



COLBY FREE PRESS

Festival attracts hundreds

By TISHA COX
Colby Free Press

Pickin' on the Plains is over for another year but it will stand out as what Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Leilani Thomas said was probably the best event yet.

"We know without a doubt it was the largest crowd we've had," she said, adding an estimated 750-800 people attended the weekend event.

"The festival couldn't have gone better."

Bob McLemore, one of the event's organizers and also a performer, also said the bluegrass festival went well.

"We had a good turnout," he said.

"It keeps growing every year and I think people really enjoyed it."

McLemore said there were enough volunteers to help with the event and also enough camping spaces at the fair grounds, although there was so many people wanting to camp some had to go to Bourquin's RV Park.

All 60 fairground electrical sites were filled and he said there were also other people camping out with tents so all of the spots were filled.

McLemore said the performances were packed Friday and Saturday night and ran until



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

ABOVE: The New Old-Timers of Hill City performed Saturday afternoon at Pickin' on the Plains at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. **RIGHT:** A record crowd enjoyed the performance as well. The event drew in a record crowd of 750-800 people, said Leilani Thomas, director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau.

10:30 and 11 p.m.

He said even Saturday afternoon's performance was full.

Thomas said the tent for this year's festival was a third bigger

than last year and it was kept full from Friday night until the last performance on Sunday.

She said even though it was larger, there was still overflow and



some people were standing outside to watch the performers.

Even the vendors were busy. Thomas said there were about 12 vendors at the event, selling every-

thing from food to tie-dyed shirts.

McLemore said at one point, a food vendor ran out and had to go get more.

"I think overall the vendors did

pretty good," he said. "It was undoubtedly a success."

Next year's Pickin' on the Plains is scheduled for July 15-17.

City council looks at final options for sewer plant funding

By PATTY DECKER
Free Press Editor

The Colby Council will be making its final selection regarding funding for the wastewater treatment plant improvements at its meeting at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, in council chambers.

The discussion will involve the state's revolving loan fund and the USDA Rural Development fund,

said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager.

"The state's revolving loan fund is a 2.77 percent loan over a 20-year period with the principal and interest payments anticipated at a cost of \$433,587 after the application of \$2.2 million paid by the city," she said.

Under this loan, the required average sewer rate would be \$27.59 a

month.

With respect to a USDA Rural Development loan, everything will depend on final review of the project, financial status of the city, availability of funds from the federal level and more, she said.

However, based on the application the city submitted to the USDA in 2003, the city could receive a grant of \$850,000 with the federal

loan at \$7,808,900, at a current interest rate of 4.75 percent and average sewer rate of \$28, Armstrong said.

With the increase in the sewer rates, Armstrong said she believes we will meet the \$2.2 million toward the loan regardless of which way the council decides to go.

The council is expected to make a decision on this issue with Mayor

Warren Hixson also expected to sign the appropriate documents to get the funding in place for the new wastewater treatment plant.

In addition, the council has many agenda items to discuss or approve including the appointment of a new city attorney.

Armstrong noted that Joel Kriss, the current city attorney, who has been in that position for nearly 10

years, has decided to retire.

Other concerns include review on the condition of a yard at 1390 W. 3rd St and what can be done to bring this up to code.

The council will also talk about its budget next year and schedule the public meeting.

For questions or to get a copy of Tuesday's agenda, call 462-4410. All meetings are open to the public.

Sedgwick County Zoo visitors will go ape over newest exhibit

WICHITA (AP) — When you weigh up to 500 pounds, people expect big things of you.

Sedgwick County Zoo officials predict the residents of the \$5.5 million Downing Gorilla Forest opening that opens this week will draw an additional 50,000 visitors

over the next two years.

"Gorillas are definitely among the animals that bring people in," said zoo director Mark Reed. "And we think people are really going to love this exhibit."

The six male gorillas already in residence — Matt, Jabir, Shango,

Barney, Tommy and Billy — come from zoos across the country and range from 5 to 15 years old. Two more, Virgil and Samson, are expected to arrive this fall or early next year. The zoo has developed the gorilla exhibit over the last four years, hoping to ape the success of

the 8-year-old Koch Orangutan and Chimpanzee Habitat.

Like many zoos in the country, Sedgwick County always wanted gorillas, he said.

But it wasn't until Wichita philanthropists Barry and Paula Downing stepped forward that the plan

became a reality. The Downings, who were enthralled with gorillas during a trip to Africa, provided \$4 million for the habitat and encouraged others to donate an additional \$1.5 million. Reed and other zoo officials visited parks with gorillas to compare what worked and what

didn't. They also reviewed lists of gorillas being removed from zoos because of age, size or how they ranked in simian society. Zoos use gorillas to compete but also are careful not to put gorillas where they could be dangerous or unhappy.

Fatal shooting in December was ruled accidental

ST. FRANCIS (AP) — Authorities in northwest Kansas say no charges will be filed against a former police chief in the fatal shooting of a man he was trying to take into custody.

William Joseph Schwab, 43, of

Oberlin, was shot in December 2003 when former St. Francis Police Chief Jason Ryan and Kansas Bureau of Investigation agents tried to apprehend him.

Cheyenne County Attorney Kevin N. Berens announced Friday

that Schwab's death was found to have been an accident.

Schwab, who was being investigated for solicitation of murder, was shot when Ryan's handgun went off while he was struggling with Schwab, Berens said. Schwab died

at the Cheyenne County Hospital.

The KBI provided reports on the case to Berens, an agency official said. Ryan was placed on administrative leave after the shooting and later resigned. Troy Gardner became police chief in March.

Briefly

Library to hold book sale

Pioneer Memorial Library will hold its annual "Summer Book Sale" July 31 through Aug. 8. Book prices will start at 10 cents. As the week progresses, all book prices will drop. The book sale will take place during normal library business hours.

For more information contact the library at (785) 462-4470. All proceeds go to benefit the library.

Outreach enrollment planned in Rexford

Enrollment for Colby Community College Outreach classes will be held in Rexford from 7 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, Aug. 17-19 at the Rexford High School. For questions about the outreach program, to obtain a schedule or other general information at Colby College, call 462-3984.

Yo-Yo Spinmaster to perform at library

The 2002 National Yo-Yo Champion will be performing freestyle routines to music at 2 p.m., Wednesday, at Pioneer Memorial Library. Brent Dellinger, 16, who is a sophomore in Salina has won many awards and contests for his tricks using a yo-yo, a library spokesperson said.

Dellinger has been performing professionally since February of 200 and demonstrates tricks from the beginner level to the expert/pro level.

The program is free and open to everyone. For questions, call 462-4470.

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.

"We are helping to schedule volunteers and would like your name on our sheet," said Jada Tubbs, executive director of the chamber.

Thomas County 4-H seeks trophy donations

With the 2004 Thomas County Fair approaching, the Thomas County 4-H Council Trophy Committee is looking for sponsors for the various 4-H exhibits--crops, livestock, arts, cooking, sewing, etc. at the fair. Individuals, businesses or organizations can sponsor a trophy at the fair. Trophies will be given to the Grand Champion and Reserve Champion in all the projects. The projected cost of each trophy is \$8. All sponsors will be thanked through an advertisement in the Colby Free Press following the fair, their names printed in next year's fair book and will also be listed at the 4-H Building and livestock arena. For information call 462-4582.

Colby
Seguin
Angelus



Warm stuff to hang on

Tonight...Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the lower 60s. Northwest winds 5 to 15 mph. **Saturday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 80s. North winds around 5 mph. **Saturday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 60s. Northeast winds 5 to 10 mph shifting to the southeast after midnight. **Sunday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 90s. South winds 5 to 10 mph. **Monday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 90s. **Tuesday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 90s.

The numbers

Sunday's high,
Low this morning,
Records for July 19, 107 in 1926 and 50 in 1902
Year ago today, 94 and 73

Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00
July total, 2.94 inches

Soil temperature,

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 16-17-18 = 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.

