



County says 'no' to beer sales

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Thomas County commissioners refused to pass a request Thursday to allow beer sales at the race track at the county fairgrounds...

Jeff Carney and his wife Kassie, who operate the Thomas County Speedway, asked that they be allowed to sell beer during the racing season...

The commissioners decided to take no action, in which case, they said, alcohol would still be illegal at the race track...

Commission Chairman Paul Steele said the commission has

heard this request before and has never agreed to it.

"I get a lot of calls from the little old ladies in the country who appreciate the fact that we won't (allow beer)," he said.

Jim Carney pointed out the possible economic benefits of allowing beer at the races. He said that race fans eat at restaurants and stay overnight at hotels...

"We could have them inundate you with phone calls saying we're all for it," he added.

The Carneys had several supporters with them to help make their case. John Schmidt said that of the racetracks he visits around Kansas and Nebraska, those in Colby and Goodland are the only ones that do not allow alcohol.

He said he has grown up here

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Newspaper wants to hear from readers

The Colby Free Press needs to hear from readers whose paper is coming later these days.

The Postal Service has closed the mail-processing operation in Colby and now ships mail from the 677 Zip-code area to North Platte, Neb., to be worked.

Because of the change, some copies of the Free Press may be delivered one to three days later than you're used to, especially those outside the immediate area.

to go from North Platte to Omaha and Kansas City before coming back for delivery. There no longer is a truck from Colby to the east.

We are working with postal officials to minimize the impact. If your delivery has changed, let us know. Where possible, we'll make adjustments.

Contact the Free Press at (785) 462-3963 or e-mail Circulation Manager Melissa Edmondson at medmondson@nwkansas.com.



College students work on mosaics

Colby Community College art students in an elementary art education class discuss children's development in art at various stages, the positive effects of art on their development and why it's important for kids to be exposed to the fine arts...

REBEL JAY/Colby Community College



After 5 at S&T



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

Dr. Stephen Vacic (left), president of Colby Community College, talked with Assistant Fire Chief Sean Hankin and his wife Brette, registrar at the college, Wednesday afternoon at S&T Communications.

Proposed legislation promotes charter schools

TOPEKA (AP) - Two bills introduced in the Legislature would give charter schools greater freedom to open and operate in Kansas, where the schools have struggled to find a foothold.

Kansas has 15 charter schools, run with tax money but generally independent of local school districts. The state had 37 charter schools just three years ago; most of those that closed cited financial difficulties.

The bills before the House and Senate are strongly influenced by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, sometimes quoting word-for-word from its model legislation, The Topeka Capital-Journal reported (bit.ly/ZSQKMX).

Charter-school proponents say they offer parents a choice to send their children to schools that offer innovation and options and introduce competition into education.

Opponents contend charter schools aren't held to the same standards as public schools and often turn away or expel difficult students, who become the responsibility of public school districts.

The legislation proposed in Kansas would allow lottery admissions and bar charter schools from discriminating, although they would be able to turn away special-education students if they don't offer

the services those students need.

The legislation would allow independent groups, such as a university or county government, to create a charter school and monitor its progress, while the schools are run by other groups. It also would give charter schools exemptions from state laws and regulations, including graduation requirements and curriculum standards.

Charter schools also would no longer need school boards to receive state money for them. Instead, they would get a portion of state aid that would otherwise have gone to the local district, but wouldn't receive local tax money, meaning that charter schools would have lower budgets. However, they could accept grants and donations.

The schools would be exempt from professional negotiations laws involving teachers and would be allowed to offer different themes and specializations, including single-sex schools, but not religious schools.

Kansas Policy Institute, a free-market group, supports the bills, although it would prefer that charter schools have access to more public money, said lobbyist Dave Trabert.

College concert set for Tuesday

The Colby Community College music departments' free Spring Concert will begin at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the Cultural Arts Center on campus.

The performance will include the concert band, concert choir,

Sunflower Singers and Trojan Stage Band. The concert band and concert choir will perform traditional numbers while the singers and stage band provide more up-tempo performances, including quartets made up of members of

the singers.

Contact Tony Schroer at 460-5519 for information.

