



8 pages

COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Monday

July 27, 2009
Volume 120, Number 116
Serving Thomas County since 1888



EVAN BARNUM/Colby Free Press

Air Force chopper delights audience

Kicking up dust and dirt everywhere, a U.S. Air Force UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter landed at the Thomas County Fairgrounds Sunday afternoon. Dozens of area residents turned out to watch the helicopter as it landed in the field north of the arena, and were allowed to come in for a closer look. The Black Hawk is a multipurpose transport helicopter that has been used by U.S. Armed Forces and those of several other countries since 1979. According to the Thomas County Fair Board the helicopter was brought in for the Oak Ridge Boys concert later on Sunday. It took off during the show and circled the arena between acts.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Universities team up for irrigation day

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press
vsloan@nwkansas.com

Scientists from Texas A&M University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be in Colby on Tuesday, Aug. 4, to join Kansas State University researchers in presenting a subsurface drip irrigation technology field day.

The event is free, and open to the public at Kansas State Northwest Research-Extension Center, at 105 Experiment Farm Road in Colby.

Pre-registration deadline is Tuesday. To register, call (785) 462-6281 or register online at

www.oznet.ksu.edu/sdi/events/sdievent.htm.

Surface drip irrigation has been in use at the Colby Branch Experiment station since March of 1989. It is a common type of irrigation for high-value crops like fruit trees, and vegetable farming in Florida and California.

The system is being studied for lower-value crops such as corn, sorghum, beans and wheat, for several reasons. One of them is long term usage without replacement costs. Less evaporation is another plus. Freddie Lamm, irrigation specialist, said it is estimated that there is as much as 25 percent savings of water from less evaporation.

"We have the oldest and longest continuing

system in use in the world today," Lamm said. "This system of irrigation has been under study in England and Israel for as long as 40 years, but to be in continued use, ours is the longest. We have had international visitors here to look at our system.

"When doing a cost comparison," he added, "a center pivot system can cost around \$450 per acre, and a surface drip system can cost around \$1200 an acre, so it has to last a long time. But the savings in water, and the number of acres watered is a factor to look at."

The system is installed much like under-

See "FIELD DAY," Page 3

International tourism increasing across Kansas

(AP) Kansas and Oklahoma are working together to promote the rural heartland to foreign media and tourists.

The number of international tourists visiting the area has increased steadily, said Lisa Weight, international marketing and public relations representative for the two states.

Recently a crew from Germany's largest public television station, ARD, filmed a travel documentary in the Flint Hills about the

Santa Fe Trail. Footage is slated to be shown on TV in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

"This is the type of documentary that will entice European travelers to consider a trip to Kansas," said Becky Blake, director of the Kansas Travel and Tourism Division.

Weight said the film will help attract foreign travelers looking for authentic Old West experiences.

The crew has visited to the Oklahoma City stockyard, Kansas CosmoSphere and Space Center

and the Kansas Underground Salt Museum in Hutchinson.

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Travel and Tourism has reported more than 35,000 overseas travelers came to Kansas last year.

Kansas' travel and tourism division spent \$4,500 to host international journalists last year and that turned into the equivalent of \$4.6 million worth of advertising, Weight said.

"Kansas has a special, almost

mythical, place in our nation's history and culture," Blake said. "For that reason, Kansas is also fascinating to Europeans looking to learn about the American experience."

Weight said travel agencies market fly-and-drive trip to Kansas and Oklahoma.

"Kansas and Oklahoma are secondary destination sites," Weight said. "The people coming to us

See "TOURISM," Page 3

Girl Scouts help out in Greensburg

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwkansas.com

Colby Girl Scout troop 218 helped clean up Sunset Acres Park in Greensburg last week, two years after the high plains town was devastated by a tornado that claimed several lives. The storm left the area without a grade school, high school, city hall, hospital, water tower or fire station.

The troop cleaned up the park and pulled weeds from a large flower bed in the park. The members of the troop are Ann Dixon, Randi Cloe, Caitlin Cline, Maura Hansen and Jenna Ketchum. The adult co-leaders of the troop are

Teri Cloe and Penny Cline.

"It feels really good to help people," said troop member Randi Cloe. "I would have liked to clean up more. I wish we could have helped clean up people's houses."

Teri Cloe said she was encouraged by how much the girls wanted to help the town.

"Three girls from the troop told me they wished they could have done more," said Cloe.

Bob Dixon, mayor of Greensburg and Cline's cousin, took the troop on a tour of the town.

He and his wife Ann treated the troop to a potluck dinner before the tour. The tour highlighted the

See "SCOUTS," Page 3

County hears interest proposals

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press
vsloan@nwkansas.com

Thomas County Commissioners met for a brief session on Thursday afternoon at the request of County Treasurer Donita Applebury.

Her request to meet with the commissioners was a result of the proposals she had requested from various banks regarding interest rates they would pay on the county's idle funds accounts. Applebury said she felt that since interest rates change so rapidly, she

wanted to nail down a decision on where to invest, to the best advantage of county funds.

Applebury had asked representatives from Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball to be in attendance along with the county attorney. Others attending the meeting were Applebury, County Clerk Shelly Harms, Colby Free Press, and commissioners Paul Steele and Byron Steele. Chairman Ken Christiansen was in speaker phone contact with the group.

See "COUNTY," Page 3

Oak Ridge Boys concert



EVAN BARNUM/Colby Free Press

Joe Bonsall (left to right), Duane Allen, William Lee Golden and Richard Sterban, better known as the Oak Ridge Boys, played to a packed arena at the Thomas County Fairgrounds on Sunday. Sterban said the group likes to pick a new county fair to play at each year. They performed both their classic hits and songs from their new album.

Briefly

College bus will haul vets

Colby Community College is making its bus available to veterans who're not able to walk in the Fair Parade on Tuesday. The bus will leave from the American Legion Hall at 1850 W. Fourth St. at 5 p.m. and return to the Legion when the parade is over. For questions, call the college information office at 460-7836.

Slab dance set for Thursday

As part of the Thomas County Free Fair, there will be a slab dance at 8 p.m. Thursday at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Music will be provided by CC Energy. For information, call Audrey Hines at 443-0544.

Coach offers tennis camp

The Colby Eagle Net Slammers Tennis Camp will

be from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Monday to Wednesday, Aug. 3-5, at Fike Park. Children 6 to 12 can sign up no later than Monday, July 27. The cost will be \$25, which includes a T-shirt. No late registrations. For information, call tennis coach Jennifer Rall at 462-0320.

Salvation Army has fans

The Thomas County Salvation Army representative has box fans available for anyone who needs them. Call Sue at 460-4842 if you need a fan.

Dance planned for Aug. 7

There will be a singles and married couples dance Friday, Aug. 7, in the Community Building from 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. This is a free dance for Janet Phelps' 75th birthday. please no gifts. For informa-

tion please call Lue Duffey (785) 855-2341.

Picnic in the Park Wednesday

Larry and Taylor McLemore will headline the final Picnic in the Park at noon next Wednesday in Fike Park. For information, call the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at 460-7643.

Seminars focus on special needs

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas is offering a free seminar on "Special Needs Trusts," focusing on how to provide for a person with special needs, at 3 p.m. or 6 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 20, in room 106 at the Colby Community College Student Union. The speaker will be Randy Clinkscales, an elder law and special needs attorney from Hays. Seat-

ing is limited. For information, call Raenette Martin with Developmental Services at (785) 462-3400.

City spraying mosquitoes

The City of Colby is fogging for mosquitoes as needed. On Mondays or Tuesdays, crews will fog from Webster Street south. On Thursdays or Fridays, they work from Webster north. The crews need your help, though: check your yards and empty anything that holds stagnant water — such as cans, swimming pools, tires and the like — to help keep the mosquito population down. For information, call the Public Works Department at 460-4420.



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 8 9 8 3