



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Time out



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Todd and Shelly Wilson of Minneapolis visited with Christian recording artist David Phelps during a meet and greet break at Phelps' concert Saturday night at Colby High School. Record-

ing artist George Rowe and comedian Daren Streblow also entertained. This was Phelps' "Revelation" Tour's only stop in Kansas this summer.

## Three hurt, one airlifted in Levant fire

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

LEVANT — Three people were injured Friday night in Levant when a controlled burn went out of control while dismantling a shed and tossing the wood into an open pit.

Roy Williams, owner of the shed, along with Robert Willbur and Jordan Harris, both helping with the project, were tearing down the shed, depositing the wood in a pit and then using flammable liquids to start the flame.

The injuries occurred when the three men used too much gasoline on the wood, said Bob McLemore, fire chief, causing a flashback on them.

A call was made to the Thomas County Sheriff's office at 8:26 p.m. and, in turn, the Colby Fire Department was notified. McLemore was on the scene within six minutes of the call.

All three men, he said, were taken by Thomas County Emergency Medical Services ambulance to Citizens Medical Center, where Williams and Willbur were treated and released.

The thirdman, Harris, was released and airlifted to another facility. No other information on his condition or to what facility he was

taken to was available.

McLemore said he cautions residents to follow a few safety steps when considering a controlled burn.

"Residents should always call the fire department and let us know they plan to do a controlled burn," McLemore said.

With the exception of burning trash in the county, he said his office should be notified of a controlled burn.

In addition, something like what happened Friday night could have been avoided, he said, by asking questions on the proper usage of flammable liquids.

"That's where the residents in Levant got into trouble," he said.

The fire department can offer many suggestions for controlled burns and by notifying them, firefighters are then aware the fire is taking place.

Another agency that must be contacted before a structure fire takes place is the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in Hays, he said.

"They need to know for health and environment reasons with regard to the smoke and materials being burned," he said.

For questions or general information on fire safety, call 462-4454.

## Wall Street notices little firm

ATCHISON (AP)—A few short years after wondering if his 63-year-old company would survive, Ladd Seaberg is presiding over a business that has customers clamoring for its products and Wall Street noticing the little wheat-processing firm in northeast Kansas.

After being hammered in the late 1990s by a steep drop in sales of wheat gluten, a baking ingredient that was the company's main product, Seaberg and other leaders of Midwest Grain Products decided the company had to refocus or risk going out of business.

Midwest Grain changed its emphasis from ethanol and commodity products such as wheat gluten

and animal feed to developing specialty ingredients from proteins and starches it pulls out of flour. To note the change, the company was renamed MGP Ingredients Inc.

MGP caught one of the biggest breaks in its history when the low-carb craze hit America, ratcheting up demand for its proteins and starches that reduce carbohydrates in bakery and food products.

"Along came Dr. Atkins. It fell in our lap and really accelerated our program," Seaberg said. "Suddenly, we couldn't make enough of the stuff."

The specialty ingredients also have allowed expansion into such diverse areas as pet treats, hair and

cosmetic products and even biodegradable golfing tees and cutlery.

MGP also offers Wheatex, a textured protein that, with moisture, can be used as meat filler or a protein source for vegetarians.

The transformation was helped by \$26 million in federal funds received after European competitors cornered the market on wheat gluten through what MGP considered unfair trade practices.

An explosion at its distillery in Atchison in 2002 even had a silver lining, Seaberg said, because it allowed the company to install state-of-the-art equipment at that plant, which produces ethanol and specialty products for alcohol.

## Insurance renewal gets county nod

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Commissioners approved a renewal of health insurance for county employees at their meeting this morning.

Randy Dick, of Rossville, representing Central Benefits of Columbus, Ohio, the county's insurance provider, was at the county meeting to confer



Ron Evans

with the commission.

He said the county will have a 5.25 percent increase in premiums for insurance over the coming year.

However, county employees won't have to pay anything extra because the county is picking up the tab which is an estimated \$16,000 increase.

Commissioner Ron Evans said the county has the money in the form of insurance carryover, which will be used to pay the extra premium.

He said they were anticipating a 10 percent increase and said the actual increase is acceptable.

Dick said they didn't have to

make any changes to the insurance program, only retain the plan the county had last year.

The commissioners also heard a 2005 budget request from the Thomas County Conservation District.

Lynette Koon, district spokesperson with the conservation district, was asking for a \$3,000 increase.

Last year, the district received \$37,500 and is asking for \$40,500 this year.

In other matters, the board approved renewing the county's contract to continue with Oneok as its natural gas provider.

## Colby Selden Kanorado



## Could top 100 Tuesday

**Tonight...**Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing late. Lows in the mid 60s. Southeast winds 5 to 10 mph. **Tuesday...**Mostly sunny. Highs around 101. Southeast winds around 10 mph increasing to 10 to 15 mph in the afternoon. **Tuesday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 60s. South winds 5 to 15 mph. **Wednesday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 90s. Southeast winds 5 to 15 mph. **Wednesday night...**Partly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the lower 60s. **Thursday...**Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 80s.

### The numbers

Sunday's high, 97  
Low this morning, 65  
Records for July 12, 106 in 1954 and 47 in 1975  
Year ago today, 91 and 66  
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
July total, 2.22 inches  
Soil temperature, 83

### The sources:

The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

### Water use

• July, 9, 10, 11 = averaged 2.371 million gallons.

### Water advisories

• Water **Watch** is 3.5 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.  
• Water **Warning** is 4.0 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.  
• Water **Emergency** is 4.5 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.

## Colby Girl Scouts get \$4,000 donation

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Girl Scouts in Colby were given five new tents, thanks to money from the Thomas County Sheriff's and Thomas County Attorney's Drug Forfeiture Fund.

The Girl Scouts received \$4,000 or \$2,000 from each of those offices, said Shannon Koon, service unit manager, which was enough to buy the tents.

"We had tents that were bought in the 1970s," she said, "and all of them were beyond repair."

Koon said the scouts had initially requested nine tents, but were thrilled to have had enough money

to purchase over half their request.

Nearly a dozen girls were busy Sunday morning and afternoon, she said, putting the new tents up for weatherproofing and then re-packing them for this weekend's trip to Camp Hansen on Lake Kirwin.

"We also want to thank Wal-Mart and KQLS for their help as well," she said. Through those donations, Koon said, the scouts are able to buy other camping equipment and help with upkeep at the Girl Scout Center in the PuddleDuck Preschool building.

For girls interested in scouting, Koon said they can call her at 460-6662.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

More than a dozen Colby Girl Scouts, along with troop leaders, weatherproofed tents Sunday. (Left to right) Jessica Koon, Allison Mruzek, Shannon Koon and Christina Ostmeyer (inside the tent) packed up the tents for this week's camping trips.

## Briefly

### Voter registration still open

Voters who haven't registered still have time to register to vote in the Aug. 3 primary election. The county voter rolls close at 5 p.m. on July 19 and won't reopen until the day after the election. For information on registering to vote, call the Thomas County Clerk's 462-4500.

### Volunteers needed at fairgrounds

Volunteers will be needed this year at the Thomas County Fairgrounds to help with the Amusement Association's games. For those wanting to volunteer time call the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce office at 460-3401.

### Pre-Pickin On the Plains event planned

A pre-festival event in conjunction with *Pickin On the Plains* is scheduled Thursday, July 15 starting at 4 p.m. with registration for the pedal

tractor pull open to children ages 4-12. The pedal tractor pull activities begin at 5 p.m. at the Thomas County fairgrounds and is being sponsored free by Farm Bureau Association. Following the pedal tractor pull, organizers said, there will be a potluck and jam session with drinks furnished. For questions on any of these pre-festival activities, call (785) 460-6332.

### Items still needed for camp

Donations are still needed for Girl Scouts in Colby who will be attending summer camp Wednesday at Camp Hansen, Kirwin Lake, said Brette Pfeifer, coordinating activities. Thanks to the overwhelming response, Pfeifer said, they now have enough 45s and coffee cans; however, pillow cases (whites and light pastels); clear fingernail polish; rubber O-rings (for making water bottle holders); clear sealant spray, and bubble gum are needed. Pfeifer said she would be glad to pick these items up by calling her at 460-6006 or toll-free at 1-877-280-9836. For those wanting to drop items off to her, they can do so between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., weekdays, at the Girl Scout Office.

