



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Wreck claims three

*Overtured rig  
on Interstate-70  
is struck by car*

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Three people lost their lives as the result of accidents on Interstate-70 this past weekend.

Two separate accidents near Oakley sent two people to the Logan County Hospital on Friday, and in the second accident early Saturday morning, two Colorado women died at the scene and one died hours later after being transported to St. Francis/Via Christi Hospital in Wichita, according to the Kansas Highway Patrol.

In the early Saturday morning wreck, Lisa Jane Wrenshall, 41, of Littleton, Colo. and Kerily Lane Heber, 42, of Thornton, died at the scene of the accident and Virginia Doreen Short, 41, also of Thornton, was transported to Wichita where she died five hours later, authorities said today.

The accident involving the fatalities, took place three miles east of Oakley at mile marker 78 at 2:20 a.m. when the 2002 two-door Honda driven by Wrenshall struck an overturned semi trailer in the road.

The driver of the semi, Charles Milton Streeter, 26, of Montgomery, Ala., was out of the truck when the car hit the trailer.

The three women weren't wearing their seatbelts, said authorities..

The other injury accident Friday was one mile east of Oakley on Highway 40 at 7:30 a.m.

Clarence B. Barnhart, 23, of Grinnell, was driving his 1983 Chevy pickup eastbound on the highway when he turned into the path of Stephanie A. Albers, 44, of Grinnell.

Both were transported to Logan County Hospital.

The condition of the two was not available.



### Comfortable outlook

**Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area Tonight...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 40s. South wind 10 to 15 mph.  
**Tuesday...**Mostly sunny and warmer. Highs in the upper 80s. Southwest wind around 10 mph.  
**Tuesday night...**Mostly clear. Lows near 50.  
**Wednesday...**Partly sunny and cooler. Highs in the upper 60s.  
**Wednesday night...**Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 30s.  
**Thursday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 60s.

**By the numbers**  
Sunday's high, 78  
Low this morning, 43  
Records for the date, 97 in 1939 and 24 in 1983  
Year ago today, 69 and 46  
24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
Month's precipitation, 0.02  
Year's precipitation to date, 14.02  
2002's precipitation to date, 9.94

The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby.

## A happy howdy!



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Miss Rodeo America Lori Bortner visited with Rita White at Fairview Estates on Friday. Bortner was a guest at a western-theme lunch for Fariview residents and was in town for the grand opening of Buffalo Creek at its new location upstairs at the Oasis Travel Center.

## Firemen called to Colby home and pick blaze north of Levant

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Firemen were summoned twice over the weekend — in town and north of Levant..

A cigarette butt was the cause of a small fire Saturday afternoon in Colby, and there was also a pickup fire on Sunday.

Colby Fire Department Service Officer J.L. Ellis said 14 firefighters and one truck responded to the cigarette butt fire at 450 N. Sterling at 3:11 p.m. Saturday.

He said the cause of the fire was a coffee can used to dispose of cigarette butts.

There was paper and other debris in the can and a live butt tossed into the can ignited the contents.

"It was a small fire on the outside of the house," Ellis said, adding that the can was very close to the house and the fire caused some damage to the vinyl siding on the house and the porch.

He said there was also a small amount of smoke damage inside but nothing significant.

There was also an injury as a result of the fire.

"The gentleman that lived there

did burn his fingers," Ellis said. The Thomas County Emergency Medical Services was there and treated him."

He said the man was burned when he pulled away a small wooden addition to the porch.

He said the man is doing fine now and the fire was under control in less than 15 minutes.

Ellis didn't know the man's name or who owns the house.

The other report involved was a pickup fire about 11 miles north of Levant on Sunday but Ellis had no details.

## Colby man up for magazine's top award

The *Colby Free Press* learned today that one of the city's resident is in the running for a coveted honor and a blitz has begun to get him nominated.

Sherry Barrett, who serves as the newspaper's track reporter, gave the following information to the Free Press this morning.

Shoshana Surek, editor/owner of a Colorado based dirt track racing publication *Colorado Dirt Magazine* has nominated Thomas County Speedway track promoters Kerry and Leeza Wark for "Track Promoter of the Year" award.

Each year the publication sponsors an annual award for those deserving recognition in each category, for example, "Track of the Year," "Driver of the Year," etc.

Warks, along with Butch Speicher of I-76 Speedway in Fort Morgan, Colo. and Mike Mathis of Rocky Mountain National Speedway just outside of Denver, have been nominated for this year's award. Located near

more populated areas, both of these tracks are supported by a much larger fan base than Thomas County Speedway, so the competition is tough.

In her description of the nominees, Surek said of the Warks, "Typically, I stay within Colorado for *Dirt* Award nominations, but I made an exception this time. Sherman County Speedway in Goodland, Thomas County Speedway in Colby and McCook (Neb.) Speedway are now going to be regulars in *Dirt*, so I have traveled there often to cover their races.

"Wark's nomination has much to do with Goodland's track and Lloyd and Rebecca Koel, the track's new promoters. So why didn't I nominate the Koels? I almost did; however, as I got to talk with them longer I realized that Lloyd had taken over the management of a track that had been run into the ground, a racetrack that was once a gem in western Kansas. He did turn it around completely in one season and while there is still work to do,

it looks to be in better shape next year.

"Wark receives the nomination because it was his mentoring that led to the success of Goodland. He stepped in with his officials and track crew at every race this year. Goodland's success is due, in part, to the fact that it was mirroring Colby. Wark did all of this while working a full-time job and successfully running his own track, whose Fair Race brought in 64 Modifieds on Aug. 1 and 2. He has successfully run Colby for 14 years with his wife Leeza Wark. It is evident that he loves what he is doing and that he is willing to put whatever it takes into making dirt track racing successful in Kansas, whether it is at his track or his friend's. That is the mark of a true Promoter: the one that promotes for the sake of the race."

In addition to all of the accomplishments, Surek mentioned Kerry (Wark) also spearheaded the group that successfully brought a great start of a wonderful home-owned

## Officials want station to seek other tower site

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

For both safety and economic development reasons, the City of Colby and Thomas County Commission both have asked Smoky Hills Public Television officials to consider an alternative location for its proposed tower.

The issue first came to the city and county's attention at the beginning of September when the two entities were asked to approve a 1,267 foot above ground tower that would be located 6.75 nautical miles (or about 7.7 miles) southwest of the municipal airport.

In a letter written to Lloyd Mintzmyer with Smoky Hills last week, both the city, county and airport authorities said that while they welcome and encourage new development with many in support of public television, they requested that Smoky Hills seek another location for their tower in the county.

Mark Ostmeyer, airport manager, said there were other options to include either going about 11 miles further south or moving the tower's proposed location from the 7.7 miles southwest to about 14 miles southwest.

Cited as the major concerns for the current height and location of the tower, said Carolyn Armstrong, at a recent council meeting, were the affect it would have on future development of the airport, which in turn would have a negative impact on the development of the county.

Armstrong said the city is in the process of updating and revising the airport layout plan and master plan.

"This will include new runways and new instrument approaches as well as improvements to existing runways and existing instrument

approaches," she said.

Ostmeyer adding that with the new plan, the airport would improve accessibility at the airport in bad weather, which is why the proposed location would not work well with the plan.

In the eyes of the aviation community, said Ostmeier, it also presents a hazard to aircraft arriving and departure from Shalz Field.

The tower's location just two miles south of I-70, city and county officials said, and with aircraft flying across the state at lower altitudes under visual flight rules use I-70 as a reference — some in marginal weather with down to one mile of visibility, would also be a problem.

A large number of aircraft prefer to be at traffic pattern altitude five nautical miles or more prior to entering the traffic pattern of an airport, which is 800 to 1,000 feet above ground for light aircraft and 1,500' above ground for turbine-powered and heavier aircraft, Ostmeier said.

The proposed tower at 1,267' above ground and only 6.75 nautical miles from the airport, it also appears to penetrate controlled airspace along a federal highway by 67 feet.

There are also concerns with agricultural aerial applicators and pipeline patrol aircraft as it presents additional obstacles including support cables to look out for.

"We are still in the process of studying this," Ostmeier said today. "We welcome public comment too."

However, Ostmeier suggests that those wanting to make input look over the documents currently at the airport for educational purposes.

## Drowsy drivers on the increase

SALINA (AP) — Drowsy drivers aren't a new problem, but a growing one, Kansas officials say. It's a problem that sometimes has deadly implications.

"Some people find themselves on autopilot," said David Greiser, a spokesman for the Kansas Department of Transportation. "If you don't remember the last several minutes or miles, you probably dozed off and should get off the road."

Drivers falling asleep were listed as the cause of 850 Kansas traffic accidents in 2001, according to the Kansas Traffic Accidents Facts released by the department. But Greiser said that number doesn't really show the extent of the problem in the state.

"It's impossible to attribute drowsy driving as the direct cause of most wrecks," he said. "The only way is if the driver tells us, and that seldom happens."

Officials say a sleepy driver is almost as dangerous as a drunken one, exhibiting many of the same driving mistakes.

## Briefly

### Author to speak at library

Roy Bird, author of "In His Brother's Shadow, The Life of Thomas Ward Custer" will speak about the Custers and his book Wednesday, Oct. 1 at Pioneer Memorial Library.

### Checks still need to be picked up

Premium checks for this year's Thomas County Fair need to be picked up at the Thomas County Extension Office, 350 S. Range, Colby, before the end of September.

Anyone entitled to receive a check and haven't done so yet are encouraged to do so as soon as possible.

### Hospice offers workshop

Hospice Services, Inc. will offer a continuing education workshop at the Gateway in Oberlin from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday. The speaker is Marcia Lattanzi-Licht, MA, RN, LPC, and the workshop is entitled, "Acquired Bravery:

A Health and Wellness Approach to Loss." Anyone interested in attending or with other questions, can call either (785) 543-2900 or toll-free, (800) 315-5122.

### Free program offered in October

The Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center in Oakley is sponsoring a presentation geared for parents, childcare providers, preschool staff and kindergarten through third grade teachers. There are two opportunities available with the first from 1 to 4 p.m. and the second from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 9. The presentation will be made by Chuck Smith, state specialist in Kansas Research and Extension with the program called, *Raising Children Who Have Courage and Conscience*. To register for either presentation, call the service center at (785) 672-3125, ext. 124 by Monday, Oct. 6. Free childcare is available upon request and there is no cost for the presentations.

### College to offer certification courses

Colby Community College will offer certification courses

for social service designees and activity directors starting today. The courses will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 22, 29, Oct. 6, 13, 20, 22, Nov. 3 and 10 in the Robert Burnett Memorial Student Union. Four college credits and two certificates will be awarded for attendance at all eight classes. Two college credits and one certificate will be awarded for six classes. To enroll or for more information, call (785) 462-3984, Ext. 286.

### Center enrollment continues

The Thomas County Learning Center, 305 N. Franklin in Colby, is now taking enrollment applications. One function of the center is to give students a chance to get their high school diploma. For those wanting to enroll or for eligibility information, call 465-7900.

### Job Service open over noon hour

The Colby Work Force office (formerly known as Job Service) at 485 N. Chick is staying open during the lunch hour from here on in to better serve the public.



