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Fair board hears about new extension agent

By DARREL PATTILLO

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Fair Board held its January meeting Thursday night at the 4-H Building, Thomas County commissioners Ron Evans, Duane Dawes, and County Clerk Tracey Perkins were on hand to hold the board's election of officers. Mark Miller was elected president, and Mark Anderson was voted in as vice-president of the board.

Evans told the board that "Thomas County has an outstanding fair, and the commissioners are very appreciative of the efforts of the fair board."

Board member Marty Crampton was recognized for his attendance at fair board meetings. Crampton didn't miss any meetings during 2002.

Marie Skolout and Karen Stramel informed the board that they would be taking over the Miss Rodeo pageant. Board member Nancy Rundel volunteered to help them.

D'ette Schultz, from the Thomas County Extension office, reported

that Doug Musick, formerly the Sheridan County Extension agent, and currently a Watershed Specialist in Lawrence, will be taking over as the Thomas County Extension Agent.

Musick's wife Cathy will be the Gove County Extension agent.

The board is still needing members from North and South Randall, and East Hale Townships. Interested persons need to contact the fair board.

In other business,

•Carnival chairman Darrel Dible reported that insurance for the home-owned carnival has been approved. He also told the board that so far, 3 rides have been purchased, and bidding continues for a fourth. Also, the Thomas County Amusement Association is looking for 4 kid's rides.

•Bill and Bev Biel have agreed to serve as Grand Marshalls of the 2003 parade. Justin Alexander and Brad Skolout, who serve as the parade committee, suggested to the board that ideas for the parade theme be solicited from the public.

Anyone who wishes to submit an idea for the parade theme should contact a member of the board.

•Mark Anderson, advertising chairman, reported that advertising rates for the catwalk will be set at the February meeting.

•The board will be re-applying for money from the Thomas County Community Foundation. A mix-up on how the fair is funded caused the first application to be denied.

•The McDonald Lion's Club is interested in catering the fair barbecue. The board is waiting for a bid.

•The board is looking into having a tractor pull at this year's fair. The tractor pull would be put on by the Nebraska Tractor Pull Association.

•Board member Brad Skolout brought up the idea of having a 'slab' dance at this year's fair. The board instructed him to pursue that idea.

The fair board meets on the second Thursday of each month. February's meeting will be on the 13th, at 8 p.m. at the Thomas County 4H building. The public is invited to attend.

Shuffleboard anyone?



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

Millie Sauvain (right) took her turn at shuffleboard today at the Senior Progress Center in Colby. Center director Donna Schielke was Millie's opponent. The center is open to all senior citizens and offers a variety of activities to include exercise classes, line dancing, fellowship and much more. For questions or information on how to get involved, call Schielke at 462-2902.

Viaduct project is a go

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

In an effort to dispel rumors that the viaduct project in Colby and other projects in Thomas County have been scrapped, Tom Hein with the Kansas Department of Transportation in Norton, went on record today saying that those rumors aren't true.

"Even with the ongoing state budget crisis, Colby and Thomas County are in line for a number of road projects that will add up to millions of dollars of improvements," he said.

Offering a timeline for the viaduct project at Fourth and Franklin and Fourth and Range Avenues in Colby, Hein said the state plans to take bids in April for the upgrading

of the intersections and the demolition of the Kyle Railroad bridge with an on-grade crossing constructed. Hein also sited design complications as a reason for the delay in the bidding process.

"The three projects are tied together and one contractor will be awarded all of the work," he said.

"That contractor will most likely hire subcontractors to complete some of the phases that their company is not equipped for."

Money is expected to be saved on all three projects by consolidating them into one package, Hein said.

The improvements at the intersections will include new curb, sidewalks and resurfacing of the roadway.

Hein said he is encouraging

people to call Gerry Bieker, director of public works in Colby with questions.

He also said that the Kyle Railroad bridge on K-25 will be removed and a crossing will be constructed similar to the one in Atwood.

"The transportation department planners evaluated many factors including current and future train traffic, K-25 traffic volume, structural limitations of the bridge, composition of the adjacent neighborhood, and safety technology that make an on-grade crossing the best choice for this location," Hein said.

For those with questions, Hein said he also could be reached at (877) 550-5367 or send e-mails to: hein@ksdot.org>hein@ksdot.org.

Long inaugural weekend will take Sebelius across Kansas

TOPEKA (AP)—In Kathleen Sebelius' vision for her inauguration, Kansans young and old will share in a four-day celebration of regional food, good music and the mutual appreciation of citizens and the governor-elect.

Festivities were beginning Friday with a Sebelius innovation — a series of regional receptions at universities or high schools in six cities. Today's schedule was taking

Sebelius to Garden City, Hays and Wichita, with Saturday's receptions in Salina, Pittsburg and Kansas City, Kan.

Sebelius returns to Topeka for a Kansas Family Festival at the Expocentre on Sunday afternoon. Monday brings a church service, the late-morning swearing-in ceremony and a gala dinner and dance at night.

She and organizers wanted people throughout the state to participate and

sought to have events that anyone, including families, can enjoy.

Funding comes wholly from private contributions and ticket sales. Any money left over goes to the state by law.

"This is a fine line because it is a cause of celebration, the peaceful transfer of government," inaugural coordinator Scott Allegrucci said. "But these are hard times."

Allegrucci estimated the total cost at

\$320,000 to \$350,000. Gov. Bill Graves spent \$327,000 on his second inauguration in 1999. Sebelius' inaugural committee is using Kansas vendors rather than buying from wholesalers, which is more expensive but keeps money in the state economy, Allegrucci said.

The full menu for Monday night's dinner at the Expocentre hasn't been made public, but organizers ordered 400 pounds

of Kansas beef and 400 pounds of buffalo meat from Butterfield Ranch in Beloit.

As the evening unfolds, so will the story of Kansans and their government through food and presentations, Allegrucci said. The Kansas State Historical Society helped with preparations.

"We have a culturally rich state, and the governor-elect is proud of it and wants people to enjoy it," Allegrucci said.

Biological family of slain 9-year-old grieves his death

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (AP) — The last time Patricia Jones saw Brian Edgar, her grandson was 2 and had been in foster care since he was seven months old.

Thoughts of that short visit, along with a few photos and fond memories, are what she holds on to now after learning that a boy killed last week in a case attracting widespread publicity was her grandson.

Brian died Dec. 29 of asphyxiation after being gagged, and the couple who adopted him face murder charges, as does a baby-sitter.

This week Linda Shadden, the state's adoption contract specialist in Wyandotte County, confirmed that the 9-year-old boy's biological father is Jones' son, now in the state prison at Lansing.

Recalling the last time she saw

Brian, Jones said, "It was like a flash of light. Ahug. Akiss. Ihaven't seen him since then — until the news. All I heard was the name Brian, and I knew that was my grandchild. My heart just dropped."

Her daughter, Elicia Jones, said her heartache began when she saw the slain boy's picture in the newspaper.

"I saw me in his face," she said.

Now Jones and other family members are grieving and asking how Kansas social services officials allowed the boy, born Brian Clark, to be adopted by the people now accused of killing him.

Church leaders Neil and Christy Edgar and their baby sitter, Chasity Boyd, are charged with the first-degree murder of Brian, who died after he was bound and gagged and

his mouth taped shut. Police alleged in court records filed this week said that Brian and three other children the Edgars had adopted were routinely bound and gagged at night.

"How could they place him in an abusive home?" asked Elicia Jones.

"We're distraught about it," Shadden said. "Unfortunately, we couldn't prevent this. Or we didn't prevent this. It's really tragic."

WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley area

The numbers

Tuesday's high-42
Low this morning-6
Soil temperature: 33

Temperature at 11 a.m. today: 28

Record high for today: 74, 1990. Record low, -14, 1962.

The forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy. Lows in the mid teens. Southeast wind around 10 mph.

Saturday: Mostly cloudy and cool. Highs in the upper 30s. South wind 5 to 10 mph becoming northeast early in the afternoon. Saturday night: Mostly cloudy. Lows in the upper teens.

Sunday: Mostly sunny and warmer. Highs in the lower 50s. Sunday night: Mostly clear and breezy. Lows in the mid 20s.

Monday: Partly cloudy and windy. Highs in the upper 40s.

Tuesday: Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 20s and highs in the upper 40s.

Wednesday: Partly cloudy and breezy. Lows near 20 and highs in the lower 40s.

Thursday: Partly cloudy and windy. Lows in the upper teens and highs in the upper 30s.

Briefly

Wellness Fair blood work Saturday

Blood work for the Wellness Fair will be done one last Saturday, Jan. 11, from 6 to 10 a.m. at Citizens Medical Center. With the Wellness Fair nearing, businesses are being asked to take part in promoting community health and wellness by covering the cost of the fair registration and or health screenings for their employees who may want to participate. The fair will be held on Saturday, Jan. 18, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the student union on the Colby Community College campus. The registration fee is \$5, with the addition fees for some of the tests. For more information about business coupons for the Wellness Fair call Wanda Davis at (785) 462-4797.

Booster Club seeks helpers

The Colby Booster Club is looking for any school group or team interested in earning extra money for their group's specific goals to work at its concession stand during home wrestling matches and basketball games, said Shawn

Stephens with the Booster Club. In the event there no school groups or teams requesting to work, the club will extend the offer to church youth groups and other organizations. If interested, call Stephens at 462-6929.

Youth group soup supper Saturday

The Catholic Youth Organization in Colby is sponsoring a soup supper, Saturday from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. (after the evening mass) in the Sacred Heart Catholic Church basement, 1065 W. 5th. The cost is free-will donation and all proceeds will go to support the youth group's activities. The menu will include potato, chicken noodle and chili soups. For questions or information, call 465-9103.

Landfill has new regulations

Because of new Kansas Department of Health and Environment regulations, only trees and shrubs will be allowed in the Thomas County Landfill burn pile. All other wood products, including unpainted wood and pallets, must be placed in the construction and demolition area of the land-

fill, said Larry Jumper, supervisor. All debris that enter the construction and demolition area is subject to the \$10 per ton tipping fee, with a \$2 minimum, he said. For questions or other information, call Jumper at 462-8139.

Free throw contest Sunday

The Knights of Columbus annual free throw contest will be held Sunday, Jan. 12 in the Colby Elementary gymnasium. Registration begins at noon and competition begins at 1 p.m. The contest is open for all boys and girls ages 10-14. with age determined as of Jan. 1, 2003, organization officials said today. Proof of age is required by providing a copy of birth certificate. For those with questions, call Miles Ladenburger at 462-7687 or Dewey Augustine at 462-2924 or 443-1548.

Colby report cards out today

Colby Public Schools are reminding parents and guardians that semester grade cards will be sent home with students today. For questions, call the appropriate building level administrators.

