



Thursday motorcycle accident injures one



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Ronald Rubb fell off a motorcycle at the intersection of Range Avenue and Fourth Street at about 5 p.m. Thursday. According to Sgt. Kent Dible of the Colby Police Department, Rubb had been traveling eastbound on Fourth Street when a car turned

in front of him. He swerved to avoid hitting the vehicle and fell off the bike. Rubb was taken to Citizens Medical Center by Colby Emergency Medical Services with a head injury, a lacerated arm and friction burns.

Parasailing
raises rural
safety issues

By Kevin Bottrell
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Parasailing isn't something you think about seeing on a county road, and until Sunday, it wasn't something the Thomas County Sheriff's Office had thought of either.

Deputy Kraig Cersovsky responded to a report of people parasailing — pulling a person with a parachute behind a vehicle — at County Roads Q and 37 north of Menlo about 9:30 a.m. Sunday. Sheriff Rod Taylor said the deputy spoke to both the teens involved and their parents.

Taylor said this was the first time he had heard of parasailing on roads in the county, and there is not really any Kansas law to cover it. The closest statutes, he said, have to do with operating a vehicle other than a car or truck on a public road.

"It would be like riding your bike on the Interstate," the sheriff said.

Taylor said he didn't know exactly how the parasailors were attempting to get off the ground, but he suspected they wanted to use the long, empty stretches of county roads and the recent high winds to create some lift. He said they had not gotten airborne before Cersovsky found them — or before they found a power line.

Taylor said cases like this often involve juveniles. The department's procedure with the first incident, he said, is to contact both the kids and their parents. If necessary, the department can cite the parents for code violations instead of creating a criminal record for the teens, he said.

"I don't want to start kids out badly with traffic violations," the sheriff said.

The most common problem in this category is youngsters riding four-wheelers. Taylor said the department gets noise complaints as well as reports of four-wheelers damaging private property. He

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Dropping water table concerns experts

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Not until the mid 1950s, when the Kansas Geological Survey began to notice water tables dropping in southwest Kansas counties, did the legislature become concerned about conserving the states groundwater. The geological survey people were saying, "whoa, Kansas, you may have the beginning of a problem here."

Irrigation was well advanced in northwest Kansas, and the surge in irrigation was enough that the state's monitoring of the wells began to show a decline in underground reserves by the late 1960s and early '70s.

The concept of doing something that would help the problem took root, when a group of people from the state put together a plan called

"Proposal 27" and sent a team out to tour the state to get input from the people about how they felt about ground water districts.

"The Legislature passed enabling legislation in 1972 that allowed locals to form their own districts," said Wayne Bossert, manager of Groundwater Management District No. 4 in Colby.

"The concept for local control was to organize local districts," Bossert said. "It was locally driven, by Al Lowenthal, Elmer Zerr and about 30 others who were interested in organizing. We held an election to see how others felt about it and 67 percent voted in favor of it."

The district incorporated in May of 1976. Districts 1, 3, 4 and 5 are all in the western half of Kansas from Nebraska to the Oklahoma border. District 4 is served by the Ogallala Aquifer. District 2 is the

Equus Beds Groundwater Management District that serves the Wichita area. It is the smallest of the five districts.

"When we could show that loss of our water table could be tied to the tail water from runoff going down the road ditches," Bossert said, "then that gave us a seat at the table."

Runoff from ditch irrigation, and high pressure pivots, saw some improvement when conservationists demanded producers to dig tail water pits. A pump would be set in the water in the tail pit, and re-pumped back onto the crop ground.

Low pressure pivots make more efficient use of the water for the producer, because of less evaporation, but it does little to reduce depletion.

"We develop a management program each year, and that is our

'Bible.' We have to be consistent with the law," Bossert said. The law is enforced by the state engineer, who is also the director of (the state Division of) Water Resources."

The main job of the water district is that they are basically responsible for the expression of the public interest about how much water can come out of the ground, the spacing of the wells, and enforcing water laws in the district. The district makes recommendations to the state, but the state makes the law.

Bossert said the switch to more efficient pivot systems did not slow the decline of groundwater, and there is no longer any money available for conversion to more efficient practices, such as pivot sprinklers.

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Kiwanis needs donations for fireworks

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The rockets' red glare will be seen over Colby again this year at the annual Fourth of July fireworks display, but the sponsor, the Kiwanis Club of Thomas County/Colby, needs a little help to keep the display going.

Secretary Rick Dickman said that while the club pays for whatever is left, donations from businesses and the public help defer some of the costs.

"It gets more expensive every year," he

added.

If you want to donate, he said, send a check to the Kiwanis Club at Box 501, Colby, Kan. 67701. Dickman said the club has sponsored the Fourth of July show display since the mid-1980s, and they get many donations each year. "The community has really been good to us," he said.

The display will start around 10:15 p.m. The Colby Fire Department will shoot off the fireworks from the center of the Thomas County Fairgrounds track.

While the track will be closed off during the display for safety, Dickman said, the whole pit

area on the east end of the fairgrounds will be open for to watch the fireworks. The display is visible over most of the town, he added, and many people gather in places such as the K-State Experiment Station, where they have a clear view.

The High Plains Lions Club will hold it annual barbecue at 6:30 p.m. in the 4-H Building at the fairgrounds. During the barbecue, the Colby Free Press will again sponsor the Cointest, where people try to guess the what side a coin will land on to win a cash prize.

Briefly

Pilots plan miniature air show

The Colby RC Flyers invite everyone to a free air show from sunrise to sunset Saturday and Sunday, seven miles north of Colby on K-25 and one-eighth of a mile east. Visitors can try the club's remote-control trainer and a public drawing will be held at noon. There will be flying contests and open flying each day. Lunch and drinks will be available. For information, call Nick Nichols at 460-6357.

Church school starts Monday

The Colby Wesleyan Church will hold Vacation Bible School from 9 to 11:30 a.m., from Monday to Friday next week, June 22-26. This year's theme is "Studio GO! Game Show — Where kids experience real teamwork, real service and real FUN!" Kids will "meet" characters from the Bible who decided to team up with God and GO for it. Registration be-

gins at 8:30 a.m. Monday. For information, call the church office at 462-8391.

Church to offer screenings

The First Presbyterian Church of Colby will offer HealthScreens, a program of the Gerontology Research Foundation, on Saturday, with tests to determine your current health baseline. These include checking your risk for stroke, heart attack, thyroid disease, cancer, osteoporosis, diabetes and other preventable illnesses. To schedule an appointment or for information, call HealthScreens at (877) 854-4735 or go to www.healthscreens.net. Different fees are charged for each test.

Picnic in the Park Wednesday

Picnic in the Park will be at noon every Wednesday through July 29 in Fike Park. This week's en-

tertainment will be the Bugbee Sisters. For information, contact the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at 460-7643.

Food delivery next weekend

Prairie Land Food delivery will be from 10 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, June 27, at the Sacred Heart School Gym, 1150 W. Sixth St. For information, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579 or State Farm at 462-7525.

College pool open weekdays

The Colby Community College indoor swimming pool is open to the public for lap swimming from 5 to 7 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Open swimming is 4 to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Cost for general admission is \$3. Monthly and yearly passes

are available. Call Kipp Nelson at 460-5476 for additional information.

Camp set for Tuesdays

The Colby Wesleyan Church is offering "Tuesdays @ 10," a free summer day camp for children 4 to 12. Kids are invited to participate in the food, fun, games and God's love from 10 a.m. to noon every Tuesday through July 28. This year's "Son Rock Camp" will include nature hikes and outdoor activities with lunch. To register, or for information, call the church office at 462-8391.

Making progress



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On Wednesday, one lane of Franklin Avenue was closed briefly as contractors Strait and Associates lifted an air conditioner unit onto the roof of the building that will house Embark, a company that will offer end-of-life services.

