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Five West Nile cases found in Kansas

By Christina Beringer
Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkans.com

Five confirmed cases of West Nile virus, including one death, have been reported throughout the state of Kansas so far this summer, and health officials say 14 other cases have been reported but not confirmed.

“Sadly, someone in Kansas has died

due to West Nile virus disease,” said Dr. Robert Moser, secretary of health and environment and state health officer. “In many places around the country, including Kansas, cases are on the rise, and we urge caution about the spread of this disease and encourage the use of methods that prevent mosquito bites.”

Last year, said Miranda Steele, communications director for the department, the state had one confirmed case. The three-

year average was five.

The current cases have been reported mostly in south central Kansas: 12 in Sedgwick and one each in Harvey, Sumner, Reno, Stafford, Pottawatomie and Douglas. The closest reported case to Colby was in Trego County.

She added there has never been any report of a possible or confirmed case of West Nile virus in Thomas County.

Steele said other than listing the cases

by county, no other geographic or demographic information is being released on the patients or the one person who died. She said the department doesn’t have any idea why the cases have seemed to cluster in the south central part of the state.

The virus can be spread to people through bites from infected mosquitoes, said Steele, but it is not contagious from person to person.

“Symptoms range from a slight head-

ache and low-grade fever to swelling of the brain or brain tissue and in rare cases, death,” she said. “People who have had West Nile virus before are considered immune.”

Incidences declined sharply after 2003, probably due to immunity people developed through exposure to the virus. Steele said that after exposure to the virus, like

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Legion Riders join convoy for fund raiser

By Christina Beringer
Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkans.com

On Saturday, the Colby American Legion Riders will couple their biggest annual fund raiser of the year with the Northwest Kansas World’s Largest Truck Convoy to raise money for the Special Olympics of Kansas, part of a day full of fund raisers.

The Legion riders invite all area motorcycle riders to join them in a bike show in conjunction with convoy’s truck show at the Oasis Travel Center in Colby. Registration will be from 10 a.m. to noon, and the show will last until 3 p.m. The entry fee is \$10 per bike.

“All bikes must be ridden in,” said Riders director C.W. Hamilton, “even if it’s just the last 10 feet. Bikes must be in running order to be eligible for awards. And we need them to stay the whole

time, since we’ll be taking photos and giving out awards.”

Hamilton said there will be seven classes and nine awards given: cruiser, custom, scooter, sport, trike and three-wheeled, touring/dresser and vintage. He said bikes in the touring/dresser class must have hard or soft saddlebags, full fairing and tour pack. Bikes for the vintage class must be at least 35 years old.

Awards will be given for each class. A Best Bike award will be given based on the decision from three judges and an Athlete’s Choice award will be given to the bike that receives the most votes from Special Olympians.

All proceeds from the show will be donated to the Special Olympics of Kansas, said Hamilton.

Later that afternoon, from 4 to 6 p.m., the Legion Riders will have

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Suspects sought after wild heist

LOS ANGELES (AP) – Two masked gunmen managed to evade authorities after a bizarre bank heist in which they strapped what they said was a bomb to the bank manager’s midsection and forced her to order employees to “take out all the money” from her branch.

The bank robbers got away with an undisclosed amount of cash from the Bank of America when it opened Wednesday morning, but no one was injured in the robbery. No arrests had been made as of this morning.

A Los Angeles County sheriff’s bomb squad disabled the device, but investigators said it wasn’t an explosive.

The bank manager was snatched in front of her home Wednesday morning, said sheriff’s Capt. Mike Parker. She arrived at her workplace wearing a device the men had strapped to her stomach.

She ordered her fellow employees to remove the cash from the

bank and it was thrown to the men who were waiting outside, authorities said. Parker would only say there was “a decent amount” of money at the bank and the manager did enter the safe.

The two men, who were armed with handguns and wore ski masks, took off in a two-door car and remain at large.

Parker said the woman remained inside the bank until a bomb squad arrived and removed the device from her body. The squad later disabled the item with a robot. Nearby businesses were evacuated for a few hours as a precaution.

Investigators initially said they didn’t believe the manager knew the robbers but they have conducted interviews to ensure she wasn’t connected to the crime.

Authorities also haven’t said how the bank manager was targeted by the robbers. Investigators are trying to determine if any video surveillance cameras captured the incident.

Alzheimer’s Walk planned in Colby

Participants and donors for an Alzheimer’s Walk at Fike Park on Saturday can help fight the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States.

“Join the Alzheimer’s Association Walk to End Alzheimer’s and unite in a movement to reclaim the future for millions,” says Outreach Coordinator Jan Evans. “Each walker will join in a meaningful tribute ceremony to honor those affected by Alzheimer’s disease.”

The walk will begin with registration at 9 a.m., followed by the opening ceremony. The one-mile walk will begin about 9:30 a.m.

Evans said people can sign a team up, join an existing team or donate to a team member by going to alz.org/walk and listing the town.

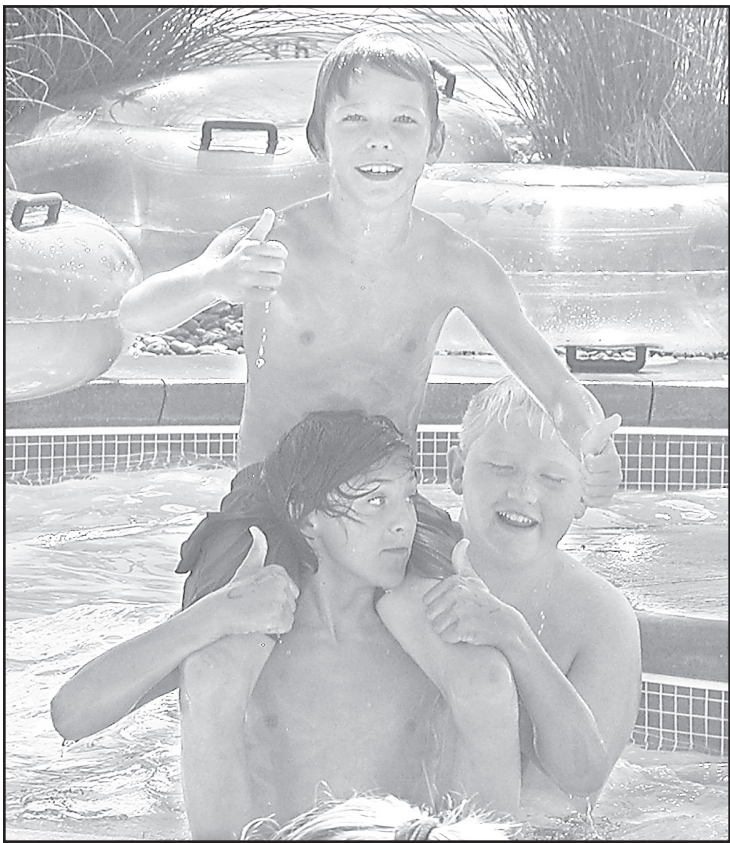
Anyone unable to participate in the walk can show support by calling Evans at (316) 267-7333.



Kids enjoy pool on last day of season

Swimmers going down the “lazy river” (above) at the Colby Aquatic Park on Sunday had to dodge a lifeguard, Taylor Lemman, who was determined to flip their innertubes. One of those who made it through gave a thumbs-up to the camera (below). Dawsyn Lemman (right) took a leap off the diving board. A lack of lifeguards meant the park could not stay open on Labor Day, making Sunday the last chance for a swim this season.

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press



Report: health care system wastes money

By Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON – The U.S. health care system squanders \$750 billion a year – roughly 30 cents of every medical dollar – through unneeded care, byzantine paperwork, fraud and other waste, the influential Institute of Medicine said today in a report that ties

directly into the presidential campaign.

President Barack Obama and Republican Mitt Romney are accusing each other of trying to slash Medicare and put seniors at risk. But the counter-intuitive finding from the report is that deep cuts are possible without rationing, and a leaner system may even produce better quality.

“Health care in America presents a fundamental paradox,” said the report from an 18-member panel of prominent experts, including doctors, business people and public officials. “The past 50 years have seen an explosion in biomedical knowledge, dramatic innovation in therapies and surgical procedures, and management of conditions that previously were

fatal....
“Yet, American health care is falling short on basic dimensions of quality, outcomes, costs and equity,” the report concluded.
If banking worked like health

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