



COLBY FREE PRESS

Recording artist returns to hometown

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Coming "home" for a visit is always a special occasion.

But for Mark Schultz, returning to the community where he grew up is even more special this time. Schultz, an award-winning Christian artist, is giving his first-ever concert in Colby on Thursday, Aug. 11.



M. Schultz

The concert will be at 8 p.m. at the Colby Community Building. And Schultz said it's a "huge thrill" to give a concert in the community he once called home.

"This is the first concert since I've come to Nashville," Schultz said, adding in nearly six years of touring, he's done "thousands" of concerts from Charlotte to Dallas to Los Angeles.

The concert will be the kick-off date for the tour to support his upcoming DVD "Stories and Songs," which will be released on Tuesday, Sept. 27.

People will be able to pre-order the DVD at the concert and it will be delivered by mail after its release.

The Colby concert will be the first of a tour that will span more than 20 dates this fall, and will include Orlando, Charlotte, Dallas, and Tulsa.

Schultz has had six No. 1 songs in the past five years, including "Letters from the War," which was on his last record.

The U.S. Army made a video of it, which was shown to soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and he even did a concert in the courtyard of the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. last summer.

Footage from that concert will be shown during his Colby performance.

Schultz is in the middle of getting ready to promote the DVD, which features a live concert as well as a 45-minute documentary on where he grew up, including Colby, Salina, where his grandmother lives, and Kansas State University in Manhattan and his old fraternity, as well as Nashville.

"It makes sense in the context of

the concert," he said.

He still has family in the area, an aunt and uncle, Louise and Don Schultz, who live in Grainfield. However, Schultz said he feels like he has adopted the community as family while he was growing up.

"I was over at everybody's house then," he said, adding it's always fun coming back home. "I feel like I never left."

The timing of the concert couldn't be better. Not only is Schultz coming back to perform but he'll be sticking around for a few days for the Colby All-School Reunion, an event held every five years.

He's excited to come back and do the concert, and said it's a dream to actually be able to do so. Schultz said all of his concerts are special but with this one, he's coming full circle.

Schultz said the community is important to him.

He also talks about Colby while on the road at concerts, telling people it was a great place to grow up.

And, Schultz said, he's doing what he's doing because of the people he grew up with.

Many people in the community played a "huge" role in his life and he wanted to thank them, including Phil Shuman, Joan Albers, Lenora Haney and Shirley Malcolm, who taught him to play piano, and all of the other people who encouraged him in music.

Schultz, a 1989 graduate of Colby High School, played quarterback on the football team as well as basketball, said Larry Arehart, whose son Scott was a friend of Schultz's.

He said Scott was a couple of years older than Schultz and the two met through youth activities at Colby United Methodist Church.

"He was a good kid growing up," Arehart said. "He was fun to be around."

Schultz also attended Colby Community College two years, where he was active in the Sunflower Singers.

Arehart said he was even in a production of "South Pacific" with Schultz.

Only a couple of hundred tickets are left, said Rich Epp, co-owner of J&R Marketing, the concert organizer.

.And this little piggy . . .



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Samantha Schmidt, the daughter of Stan and Terina Schmidt, Colby, painted one of many animated characters keeping with this year's Thomas County Fair theme of "Ride High in 2005," on the front windows of the Cutting Edge, 850 S. Franklin.

Samantha, along with many others, are participating in the window decorating contest with judges planning to evaluate the winners tonight. First place winner will receive \$150; second, \$100; third, \$75; fourth, \$50 and fifth, \$25.

Local incident turns into federal case

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

What started out as a theft at Colby's Wal-Mart store in March involving two northwest Kansas people has now escalated into a federal drug case, said Detective Sgt. Gary Shull, Colby Police Department.

Jason Neal Hopkins, 31, Colby, and Tresha A. Carter, 27, Goodland were both indicted on seven federal warrants from the United States District Court in Wichita on Thursday.

Hopkins, also known as Jason Davis, was charged on unlawful possession of firearms (a machine gun and a firearm with a silencer) in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime; manufacturing of methamphetamine; possession of prohibited equipment used to manufacture methamphetamine; receiving, possessing and disposing of a stolen firearm; possession of a machine gun; possession of psuedoephedrine with intent to manufacture methamphetamine and aiding and



J. Hopkins



T. Carter

abetting.

Carter was indicted on unlawful possession of firearms; possession of a machine gun; possession of pseudoephedrine with intent to manufacture methamphetamine; manufacturing and aiding and abetting.

In the initial arrest at about 10 p.m. on Sunday, March 26, Shull said, the police got a report of a theft at Wal-Mart after observing a man (who later turned out to be Hopkins) run from the store with a bag of items.

Employees also told police they saw the man, alleged to have stolen items from the store, get into a red Pontiac Grand Am.

One of the store employees followed the vehicle as it fled and used his cell phone to keep in touch with the emergency dispatcher.

In trying to catch Hopkins in the initial arrest, Shull said, the car fled

to the Oasis Travel Center area, turned back and headed east onto I-70, crossed over and then went west on I-70.

Both city and county law enforcement officers chased the Pontiac, which got back off at the Colby interchange.

"The car ran a police roadblock that was set up at the bottom of the exit ramp and headed south on Range Avenue.

The car fled at a high rate of speed south on Range Avenue including the speeds in the residential areas south of Webster Avenue," he said.

As the chase pursued, the police lost sight of the car as they reduced their speed in the residential area. However within seconds of Hopkins abandoning the car in an alley near Webster and Chick, Hopkins ran in front of one of the patrol cars. He was captured in a fenced backyard in the immediate area. After a struggle he was placed in a patrol car.

Carter was caught after a resident told officers he saw a female fleeing from the same alley.

"A search warrant was obtained for the 2000 Pontiac Grand Am which appeared to contain a meth lab," Shull said. "There were 68 boxes of various types of pills as

well as other items used in the manufacture of meth."

The car was registered to Angela Cook and Jerome (J.D.) Kruse of Oakley, but no charges have been filed against Cook and Kruse.

It was during the search that police found an M1 carbine fully automatic machine gun, along with another firearm and suppressor (silencer) that also appeared to be fully automatic.

"Due to the seriousness of the crimes (drugs for sale and automatic weapons) the Drug Enforcement Agency was contacted," Shull said.

After booking Hopkins in the Thomas County jail in March, he originally told officers that his name was Jason Davis. However, FBI fingerprint records showed his real name was Hopkins and was wanted in two counties in Colorado as well as wanted nationwide out of Sherman County Kansas.

Hopkins has been in custody in both Thomas and Sherman Counties since this incident.

Federal agents picked up Hopkins from the Sherman County jail on Thursday and Carter was arrested by Quad County Drug Task force at her home in Goodland on Friday. Both are being held at a Federal Detention Center in Wichita.

Marijuana bust on I-70

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A routine traffic stop Friday evening yielded several hundred pounds of marijuana.

Jason Draper, a trooper with the Kansas Highway Patrol, said a deputy from the Thomas County Sheriff's Office pulled over a motor home from Arizona on a routine traffic stop on I-70 at 5:30 p.m.

The stop was made at mile marker 62 just east of the Mingo exit.

An investigation found 409 pounds of marijuana in the motor home bathroom. Draper said the estimated value of the drugs is about \$800,000.

He said they were assisted by the Thomas County Sheriff's Office and Colby Police Department. One of the department's two K-9s, Capone, helped with the search, and was instrumental in locating the marijuana.

Draper declined to name the people who were arrested because the matter is still under investigation.

He said the individuals are being held at the Thomas County jail.

Getting ready



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Aaron Mead, Colby, thought about where to put items during booth setup Sunday at the Thomas County Fair Grounds. He and his other family members have the Mead Insurance booth located in the commercial building.

Grass fires cause problems for city

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Grass fires kept the Colby Fire Department on its toes the past two weeks said Assistant Colby Fire Chief Rick Dickman, including two over the weekend.

The Friday fire was a quarter mile south of the Nine Mile Corner on Highway 83. Dickman said it burned 10-15 acres down in a small draw.

The call came in at 6:15 p.m.

"We were there two hours," Dickman said, adding one engine and two tanker trucks from Colby

and a tanker from Gem were used to fight the fire.

The department also responded to a call for another fire at 12:58 p.m. Sunday.

Dickman said this smaller fire, which burned about five acres, was two miles south and one east of Mingo along the Union Pacific Railroad.

He said those two fires were just a couple of "numerous" grass fire calls the department has received in the past two weeks.

The cause of the two fires was unknown but Dickman said recent

dry conditions haven't been very helpful in preventing fires.

He said people can help avoid fires by maintaining their vehicles and not throwing anything out their windows while traveling, including matches, cigar or cigarette butts or even trash, especially glass. Dickman said sun shining through broken glass can also cause fires.

Other tips include being careful with open burns and keeping a close eye on barbecue grills.

He said keeping areas mowed can also help by getting rid of weeds and other unnecessary vegetation.

Thomas County fair parade entries sought

The 2005 Thomas County Free Fair starts this week and one of its signature events will be the parade on Saturday morning.

Entries are being taken now and registration will be taken up until before the parade starts on Saturday at 10 a.m., said fair board secretary Audrey Hines.

The theme for this year's fair parade is "Celebrating 100 years of Kansas 4-H Ride High in 2005." The "Ride High in 2005" theme was chosen by the Brewster Grade School fifth grade class, which received \$250 from the fair board for the school and the students in that class were awarded rodeo tickets

for having the winning theme chosen from a contest earlier this year.

Parade registration begins at 9 a.m. Saturday under the picnic shelter on the north side of Fike Park, Hines said.

The parade itself starts at 10 a.m. More details will appear in a future edition.

