



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Wheat farm featured at state fair

A Thomas County family got to see themselves featured in a display at the state fair highlighting a rare milestone in the history of Kansas farming.

Mike and Jeanene Brown, who operate Solomon Creek Farms near Levant, were featured in a display at the state fair by the Kansas Wheat Commission. In July, they harvested what the commission estimated to be the 25 billionth bushel of Kansas wheat.

"It was representative," Jeanene Brown said, "of that many bushels having been harvested in the last 100 years."

Mike Brown said he was on the board of the Kansas Wheat Growers Association in the 1990s and on the state Wheat Commission from 2003 to 2009. He said he thought the commission looked for some of the last wheat to be cut in the Kansas this year as the place the 25 billionth bushel would be harvested, which would be on a farm in the northwest part of the state.

"I imagine that they figured that it would be at the end of harvest," he said.

The commission called to make

sure they were still cutting wheat, Brown said. The family harvested supposedly the 25 billionth bushel on July 9. Brown said he went to the top of a grain cart with commission chairman Richard Randall of Scott City, taking a bushel basket to catch the grain. His son Tanner, who works on the farm, unloaded it from a combine. Tanner Brown's wife, Carla Sloan-Brown, was there, along with the Browns' daughter, Cassie Anderson, and her husband Scott.

The commission set up a display at the 100th Kansas State Fair that featured the historic bushel. The Browns were driving back from their grandson's seventh birthday party when they took a detour to Hutchinson to see their display.

"We zipped through the whole state fair in an hour," she said, "so in other words, we just went to see that. We posed in front of our picture at the state fair."

Mike Brown pointed out that the display represented the hard work of farmers across the state.

"I thought it was a very good exhibit," he said, "and it was kind of fun to be a part of it."

New soccer fields under construction

The American Youth Soccer Organization, or AYSO youth soccer league, is working on a new set of fields on the east side of town.

James Foster, regional commissioner of the league, said the land the old fields sit will be given up to make room for the Sacred Heart Cemetery. The organization currently uses four fields by the cemetery for its eight-week seasons in the spring and fall.

City Manager Tyson McGreer said the city used to own the land west of the cemetery where the old fields are. Several years ago, he said, the church bought a parcel of land east of the ballfields and traded it to the city for the land by the cemetery.

"We've had several fund raisers," said the league's assistant regional director, Tina Harris. "This has been a work in progress."

She said the organization knew it would have to move someday when it first started playing on its

fields west of the cemetery.

Right now, there's a patch of dirt where four fields are being built east of the ballfields, with a sign marking the area as the future site of the organization's fields. Contractors Griffin Plumbing, Heating and Air; Cahoj Earthmoving Inc.; Mazanec Construction, Western Sprinklers and Lampe Sprinklers are working on the project.

Harris said the fields will cost about \$70,000, or just over \$100,000 with a fence around the area. The all-volunteer organization survives on private donations and fund raisers like its annual haunted house and cookie dough sales in the spring, she said. Foster said Cahoj and Griffin helped start the construction with donations.

He said that each year, about 140 to 150 kids ages 4 to 18 play with the organization, which has been around since 1994. To make a donation, call Harris at 462-8008.

Retired art teacher to get state honors

By Sam Dieter

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Next month, a retired Colby art teacher will get statewide recognition for almost 50 years of work here.

Cal Mahin, who now lives in Hays, taught art at Colby High School from 1964 to 1999. After he retired there, he taught for another 11 years at Colby Community College, retiring for good in 2010. The Kansas Art Education Association has named him as its Retired Art Educator of the Year for 2013. He will get an award for the recognition on Friday, Oct. 25, at the association's fall conference in Overland Park.

"I wanted (students) to have as much technical skill in as many media as possible," Mahin said. "I

have lots of students that are out in the field."

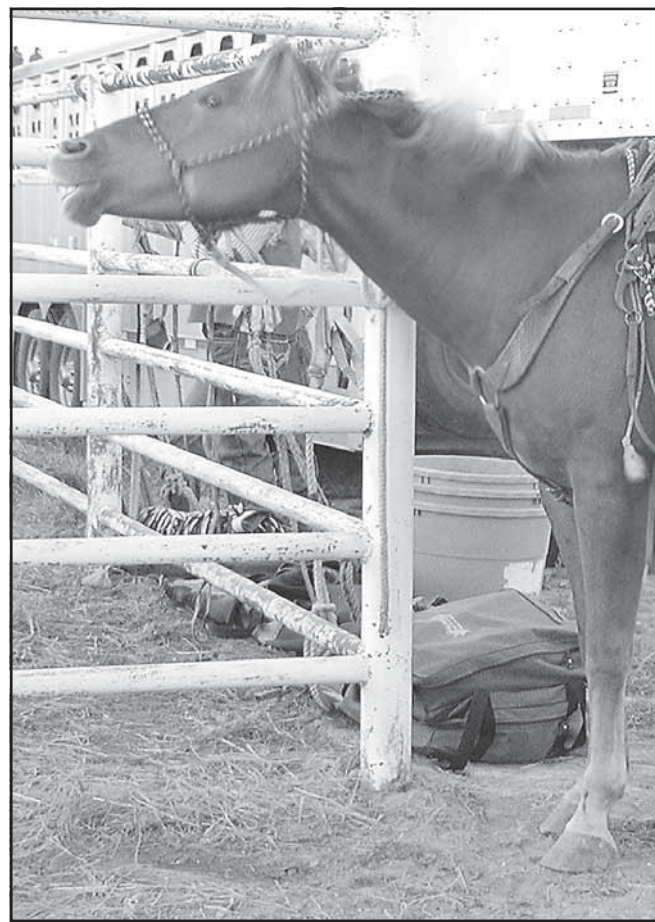
One of his old high school students, Cathy Gordon, went on to graduate from Fort Hays State University and then taught alongside him for five years at the college. Mahin said he only decided he wanted to teach art after taking an art appreciation course in college. After graduating from the University of Nebraska, he said, he moved here with his wife Joyce because at the time Colby schools paid their teachers the third highest out of any district in the state.

"Art education was becoming

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Cal Mahin



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press
College cowboys chased a high score at the team roping event (top) Saturday afternoon at the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association rodeo at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. A horse with a sense of humor took a break, tied up to the pens (above), Colby riders made up only a small fraction of the competitors, but locals helped out with all the jobs needed out to make the rodeo possible. It takes a herd of horses for the bucking events (right). Another rider tried her luck Saturday in the barrel racing (above left).

Rodeo rides through Colby

By Sam Dieter

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Hundreds of college students spent the weekend competing in Colby's biggest rodeo, a weekend-long event that drew competitors from all across two states.

Colby Community College holds the first college rodeo each school year in the Central Plains Region of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association, says Allen Russell, coach of the college rodeo team. He said this

region is one of the largest in the country.

The Colby men's team is in tenth place in the central plains standings after the rodeo here, but the women's team is not listed. Colby's Cody Rieker came in third in steer wrestling.

As rodeo team members and volunteers helped move cattle between pens and clean up after the rodeo, Russell added up the number of contestants: 607 entries, about the same as last year, representing schools from across Kansas and Oklahoma.

Colby's rodeo team had just 10 contestants,

but in the past, many of them have gone on to bigger and better things. In 2005, Russell said, two former members, Davey Dyke and Logan Olsen, made it to the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, Dyke riding bulls and Olsen in team roping.

"The large majority of them have gone on and rodeoed at four-year universities and went on to rodeo professionally," he said.

And area students were what kept the rodeo going over the weekend. The college

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More kids vaccinated for flu than ever

By Lauran Neergaard

AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON — More children than ever got vaccinated against the flu last year, and health officials urged families today to do even better this time around.

Far too many young and middle-aged adults still forego the yearly protection, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

warned.

And this year, Americans have an unprecedented number of vaccine options to choose from: The regular shot; the nasal spray; an egg-free shot for those allergic to eggs; a high-dose shot just for those 65 and older; and a tiny-needle shot for the squeamish. The bigger change: A small number of the regular flu shots, and all of the FluMist nasal vaccine, will

protect against four strains of influenza rather than the traditional three.

"There's something for everyone this year," said CDC's Dr. Anne Schuchat.

A severe flu strain swept the country last winter, sparking a scramble for last-minute vaccinations. There's no way to predict if this year will be as bad. But it takes about two weeks for the vac-

cine to take effect, so health officials say early fall — before flu begins spreading widely — is the best time to start immunizations.

"Now is the time to get vaccinated," said Dr. Paul Biddinger of Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. "Don't wait until it's in your community."

Boston declared a public health See "FLU," Page 2