



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Scott Crawford of Colby looked over a map of New Orleans and the surrounding areas where he helped with relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina struck earlier this month. Crawford plans to go back in the near future and lend his services as an electrician.

Hurricane Katrina

Colby man helps with recovery efforts

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

The devastation left in Hurricane Katrina's wake wasn't all a Colby man saw when he went to Louisiana to help with relief efforts. Scott Crawford of Colby came back with a reminder that faith and the human spirit can withstand the worst nature has to offer.

Crawford was in Haiti where he was doing street meetings with a friend, Ken Henderson of Trinity Broadcasting. He then went to Texas and was helping fit out the headquarters of Jerry Davis' Good News in Bad Places ministry in Conrow, Texas, near Houston. Crawford was gone from Aug. 15 to Sept. 19.

"I volunteered to go down and help him finish with his building," he said. He had been there two weeks when the hurricane hit.

They then put together a team and went down to help with relief efforts. Crawford went a week later with another team.

"We had special passes where even the media couldn't get in," he said, adding the Emergency Management office of Jefferson Parish, La. issued them passes so they could get around to help people.

Don Tipton of Friend Ships in St. Charles, La. helped get the passes and also housed the group on one of his five ships used to deliver humanitarian aid to disasters around the world.

Crawford said they had sailor's quarters, but did have air conditioning and hot meals.

"It got us a nice base," he said.

They were moored on the west bank of the Mississippi River in Gretna, La., across from New Orleans' French Quarter. He said the area on that side of the river received more wind damage from the hurricane than rain or flooding.

Crawford said the mayor there turned over a large, pink warehouse for their use, which was used to help feed police, fire, city and other relief workers.

They provided assistance in Gretna and the town of Slidell.

Crawford said many churches got aid in before even before the federal and state governments began to move into the area to provide assistance, and were feeding people and giving other help.

With less bureaucracy, he said, they were able to go in and get things done.

"They jumped right in there," Crawford said.

He did everything from helping people get things out of their houses to praying with survivors.

People, Crawford said, were grateful for the help but were also glad people prayed with them and gave Bibles and related literature.

"After the help, people need hope and a hug," he said. "People really needed that human touch."

One trend Crawford noticed among people asking for prayer was what they were requesting. He said many displaced families asked for prayer to help reduce the stress and strife they were feeling.

They sawed down trees and helped restore conditions so that when the power or other services

were turned back on, people would be able to have electricity in their homes work properly.

And, he said, one "heart-breaking" service they helped with was assisting families get everything out of their homes. Many houses in some neighborhoods were so full of mold after the floods people will not be able to return.

He also videotaped many of his experiences and saw a lot of the devastation left from the storm.

People he knows are going back to help to relieve others, and Crawford said a staggered response is needed to keep people fresh and able to help with the recovery.

He also is planning to go back to offer his services as an electrician and also to minister to people.

"God had me in the right place at the right time," he said.

Crawford said people of faith had the strongest, most positive response to the disaster.

He said it touched him personally and he saw that people's needs weren't just physical but emotional and spiritual also.

Crawford has been ministering for 35 years and said because of the hurricane, he now has connections all over the world, and with those, the ability to help people all over.

He said he spends time doing what he can.

Crawford and his wife, Jeanne, own the Country Club Motel in Colby. He said even though she wasn't with him in Louisiana, Jeanne helped in her own way by keeping the motel running while he was away.

Mothers of Preschoolers group to begin meeting next week

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Got a preschooler at home? A new group, called *Mothers of Preschoolers*, is starting in Colby is offering moms a chance to get together and talk about being a mother and find out more about resources available.

Michelle Mettlen, one of the members, said they will be having a planning meeting from 9:15 to 11:15 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 6.

Their first group meeting of the month will be on Thursday, Oct. 13 from 9:15 to 11:15 a.m. at Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin.

The program will be Cheryl Metcalf with a presentation on Kinder Music.

She said they will meet the second Tuesday of each month at the church.

Each gathering will feature a speaker from 9:15 to 10 a.m. followed by creative activity, small

group discussions and support.

Childcare is also provided for children from birth to 5-years-old and there is a small fee for that service.

During daycare, there will be a MOPPETS program for children. It is a "program designed to encourage healthy mental, physical spiri-

tual and social development for preschoolers," according to the group's brochure.

Mettlen said moms or pregnant women with children are welcome, and the meetings are a chance to get to know each other.

She said the group is a non-denominational Christian organiza-

tion. Other meetings the rest of the year are on Nov. 10 with a presentation on infant massage and sign by Brenda Mazanec and on Dec. 8 Charles Swanke on the retail industry and shopping locally.

For information or to register for the first meeting, call Mettlen at 460-3310.

Area man faces more charges in Ellis County

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

While awaiting placement at a correctional facility boot camp, a Colby man has been picked up for another county on multiple charges.

According to a Thomas County Sheriff's office spokesman, Levi Jones, 20, was picked up for being out of the county without permission. Jones was to have been transferred to Labette Correctional Boot Camp in southeastern Kansas at Fredonia as soon as an opening became available.

Jones on Sept. 9 was located in Barton County and was arrested on an outstanding warrant from Ellis County for issuing 16 worthless checks at Wal-Mart and El Charro Convenience Store in Hays in June. Those checks totaling \$969 were written between June 4 and June 24 when Jones resided in Hays.

District Judge Glenn Schiffner on Sept. 7 revoked Jones' probation and ordered him to a six-month stint at the boot camp.

Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick at the time told Schiffner the state didn't believe Jones was taking the terms of his probation seriously.

She said she believed time at the boot camp would "wake him up."

Jones was on probation for a crime spree in early January when he and Donald Clapper, then 16, were charged with 27 felonies and 24 misdemeanors for crimes committed Jan. 3 and Jan. 5.

Authorities then estimated Jones

and Clapper victimized multiple farm operations throughout Thomas County resulting in more than \$100,000 in property damage, including theft of a race car valued at about \$6,000.

The crime spree took place less than three months when both teens were arrested for an unrelated burglary in Oct. 2004. In the 2005 case, Jones was charged as an adult, Clapper as a juvenile.

Dian Organ, intensive supervision officer with the Northwest Kansas Community Corrections, along with Wyrick, filed paperwork asking Jones' probation be set aside. Jones admitted to having violated the terms of his original probation, at which time 51 of the original 52 charges from January were dropped.

Schiffner told Jones if he failed to comply with the court's latest order the "penitentiary is the next step."

No court date has been set for resolution of the latest violation in Thomas County.

As of Thursday, Jones was being detained in the Ellis County Jail on the worthless check charges.

Alcohol Drug Abuse Council has new director

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

The board of directors with the Thomas County Alcohol Drug Abuse Council at approved a new director at its September meeting.

Daniel Crotinger, who had been interim director since January of 2005, was named to the position on Friday, Sept. 16.

As the new director, Crotinger said he is not planning any major changes within the council.

"We are here to assist individuals and their families who are experiencing problems in their lives as a result of the use of alcohol or other drugs," he said.

In meeting this objective, the council offers consultations at no charge; evaluations and referrals; individual counseling; family counseling; group therapy; education groups; young people groups; continuing care groups; drug-free workplace policies; reintegration facility; evaluations; alcohol and other drug information school; interventions; resource library; speakers and outreach programs.

The council also operates the Northwest Kansas Reintegration Facility in Colby, which is another way of helping an individual affected by drugs and alcohol to mainstream back into society.

"Every year we are continuing to grow in numbers and will focus on expanding the agency as needed," he said. "We save lives."



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Gail Siruta, office manager, and Daniel Crotinger, the newly appointed director of the Alcohol Drug Abuse Council in Colby, spoke about office procedures earlier this week.

"The council is an excellent available resource," Crotinger said. "Professional confidential services are provided to help someone who is experiencing problems in their lives as a result of the use of alcohol or other drugs."

In addition to counseling services, Crotinger said he and his staff can also provide presentations to organizations and groups interested in learning more about them.

The council also has a vast library of books, videos, and other resources dealing with addiction and related subjects.

The Alcohol Drug Abuse Council was first established in 1973 and last year they served 402 clients in Thomas, Logan, Sheridan, Sherman, Cheyenne, Wallace, Gove, Decatur and Rawlins counties.

Crotinger said his staff includes Darrel Pattillo, counselor; Rose Cody, counselor in Goodland; and Gail Siruta, office manager, Jim Bliss, reintegration house manager, and a board of directors totaling 11 from varying backgrounds.

Private insurance and Medicaid are accepted and payment may be based on client income or other

funding alternatives.

The facility is partially funded by the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Addiction and Prevention Services and private donations through membership and fundraising events.

An open house is planned for Tuesday, Oct. 18, from 3 to 6 p.m. and everyone is invited to attend.

For questions about services or other general information, call the Thomas County Alcohol Drug Abuse Council at (785) 462-6111.

