

Concerts and graduation events wrap up Colby school year in May

It's May and a busy month in Colby. The first concert of the month was the Colby Community College Spring Concert Tuesday. The concert choir, Sunflower Singers, concert band and jazz ensemble performed.

More musical entertainment will be brought to you today with the fourth grade recorder and fifth grade band concert at 7 p.m. in the grade school auditorium.

The high school pops concert will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the high school auditorium. The middle school band concert is at 7 p.m. Monday, May 14, in the grade school auditorium and the high school band concert will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 15, in Fike Park. The middle school vocal concert will be on Monday, May 21, in the grade school auditorium.

School winds down in May. The college is holding their graduation on Saturday, May 12, at the Colby Community Building.

Sunday, May 13, is not only Mother's Day but is also Colby High School graduation at 3 p.m. Baccalaureate will be held at 1:30 p.m. Both of the high school events will be held at the Colby Community Building.

High school student awards assembly will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday in the high school auditorium and senior awards night will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the same location.

Sacred Heart will hold their Kindergarten Celebration Tea at 2 p.m. on Friday, May 11.

Last day of school for Colby Public Schools will be Tuesday, May 22.

Sacred Heart students' last day is Tuesday, May 15.

Prairie Museum will be holding Prairie Fair for area elementary students on Friday.

Stock car races will be run at 6 p.m. Sunday, May 20, at Thomas County Speedway.

Colby Aquatic Park is scheduled to open Saturday, May 26.



Leilani Thomas

• On the Road Again!

Don't forget Memorial Day Monday, May 28.

The college's Women's Basketball Second Annual Golf Tournament will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday. This is a four-person scramble.

Colby Recreation Department is holding their golf tournament at 10 a.m. on Friday, May 11, with a four-person scramble tee-off.

Kansas Barnstormers Basketball team featuring Tyshawn Taylor, Conner Teahan and Jordan Juenemann will be playing Western Kansas High School Senior All-Stars. This exciting game will be at 5 p.m. Sunday in the Community Building. It is sponsored by Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Thomas County.

May is a busy time for those of us in the tourism industry.

Tourism week is May 6 to 13. The theme in Kansas is "Tourism Clicks in Kansas," referring to the number of visitors going to attractions, lodging, restaurants and other travel-related businesses. Tourism is the third largest industry in Kansas. The average spent per visitor was \$238 in 2009, infusing \$7.2 billion into the Kansas economy. We will celebrate tourism week in Colby with a luncheon for volunteers who work at the Colby Visitor Center Wednesday at City Limits Convention Center.

We will be attending the Sampler Festival Saturday and Sunday in Liberal. This event brings communities, attractions and entertainment together from across the state. Attendees

visit the vendors, enjoy the entertainment, taste the delicious ethnic food, watch reenactments of historic figures and buy Kansas-made products. The show opens at 10 a.m. both days and runs until 5 p.m. on Saturday and 4 p.m. on Sunday. Put this on your calendar if you want a fun-filled weekend.

A strategic planning brainstorming session was held in Salina, convened by the Governor's Tourism Council and the tourism office of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism. This was a full day with over 50 communities represented.

Cindy Black and I attended a three-day facilitator's workshop in Wichita the latter part of April, held by the Kansas Leadership Center. We received certification for 6.7 hours. We also had to facilitate a session. Survey results, board development, evaluations and curriculum building were all part of the intensive training.

The board of directors is working on plans for an adult Leadership Thomas County program to be held in late summer and early fall. Brochures with dates and information will be available in the near future. If you are interested in the program, please let a board member know or call me at 460-7643.

A special event is scheduled at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, May 17. The Veterans Memorial sign for U.S. 24 will be unveiled at Frahm Theatre at the college. New Kansas Department of Transportation Secretary Mike King plans to attend.

It is a very busy month. Enjoy the activities and the warm summer days.

Leilani Thomas is director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau, a long-time civic volunteer and a passionate observer of the tourism industry.

On the Beat

COLBY POLICE

Friday

6:55 a.m. - Provided directions.

9:43 a.m. - Dog at large caught, turned over to Colby Animal Clinic.

3:44, 4:16 p.m. - Delivered council packets.

4:34 p.m. - Provided directions to motorist by Comfort Inn.

Saturday

1:31 a.m. - Caller reported loud music. Spoke with subjects.

9:16 a.m. - Provided directions for subject from Colby High School to Fike Park.

10:26 a.m. - Caller reported man staring at her and her residence. All OK, information provided to reporting party.

12:04 p.m. - Caller reported bicycle left in yard of business for longer than a week.

12:17 p.m. - Assisted ambulance crew on call.

1:33 p.m. - Theft/assisted other agency: report filed in reference to subject and vehicle involved in theft; vehicle located.

4:13 p.m. - Caller reported dog at large caught. Turned over to animal clinic.

6:25 p.m. - Caller reported juveniles on the roof of the Community Building. Spoke with subjects.

7:48 p.m. - Caller reported six or eight motorcycles racing at Colby airport. Spoke with individuals.

10:03 p.m. - Subject came to station reporting subject violating his probation. Report filed.

11:37 p.m. - Caller reported fe-

male screaming. Everything OK, on phone with mother.

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF

Thursday

1:20 p.m. - Booked Gregory Thomas Mead.

1:26 p.m. - Released Mead.

1:31 p.m. - Booked Laura Rae Murphy.

1:40 p.m. - Released Murphy.

2:02 p.m. - Caller reported hitchhiker in the 2100 block of U.S. 24. Deputy was on another call, turned over to Colby Police.

6:11 p.m. - Released Cesar J. Carrillo-Ponce.

6:20 p.m. - Provided motorist assistance on I-70 eastbound at mile 39.

8:12 p.m. - Booked Taylor J. Brown.

Friday

7:59 a.m. - Caller reported fire alarm in Brewster. Accidental.

Saturday

8:08 a.m. - Caller reported possible abandoned vehicle in ditch at K-25 and County Rd. AA. No one around, vehicle was off roadway; will check again later.

1:34 p.m. - Narcotics violation report filed for subject and vehicle involved in theft from Quinter; vehicle located at Pilot.

1:59 p.m. - Caller wanted to speak to deputy about incident that occurred in Brewster.

2:24 p.m. - Booked Michael V. D'Angelo.

3:01 p.m. - Stalled semi blocking roadway at westbound I-70 exit 54. Provided help.

3:35 p.m. - Provided traveler's assistance.

Earthworms play crucial role in earth's ecosystem

How can you know if your soil is healthy?

With all the different types of soils, from sandy to heavy clays, it's not easy to determine the quality of any given soil without a laboratory analysis.

However, one almost universally good sign of a healthy soil can be easily seen with just a little digging - an abundant population of earthworms, said Peter Tomlinson, K-State Research and Extension environmental quality specialist.

"The beneficial effects of earthworms on soil's physical, chemical and biological properties," Tomlinson said, "have been observed for a long time.... For example,

in 1881, Darwin published his observations on the importance of earthworm activity in the formation of vegetable compost."

Earthworms improve soil structure, which in turn improves soil porosity, aeration, water-holding capacity, the rate of water infiltration and soil carbon accumulation, the scientist said. This helps prevent the soil from being eroded and degraded while protecting water quality and plant productivity.

How, exactly, do earthworms improve soil quality?

"The physical movement of soil as earthworms move through the soil creates an interconnected network of burrows. This is one way

that soil porosity and aeration are improved. Earthworms also excrete a mixture of soil and organic matter, and these casts can develop into stable soil aggregates," Tomlinson said.

The activity of earthworms accelerates decomposition of plant material and mineralization of organic matter, increasing the availability of nutrients, he added.

There are steps people can take to maintain or increase earthworm populations, he said.

"Try to keep from disturbing the soil....," he said. "Earthworm populations generally become reduced in cultivated fields. When tillage practices are reduced or

eliminated as a result of conversion to a ... no-till system, earthworm populations ... increase."

Other ways to encourage earthworm populations include soil testing and liming to maintain optimal soil pH, and ensuring that sufficient organic matter is being returned to the system by minimizing residue removal and crop rotations, Tomlinson said.

As beneficial as earthworms are in most situations, he noted, they are not a panacea in all cases.

"For example, where drain tiles have been installed," he said, "earthworm burrows can actually become a problem by increasing the movement of fertilizer."

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