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TOMI MILLER/Colby Free Press

4-Hers show off their stuff

Kim Gerstner (left) showed off her outfit at the 4-H Fashion Revue on Tuesday at the Colby Methodist Church. The show included both buymanship and clothing construction outfits from 4-Hers of all ages.

City to expand pool's parking area

By Kevin Bottrell

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The Colby City Council examined a new design for the parking lot expansion at the Aquatic Center at their meeting Monday. It includes 40 new parking stalls, built where the dirt lot is now at the north end of the site.

Councilman Mark Beringer was concerned that with the number of pool employees who would be using that lot, there would still be not enough room to handle pool and walking trail parking.

City Manager Carloyn Armstrong said she had been checking the dirt lot and found less than 35 cars in it at any given time. Council President Dave Voss said usage of the pool and walking trail would likely

even out over time, once the newness wears off.

The new design also includes a south entrance onto Franklin Avenue to relieve the traffic congestion around the single current entrance. Building the entrance would require the city to move a power pole, but Armstrong said the move is feasible.

The council also designated \$26,557 that will be used to build a sidewalk on the north side of College Drive from Franklin to Wheatridge as a match for a Sunflower Foundation grant that the Walking Trail Committee is applying for.

The city began work on the sidewalk this week. When completed, the walking trail will run all the way around the college and back to the starting area at the pool.

See "CITY," Page 2

Commissioners settle right-of-way fence dispute

By Christina Beringer

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In a follow-up discussion Monday morning, the Thomas County Commissioners decided to move a fence out of a right-of-way in central Thomas County at the suggestion of Undersheriff Marc Finley, who was at the meeting to talk about a separate issue.

At the June 30 meeting, Bob and Connie Renner made an appeal to reinstate part of a right of way to them that was designated as a highway by the county 41 years ago. The highway was never built, but the 100-foot right of way

remained.

Located in the right of way is a fence that the Renners received approval to build in December. In June they received a letter from the Thomas County Road and Bridge Department to take the fence down. The letter was sent when the county learned about a Kansas state statute declaring that rights of way are not to be obstructed without proper approval from the commissioners.

The Renners had signed an agreement that included a statement labeling the fence "temporary." The agreement also included a reservation allowing the county the opportunity to request that the

fence be taken down, if necessary. When signing the agreement, Bob Renner said he was under the impression that this statement to take the fence down would never be enforced.

The commissioners discussed possible solutions to the dispute before Finley made his suggestion.

"It seems to me that the Renners acted in good faith when they put the fence up," Finley said, "and the commissioners also acted in good faith to uphold the law since the fence is an obstruction in the right of way. Wouldn't it be pru-

See "DISPUTE," Page 2

Bat researcher coming to Colby

By Christina Beringer

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A graduate student from Canada's University of Regina in Saskatchewan will be in Colby by Friday to research bat colonies, and is asking for help.

As part of his doctoral research into the genetics of bats, Joe Poissant started cataloging populations of big brown bats in Saskatchewan. He is now working his way south through the United States' prairie land and ending his study in Kansas.

Poissant is hoping that residents in and around Colby will contact him if they have bats on

their property, in their homes or in other building structures. He said the particular kind of bat he is researching is often found in attics and can be easily trapped.

He can be reached at (306) 201-1379 or ayresx@gmail.com to schedule a meeting.

For those who find a bat in their house, Poissant suggests giving him a call; and if the caller is brave, he may even recommend putting the bat in a plastic container with some air holes punched in it.

He'll also accept dead bats for the purposes of his study.

Poissant said that while rabies in bats is rare, people are recom-

See "BAT," Page 2

Downtown flea market planned for Saturday

Come to downtown Colby on Saturday for an outdoor flea market from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Vendors like Cookie Lee Jewelry, Papa's Sports Collectibles, Kansas Country Collectibles, Nana's Comfort Foods and more

will set up on the sidewalks along Franklin Avenue between Fifth and Third Streets.

Various downtown merchants will also be participating with special inside sales.

Harmonizing at the park



CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press

The ladies from the singing group Prairie Rose performed last picnic of the summer. Larry and Taylor McLemore will provide the entertainment. Wednesday at the Picnic in the Park. Next week will be the

Applause, but no tears in mission control as shuttle lands

By Seth Borenstein

AP Science Writer

HOUSTON — There was no crying in Mission Control.

And it took awhile before there were any signs of emotion from the steely engineers of that famous room that takes care of the astronauts from start to wheels-stop.

As the last space shuttle landed Thursday morning, the two dozen men and one woman in Mission Control stayed focused. Behind and above them in the VIP room, their families applauded when Atlantis touched down, but not the controllers themselves. They had to make sure the shuttle and its crew of four were safe.

Their work only ends when the crew is out and Florida ground operations takes charge.

Now, this historic room — which has controlled more than 60 shuttle flights — will revert to a training center. Thursday was a milestone that many had been dreading.

Before giving the final command to order Atlantis to fire its engines to come home, flight director Tony Ceccacci turned to his colleagues and told them: "Time to make our Mommas proud."

An hour after landing, the inevitable could no longer be avoided. It was time to let go.

"Hopefully, I can get through this," Ceccacci said, launching into a speech

to his colleagues and others over NASA airwaves.

He couldn't. He choked up once, but then pushed through. Still no tears.

"The work done in this room, in this building, will never again be duplicated," he said.

"Savor the moment," Ceccacci said. "Soak it in. And know that you are the best. The best in the world. Your work here has made America and the world a better place. It's been an unbelievable and amazing journey."

Then came the applause, the hugs and handshakes. People took pictures, laughed and some had long wistful faces. Controllers kept giving the thumbs-up and tissues mostly stayed in the pocket.

They were under orders to keep dry eyes.

"You guys must know that we do have a motto in the Mission Control Center that flight controllers don't cry," Ceccacci had told reporters Wednesday. "So we're going to make sure we keep that."

Once control was given to Florida, the doors to Mission Control opened up and the sparsely populated room filled with scores of back room flight controllers, former NASA engineers and top managers. More hugs followed. One woman was seen wiping her eyes. A chocolate iced cake with a large Atlantis on top of it was wheeled out. One flight controller's tie was even cut in a NASA tradition.

Cigars were tossed about the room.

None were smoked because it's a no smoking room.

Mark Shelton of the Dallas area who has sent roses to Mission Control since 1988 came down with a large bouquet of white roses.

Norm Knight, who heads all the shuttle flight directors, kept giving the thumbs-up to his family in the viewing area. Up in that room, children played and a toddler watched from his mother's lap. On

See "SHUTTLE," Page 2

