



10 pages

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Varying interests at the fair



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Ken and Pam Moser of Colby take a look at the 4-H exhibits at the Thomas County Free Fair Thursday night. The fair runs through Saturday.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Kids bounced around on one of the home-owned carnival attractions at the Thomas County Free Fair on Thursday night. The carnival will operate until midnight both tonight and Saturday night.

At 4th and Country Club Drive

Petition wants traffic lights to stay

By TOM (TD) DREILING

Free Press Publisher

The numbers tell the story:

- Twenty-six injury and property damage accidents from Jan. 1, 2000 through July 15, 2003.
- An average of 10 accidents every year; or
- Nearly one per month.
- One fatality in 1990
- That in just 3 1/2 years.

Those numbers apparently aren't serious enough to justify the installation of permanent traffic signals at the intersection that generated these figures, according to one Colby resident who is trying to do something about it.

The location is 4th Street (U.S. 24) and Country Club Drive.

Currently, that intersection is so much safer than ever before and provides a smoother flow of traffic, thanks to temporary traffic lights installed to alleviate problems else-

where in the city where detours are necessary due to road construction, the resident said.

"With these new stop lights you can now cross these four lanes of traffic with peace of mind," said Bonnie Lewis of Colby, who is spearheading a petition drive to have the state install permanent traffic signals when the construction activity ends.

"I have always hated trying to cross those four lanes of traffic the cars coming from the west are speeding up and the cars coming from east are just barely slowing down to the speed limit of 40 miles per hour," she said.

"Also, when you are trying to cross U.S. 24 from the south and are trying to see the oncoming traffic from the east and west, you have to look back around a curve," she said. "If there are any cars parked at the Colby Animal Clinic or a car com-

ing out the Stop 2 Shop parking lot, your view is even more obstructed around the curves," Lewis said.

The City of Colby, according to Lewis, has applied again and again for a traffic signal to be permanently installed at this location "and they keep getting turned down." She said the state says there are not enough accident (at 4th & Country Club Drive), which prompted her to pop the question, "What is it going to take for the Kansas Department of Transportation to wake up and smell the coffee? Do we need to have someone else DIE? Why not fix this problem before this happens to one of our family members or friends?"

Lewis said the fact the city has continued to apply for this traffic signal tells you the city even feels this is a major problem that needs corrected. "As residents of Colby and Thomas County, we need to let

the state know how concerned we are and sign the petition that is now circulation," she said. Lewis added, "If the state will not listen to our city, maybe they will listen to the whole community."

Lewis said Thursday that the petition can be signed at the People's State Bank booth at the Thomas County Fair. A check late Thursday afternoon showed 183 signatures had been attached to the petition.

Lewis said the petition is also be available for signing at the First National Bank, 1195 S. Range, at State Farm Insurance, 905 E. 4th and at City Hall, 585 N Franklin. She said as other locations are secured for the purpose of signing the petition, she will pass that information along to the *Free Press* to pass along to its readers.

Anyone with questions or needing information on the petition drive, call Lewis at (785) 462-3627.



Continued warm

Tonight...Partly cloudy. Lows near 60. Northeast wind 10 to 15 mph.

Saturday...Partly sunny. Highs in the upper 80s. East wind 10 mph becoming south late.

Saturday night...Partly cloudy. Lows near 60.

Sunday...Partly sunny. Highs in the lower 90s.

Sunday night...A slight chance of showers and thunderstorms in the evening...Otherwise partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 60s.

Chance of rain 20 percent.

Monday...Mostly cloudy during the day...Then mostly clear with a slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Highs in the mid 90s.

By the numbers

Thursday's high, 102

Low this morning, 65

Records for the date, 108 in 1935 and 44 in 1925

24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00

Month's precipitation, 0.00

Year's precipitation to date, 11.29

Water Usage/Colby

July 31 = 3.829 million gallons

Injury accident



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

A two-vehicle injury accident occurred around noon today on U.S. Highway 24, approximately four miles east of Colby. Injuries were reported. No details were provided by investigating officers to include the Kansas Highway Patrol, Colby Fire Department and Thomas County EMS. The vehicles involved were a pickup and a Cadillac. A full report will be available to *Free Press* readers on Monday.

Briefly

College board to meet

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will have its regular meeting at 5 p.m. on Monday in the board room of Thomas Hall on campus. Items on the agenda include dispersal of junk computer parts, annual library subscription renewal, approval of contracts and agreements, resignations, board retreat and setting a special meeting date.

Colby School Board to meet

The Colby School Board will have its regular meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday at the administration building at 210 S. Range. Items on the agenda include a public hearing on the 2003-2004 budget followed by the regular meeting. Other items on the agenda include reports from the school principals, curriculum director and superintendent; approval of the 2003-2004 budget; emergency substitute licenses; energy grant bids; and an executive session, if necessary.

Commissioners meet on Monday

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. on Monday at the courthouse. The agenda includes the monthly landfill report from supervisor Larry Jumper, and a report from Clair Schrock on township work.

Rexford flea market is Saturday

Rexford PRIDE will be holding its Farmers/Flea Market on Saturday at 8 a.m. at the park. For August only, vendors will receive double the space for the same low price of \$10 (\$5 deposit and \$5 booth space). A lunch stand will be provided. Anyone interested as a vendor or needing more information call Evelyn Johnson at (785) 687-3925.

Nine-Run-Run planned Saturday

The Thomas County Emergency Medical Service is hosting its 8th annual Nine-Run-Run and the second annual Nine-Ride-Ride events on Saturday at Fike Park. This year's event

will help raise money for ambulance equipment, organizers said, and registration will begin at 6 a.m. for bikers and 7 a.m. for the runners.

For other information, call the Thomas County EMS at (785) 462-4585 or stop by the office at 1275 S. Franklin, Colby, Kan. 67701.

Fire department giveaway tonight

The Colby Fire Department is looking at ways to raise money for a matching grant to fund public fire prevention and education, said Rick Dickman, assistant fire chief. In helping toward that aim, he said, the department is giving away a Phoenix gas barbecue, 50 lbs. of meat, two Little Audrey gift sets and Craftsmen barbecue accessories in exchange for donations.

The four items will be given away tonight at the races at the Thomas County Fair.

For questions, call Dickman at 462-4454 or any Colby firefighter.

Thomas County Fair SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Today, 3:00 p.m. - *Buyers's Appreciation BBQ - 4-H Livestock Sale*

7 p.m. - *Thomas Co. Fair Races*

Saturday, 10 a.m. - *Parade. The parade will start south on Franklin to 5th St., east on 5th to Lake Ave., south on Lake to 2nd St., west on 2nd St. to Franklin Ave., south on Franklin to Cedar St., and west on Cedar to the fairgrounds.*

7 p.m. - Golden Harvest Hybrid Modified Shoot Out & Super Stock.

"Fair Week - Family Week"

Gov. Sebelius won't rule out tax increase

TOPEKA (AP)—Gov. Kathleen Sebelius won't rule out proposing a tax increase to finance state government but insisted Thursday that more savings can be found within agencies first.

During a news conference, she said raising taxes was one option "on the table" as she prepares her budget proposal for fiscal 2005. The budget will be presented to legislators in January.

"I think that there is every belief that we need some additional revenue in Kansas for some of the promises that the Legislature has made over the years that really aren't being kept," Sebelius told reporters.

In 1999, legislators enacted a 10-year, \$13.6 billion transportation program and promised to increase spending on higher education. Since then, they've also discussed increased spending on public schools to boost teacher salaries and improve programs.

But slower-than-expected revenue collections have siphoned money from highway projects, prevented legislators from keeping their promise on higher education

and kept the state from providing large increases in aid to public schools. Under the current budget, most of the state's aid to cities and counties was eliminated.

During her 2002 campaign, Sebelius repeatedly promised a "top-to-bottom" review of state government, saying the efficiencies she'd impose would help the state preserve funding for education without higher taxes.

In one debate, she declared: "No one is talking about a tax increase. We need to do more with less."

After the election, Sebelius said she could not ask struggling families to pay higher taxes until she could assure them that government was as efficient as it could be.

Senate President Dave Kerr said the governor's latest statements also run contrary to her comments during the 2003 session. Then, Kerr said, Sebelius maintained that raising taxes in a down economy was not prudent.

"What has changed?" he said. "I do not see a robust economy."

Sebelius suggested Thursday that the state could eliminate hundreds of positions.

