



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press



Bluegrass festival heats up weekend

Cliff and Megan Miller (above) of the Springfield, Mo., bluegrass band The Millers performed Friday night at the Pickin' on the Plains music festival. J.F. Stover (left) and the New Old Timers of Hill City brought their fast-paced and funny style to the stage just before the Millers, with Marshal Allen Bailey (right) of Dodge City introducing each band and favoring the audience with a few choice – and a few less-than-choice – jokes. The music continued Saturday and Sunday with bands like High Atmosphere (below) of Colorado Springs taking the stage. Bob McLemore, one of the festival organizers, said attendance numbers haven't been tabulated yet, but he thought the weekend was suc-



cessful. There were probably fewer people during the day, he said, because of the high temperatures, but more people showed as things cooled off in the evening.



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

County eyes new machine for road signs

By Vera Sloan

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Road Supervisor Clair Schrock told Thomas County commissioners last Monday the county could save money by buying a plotter machine, which will make road signs for less than he can buy them.

Schrock said new federal regulations require signs on county roads be bigger. Only certain signs, like the "911" signs marking numbered and lettered roads, will have to be replaced, he said, but there are about 1,000 of those in the county.

"So the change is coming again, with no money to pay for it," Schrock said.

He told the board that he would

like to search for a grant under the state risk-management program to buy the machine. He noted that Elk County had received a grant for a sign machine, and said he believes money is available to help counties in this situation.

He suggested that not only would the county be able to make all its own signs, but it might be able to share the machine with surrounding counties.

The cost is \$3,800, he said. New signs must be in place by 2013, Schrock said, but he is willing to get a jump on the rule. He noted that the plotter will probably cost more if the county waits.

Schrock said the machine will save the county some money in the long run since with it they

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State Sens. Tim Huelskamp (left) and Ralph Ostmyer held a meet-and-greet for Huelskamp's campaign for Congress on Thursday at Village Inn.

Candidate touts voting record here

By Kevin Bottrell

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Tim Huelskamp, one of the six Republican candidates for Congress in the Kansas 1st District, was in Colby on Thursday to talk about his voting record with diners at the Village Inn.

Huelskamp was accompanied by State Sen. Ralph Ostmyer of Grainfield, who represents northwest Kansas, and who endorsed Huelskamp last year.

The Fowler Republican said his biggest strength in the election is his voting record. He said he has consistently voted in the Legislature against tax increases, in favor of more energy production and in favor of farmers and ranchers. Ostmyer, who shares an office with Huelskamp when the Legislature is in session, said he made

his endorsement because of that record.

Huelskamp said that Jim Barnett of Emporia, one of his opponents and a fellow state senator, has not been nearly so consistent and none of the other four candidates has a voting record.

The senator said he sticks to principle rather than party, citing his opposition to the No Child Left Behind Act, instituted by Republican President George W. Bush. He said he's in favor of reducing the national debt, which has grown under both Democrat and Republican presidents.

Sometimes that independence has cost him, he said: in 2001 and 2002, he repeatedly voted against tax increases and got removed from the Senate Ways and Means committee for it.

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Briefly

Volunteers needed for carnival

The Thomas County Amusement Association is looking for volunteers for the home-owned carnival at the Thomas County Free Fair from Tuesday to Saturday, July 27 to 31. Shifts are from 6:45 to 9 p.m. and 9 to 11 p.m. Volunteers are needed for the prize booth, ring toss, baseball throw and ball of chance. For information or to volunteer, call Holly Whitaker at the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or Angie Gaede at 443-3853.

Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a 7-week-old white male kitten; a male yellow mixed puppy, 5-6 months old; and a female yellow Lab mix, 2-3 years; available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

Army has fans to beat heat

The Salvation Army has fans available for anyone who needs them. Call Kathy Ryan at the Thomas County Health Department, 460-4596.

Signups open for kids' football

Signups are open for Colby Little League Football at the Sports Shoppe. The league is for kids in third to sixth grades. A \$100 fee covers equipment rent and other materials. Space is limited. The Shoppe is open from 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday to Thursday and from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday to Saturday. For information, call Travis Branum at 462-8342.

Hospital plans diabetes class

Citizens Medical Center will hold a free "Journey for Control" class for people with diabetes from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the hospital. The class will use a

"conversation map" to encourage people to be engaged in managing diabetes. Class size is limited, so register now. For information or to register, call Jeanene Brown in the education department at (785) 460-4850.

Picnic, music again Wednesday

Colby's Picnic in the Park lunch-and-concert series continues at noon Wednesday at Fike Park with entertainment by Lucas Baumfalk and Brock Wagener. For information, call the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401 or the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau at 460-7643.

Sign up for soccer this month

The American Youth Soccer Organization fall season will start in September. The organization will have early registration from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Pioneer Memorial Library. Registration is \$45

until Saturday, July 31, and \$50 after. For information or to set up an alternate time to register, call Emily Griffin at 460-0647.

Leadership group class open

Applications are available for the Leadership Thomas County program, set for four Wednesdays in September and October. Participants will learn 21st century leadership skills and an increased awareness of the county and state, with an opportunity to attend the Kansas Leadership Center in Wichita. The application deadline is Friday. For information or an application, stop by the Colby Chamber of Commerce office or call Leilani Thomas at 460-7643.

