

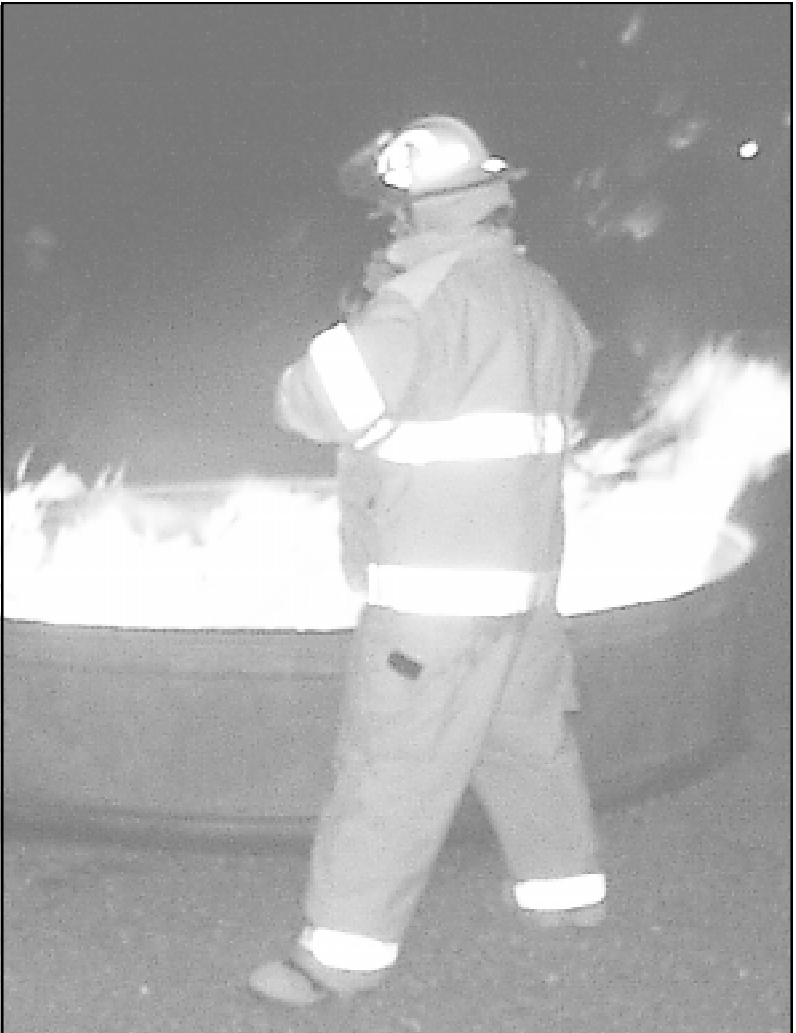


COLBY FREE PRESS

‘Pickin’ on the Plainsmen’ continues



Colby High School students took part in a bonfire and pep rally on Thursday night in preparation for tonight’s homecoming football game against Oakley. **LEFT:** More than 100 students,



athletes and fans gathered at the Thomas County Fairgrounds for the rally. **RIGHT:** A Colby firefighter got the bonfire burning before the rally began.

Jaycees asking for help

By JAY KELLEY
Colby Free Press

Walkers will be raising money for the Kansas Jaycees Cerebral Palsy Ranch at Fike Park on Saturday, Oct. 6. The ranch was founded in 1964 and “allows individuals to enjoy their highest level of functioning and independence,” said Bonnie Lewis, one of the local organizers.

The ranch is 15 miles east of Wichita, and Lewis said area kids have used it.

The ranch is \$30,000 short on funds this year, primarily due to a policy of not turning campers without resources away, Lewis said. The Jaycees rely on donations to keep the ranch running.

The walk-a-thon is part of a statewide effort. The Colby event will be three or six miles, depending on the walker’s choice. Walkers who raise \$100 or more will receive T-shirts.

The walk will begin at the large gazebo in Fike Park at 2 p.m. Registration will begin at 1:30. A lunch will be provided for walkers at 12:30 p.m., also at the gazebo.

For more information, call Lewis at 462-3627 or 462-0808.

Employee prescription coverage changed by commissioners

By MAXINE NELSON

Colby Free Press

Thomas County employees will be able to purchase their prescriptions locally, thanks to a decision by the Thomas County Commissioners at a special meeting this morning. The

county had changed health insurance carriers and discovered coverage allowed the purchase of one prescription and one refill locally, with additional refills to be ordered by mail.

Commissioners said employees complained, resulting in their decision

to change the coverage.

The change will cost the county an additional \$10 premium for each ‘single’ employee. The county pays the premiums for each ‘single’ employee, and the employees pay additional for coverage for their families. Premiums

for family coverage will be an additional \$28 to be paid by the employee. Not all employees have family coverage with the county.

The commissioners said they feel the change in coverage is in the best interest of Thomas County employees

and local businesses. The commissioners also approved the purchase of a new ambulance. It is a 2001 Ford E450 with Medtech Apollo Type II Conversion and was purchased under an equipment lease agreement with the First National Bank, Colby. Total purchase price, plus

interest of 5 percent, is \$91,738.90, spread over five years.

The commissioners will meet next on Friday, Sept. 28, at 9 a.m. in the commissioners room of the courthouse to pay bills and conduct routine business.

Taliban refuses president’s demand

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush put Afghanistan’s ruling Taliban on notice that it must hand over Osama bin Laden and his terrorist followers or “share in their fate” when the United States strikes. The Taliban refused.

Bush, in an address to Congress, announced creation of a Cabinet-level department to tighten security at home and coordinate efforts to prepare for potential attacks. “Some speak of an age of terror,” the president said. “I know there are struggles ahead and dangers to face.”

Hours after Bush addressed the nation, the Taliban rejected his demand and warned that attempts to apprehend bin Laden by force could plunge the whole region into crisis.

The White House ruled out negotiating with the Taliban, but was open to diplomacy by other nations that could create pressure on terrorist-harboring countries. “But don’t mistake the two,” said White House spokesman Ari Fleischer. “The president could not have been more clear about his conditions. But diplomatic efforts around the world will continue to help secure the president’s goals.”

Bush placed phone calls Friday morning to the presidents of Turkey and Nigeria and the sultan of Oman and met with his national security advisers.

Bush presented a rough outline Thursday night of how he planned to unravel the terrorist conspiracy in which hijacked jets became flying bombs that destroyed New York’s World Trade Center and severely damaged the Pentagon on Sept. 11, with a death toll now expected to exceed

“The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.”

U.S. President George W. Bush

6,000. At the heart of Bush’s plan is a nonnegotiable demand for the Taliban to lead U.S. authorities to the masterminds of bin Laden’s al-Qaida network, free imprisoned foreigners and “immediately and permanently” close terrorist training camps in the rugged Afghan hills.

“The Taliban must act and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate,” Bush said. “Our war on terror begins with al-Qaida. ... It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.”

In Islamabad, Pakistan, Taliban ambassador Abdul Salam Zaeef said Friday he is sorry people died in the attacks, and appealed to the United States not to endanger innocent people in a military retaliation.

Zaeef said the Taliban would not hand over bin Laden without evidence, and called for an investigation by the United Nations, telling reporters that Bush’s ultimatum poses great danger for Muslims. A White House spokesman Friday morning reiterated the passage in Bush’s speech that stated, “These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion.”

Bush was sitting down Friday with insurance industry executives for more

assessments of the body blows that the attacks dealt to an already weak-kneed U.S. economy.

The House also was poised to approve a \$15 billion plan to prop up the nation’s airlines, so devastated by the attacks that they began laying off thousands of workers.

Bush promised “active steps that strengthen America’s economy and put our people back to work,” but gave no details. He made that pledge amid predictions that the terrorism response could cost \$100 billion and send the federal budget into the red for the first time in four years.

Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., made clear that no budget issue is more important than this fight. Asked on CBS’ “The Early Show” if he is prepared to spend the entire Social Security surplus to battle terrorism, Daschle replied: “We have to put our nation’s security before we put any other questions to the Congress or to the American people.”

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan warned that the attacks had delivered a harsh blow to an already stagnant economy, and the country’s main stock index suffered its third triple-digit loss of the week, down more than 300 points Thursday.

Sale items



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Shea McKee and Kristin Cox, Colby Middle School students, went through old uniforms and warm-ups that will be sold during a garage sale at Dennen Field at 6 p.m. today during the Colby FFA barbecue.

Briefly

Weather: Near perfect

A very slight chance for thunderstorms appears in an otherwise near perfect weekend forecast for the Colby area, advises the National Weather Service. Tonight, clear, lows in the middle 50s and south winds 10-20 mph. Saturday, sunny, highs in the middle 80s and southwest winds 10-20 mph, turning to the northeast. Saturday night, partly cloudy, a 20 percent chance for thunderstorms and lows in the upper 40s. Sunday, partly cloudy, highs around 70. Monday, partly cloudy, overnight lows in the upper 40s and highs in the middle 70s. Thursday’s high in Colby was 80 and the overnight low this morning was 47. Precipitation for the month remains at 3.03 inches. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 68 degrees here and 52 degrees at the weather service in Goodland. The records for Sept. 21: 97 in 1986 and 23 in 1983. *(The daily temperatures,*

precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Flags will continue flying

“Fly the Flag for Unity” program, which started last week as a cooperative effort between the city and Special Olympic program is continuing. Colby Mayor Warren Hixson said today that in light of recent events involving the attacks, the city will continue displaying the American Flag for an extended period of time. Likewise, Vic Oelke, coordinator of the Special Olympic program, said Thursday flags will not be collected on Saturday as previously planned. “The Special Olympic team volunteers will be leaving the flags at residential and business locations through Nov. 11,” he said. Oelke asks that people involved in this program continue to display the flag from sunrise to sunset, unless suf-

ficient light is available to illuminate the flag at night.

Help the cause; flags available

Contribution boxes and cans to aid the relief efforts in New York City and Washington, D.C., can be found in numerous business locations in Colby and Thomas County. The Free Press is one such location, as are banks in the community. Additionally, the Free Press still has some American flags on hand, in case anyone out there needs one.

Music boosters meet Monday

The Colby Music Boosters will meet on Monday, Sept. 24, beginning at 7 p.m. in the teacher’s lounge at Colby High School. One club official said the group is really needing people to become more involved. The club is open to all

parents of middle school and high school vocal and band students. For information, call Rosie Stockton, public relations, at 462-6780.

‘Freedom Rally’ participants wanted

Motorcyclists are still needed for the upcoming “Attack On America Freedom Rally,” planned Sunday, Sept. 23, beginning at 7:45 a.m., with stops at either the Colby Community Building or Village Inn for breakfast. Cole George, organizer, said only rally participants will receive discounted or free meals. In addition, those accompanying motorcyclists are encouraged to make a free-will donation. He also asks that people wanting to take part let him know as soon as possible so that food preparations can be made accordingly at other stops. For questions or information, call 462-3135 (evenings) or 1-800-804-4840 (daytime).

