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## Fairgoers get unique taste of patriotism

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Patriotism and history are on display together at one exhibit at the Thomas County Free Fair. Fairgoers are getting the chance to look at more than 80 years' worth of military gear and history with the Living Memorial Museum, which is making its fair debut here.

The exhibit, a family effort of Dennis Brown of Inman and his siblings Kent, Dale, James and Denise Dible, is on display at the north side of the Commercial Building at the fairgrounds.

Brown said the idea came about last year when his cousin, Darrel Dible of Brewster and a member of the Thomas County Fair Board, suggest he bring his military museum to the fair.

"He thought it would be something different for the fair this year," Brown said. "So far, we've had 400-500 people come through to see it. People think it's a very worthy cause."

He's constantly adding items to the museum, which spans American military history from W.W. I to Desert Storm and the current Iraqi conflict. Most of it's normal, everyday gear used by soldiers but he does have a few new items that stand out from the rest.

A map case and gun holster belonging to Uday and Qusay Hussein, sons of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, have made their way to the museum and have been on display all week.

Brown said his stepson, Eric Voss, a medical examiner who was assigned to the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne involved in the shoot-out where Uday and Qusay were killed in July, 2003, was able to bring the map case and holster home. Voss is also the son of Roger Voss of Colby.

Another item prominently displayed this week is a battle-scarred Iraqi flag. Brown said the flag made its way to the United States after Desert Storm. It flew over Kuwait City and was eventually captured by the 24th Mechanized Group. He said some of the soldiers got into a tug-of-war with some Kuwaitis. The soldiers came away with the



Braden Sager of Colby looked at items on display at the Living Memorial Museum on temporary exhibit at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Items from W.W. I to the present are on exhibit through Saturday.

top two thirds of the flag and the Kuwaitis had most of the black bottom stripe of the flag.

He said they were going to bring the flag back but when they were supposed to send items through decontamination, they put it in the trash because there wasn't time to get the flag decontaminated.

Brown said Terry Dobson, who used to be with the Colby National Guard unit, was working decontamination. He found the flag and brought it home with many other items which he later donated to the museum.

He said while those artifacts have rather unique stories, everything in the museum has its own story to tell, which he keeps track of.

Brown started collecting military memorabilia when he was a kid and the first display as a museum was during Memorial Weekend, 1990.

He usually travels with the exhibit and displays its items in old military tents, which Brown said adds an "ambiance" and gives people an idea what it was like for the soldiers who lived in the tents.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press



## Thomas County Fair continues

**ABOVE:** Diana McAdams, left, and Toni McAdams, center, watched as Victoria Rall, right, signed up at the Regional Prevention Center booth at the Thomas County Free Fair Thursday. It is one of many booths on display in the Commercial Building through Saturday. **LEFT:** A 4-H member used a hose to cool down his hogs at the fairgrounds this week. Livestock, including sheep, hogs and cattle will be on sale at the 4-H auction today at the fair. **BELOW:** Amy Schroeder, Megan Schroeder and Abby Miller went for a "spin" on the tilt-a-whirl at the carnival this week. The carnival is open until 11 p.m. tonight and Saturday. Capping of the day will be the races at 7 p.m. Races will also conclude the fair at 7 p.m. Saturday.



## It's not too late to participate in the fair parade Saturday

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

The 2005 Thomas County Free Fair Parade will be taking entries up until the parade begins at 10 a.m., Saturday.

Organizations, businesses, and individuals are encouraged to either

attend or take part in the festivities Saturday, which will be the final day of all events and activities for this year's county fair, said Audrey Hines, fair board secretary.

The theme for this year's fair parade is "Celebrating 100 years of Kansas 4-H Ride High in 2005."

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

Fair board members Kathi Wright and Justin Alexander, who are the parade committee co-chairs, will be in charge of registra-

tion. Entries will need to line up on Eighth Street on the north side of the park.

Hines said the parade route goes down Franklin to Cedar, then west to the fairgrounds. There are adult and children's categories for the parade.

Adult categories are antique vehicles, animal-drawn vehicles, organizational and personal floats, horse and saddle clubs or individuals, business floats, 4-H clubs and bands, drill teams or cheerleaders.

Children's categories are organizational and personal floats, best-

decorated wheeled vehicle, best-dressed pet and most unusual costume. Prizes in both categories are \$15 for first, \$10 for second and \$5 for third, said Wright. The fair board hopes that everyone will make the 100-year anniversary a special one through participation or attendance.

## Remember the bugs?

The recent influx of unknown bugs around Colby's Amber Waves Apartment complex have been identified as "ground beetles." Although common in the area, new resident Jim Vollmer (left) and others wondered why there were so many of them this summer. Doug Musick, Thomas County extension agent, said the ground beetle may be a pest to homeowners, but they are harmless. "These bugs do not bite and feed only on arthropods (rolly-polies)," he said. Musick believes the influx was probably due to the road construction since the tiny insects like living underground and were jarred loose from the activity.



Patty Decker/Colby Free Press

## Marines casualty rate a sign of tough job

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Marines have one of the roughest assignments in Iraq: pacifying the perpetually restive Anbar province, home to Fallujah, Ramadi and Haditha, all sites of heavy American casualties since the insurgency went into high gear last year.

Underscoring the heavy load, the Marines have taken casualties disproportionate to their numbers in Iraq.

Marines number more than 23,000 out of 138,000 members of the U.S. armed forces in Iraq, or 17 percent. Yet they have lost at least 530 of the more than 1,820 U.S. personnel who have died there, or 29 percent, Marine officials said.

On Wednesday, they lost 14 when a roadside bomb detonated under an amphibious assault vehicle in Haditha in western Iraq. Just two days earlier, seven other Marines died.

Sen. Joseph Biden, ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Rela-

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Sen. Joseph Biden  
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

tions Committee, called the Iraq campaign now a tough situation "that's going to get tougher before it gets easier."

"The truth of the matter is that we've made some pretty significant miscalculations in term of policy from the outset, and we leave these Marines in a very, very tough spot," Biden said Thursday on CBS's The Early Show.

"There's such a gap between the reality on the ground in Iraq ... and the rhetoric back here" from the Bush administration, Biden said, asserting that the United States is in

a race against time to get Iraqis trained to defend themselves, but using "too few troops in a place that needs a heck of a lot more security."

Some military experts pointed to Wednesday's attack to note the Marines are performing duties somewhat different from those for which they are organized and equipped. The amphibious vehicle, for example, was designed to get troops ashore and is less armored than some other infantry carriers.

"It's basically designed to get across the beach and get a few dozen miles inland," said John Pike, a

military expert with Globalsecurity.org. "The point being, once (Marines) had managed to secure the beachhead and get a few miles inland, the Army would come ashore and take over from there."

Beyond that, occupation and stabilization duties often require expertise and equipment distinct from amphibious assault and the rapid capture of enemy-held territory, experts said.

"The entire Marine force was designed around the concept of amphibious warfare, which is a good deal different from the kind of conflict they're fighting in Iraq today, hundreds of miles from the sea," said Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute think tank. "The Marines are a light force; they kick in the door but they are not supposed to occupy all the rooms."

The service has tried to adapt to changing missions, studying concepts like urban warfare and nonlethal weaponry.



