

Child-only policies for health allowed

Legislation proposed by the Kansas Insurance Department and now signed into law gives Kansas families a chance to once again purchase a child-only health insurance policy.

As part of an omnibus health insurance bill, a child under age 19 who has been unable to purchase or obtain an individual health insurance policy is now eligible for coverage under the state's high risk pool, which is operated by the Kansas Health Insurance Association.

In House Bill 2075, passed by the Kansas Legislature and signed by Gov. Sam Brownback, provisions of the Kansas Uninsurable Health Insurance Plan Act were amended to allow for inclusion of eligible children under age 19, if no child-only coverage is available in the county where the child lives.

"Now, those families that need

a child-only policy can seek coverage through the KHIA plan if they meet the new eligibility requirements," Sandy Praeger, commissioner of insurance, said. "It provides a starting point for a Kansas-based solution to a coverage problem..."

Commissioner Praeger said the idea for the legislation originated in the department as a response to the pullback of coverage for under-19 children by health insurance companies operating in the state. Most companies in Kansas quit selling those policies in the last quarter of 2010.

"The new law provides a temporary solution until 2014, when all health plans are required by law to provide coverage without consideration of health status," Commissioner Praeger said.

For information on the plan for child-only policies, call (800) 362-9290.

Use caution if feeding wheat hay to livestock

With wheat fields struggling amid drought conditions, some farmers may consider cutting and baling their crops for hay. If so, a Kansas State University veterinarian says, "the sooner, the better."

"The beards (awns) on bearded wheat can cause oral problems in cattle if the heads are fully developed and mature," said Larry Hollis, veterinarian with K-State Research and Extension.

A lot will depend on how hungry the cattle are when fed the hay, Hollis said. If other feed is available, they likely will pick around

the heads to avoid being injured inside the mouth by the beards.

"But, if wheat hay is the primary diet component, producers will probably see some cows that don't look full, because their mouths have become too sore.... It's also possible cows will salivate or have swollen tongues or faces," he said.

If signs are present, the inside of the cow's mouth should be checked for beards that may need to be removed. A shot of long-acting antibiotic may also be indicated.

On the Beat

COLBY POLICE
Tuesday

2:10 a.m. – Security check at the B-Hive.

2:17 a.m. – Escorted vehicle pulling a trailer with no taillights to Walmart.

7:46 a.m. – Checked vehicle with subjects inside; all OK.

8:59 a.m. – Caller reported fire extinguisher left outside at 280 N. Franklin Ave. Picked up item; turned over to Northwest Fire Extinguisher.

9:36 a.m. – Report of vehicle abandoned in parking lot in the 200 block of N. Franklin for over a week. Spoke to reporting party; tow away report filed.

10:13 a.m. – Caller reported stranded motorist at I-70 and K-25. Not found. Reporting party called back and said they did get

vehicle moved.

1:29 p.m. – Walk through at Walmart.

1:48 p.m. – Walk through at the Community Building.

3:20 p.m. – Provided information to subject on cameras at work.

3:37 p.m. – Helped subject with snake in garage.

5:19 p.m. – Report filed on incident at Aquatic Center.

5:58 p.m. – Theft: report filed on incident at the Aquatic Center.

6:30 p.m. – Dog at large turned over to Colby Animal Clinic.

10:20 p.m. – Bosselman's called to report accident in parking lot.

10:56 p.m. – Attempted suicide: report filed.

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF
Sunday

12:03 a.m. – Booked Boone J.

Award winner



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Recent Brewster High School graduate Sheena Rall won third place in a Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars patriotic art contest. Rall's drawing, a tribute to Armed Forces members that included depictions of the flags, the Constitution and WWE wrestler John Cena, was one of eight entries that made it to the statewide Young American Creative Art competition.

Kansans walk 'to the moon' say Walk Kansas coordinators

Imagine, if you can, going to the moon over and over and over again.

While some may debate the value of such a trip, many in Kansas have already covered the distance. They've worked together to do it, but that's just part of the story:

Each spring, K-State Research and Extension sponsors Walk Kansas, an eight-week fitness challenge to encourage teams of six to cover the distance equal to

the 423 miles across Kansas from its east to west borders. The concept is research-based and centers on walking because it's easy for people to add to their day, said Sharolyn Jackson, state program coordinator.

The fitness challenge, which celebrated its 10th anniversary this year, has grown to include equivalent minutes of heart-healthy activities, said Jackson, who noted

Dads encouraged to go smoke free

The Thomas County Coalition is encouraging dads to be tobacco-free on Father's Day.

Father's Day is a day to celebrate dads, said coalition member Kasiah Rothchild, but it is also a time for dads to remember their influence on choices kids make.

Quitting tobacco use will set a good example, she said, and will improve dads' chances of being around for many more years. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, an international non-profit group, said 1,600 Kansas kids lose their fathers to a smoking-caused death each year.

"Quitting tobacco not only improves your health, but also improves the health of your kids by reducing their exposure to secondhand smoke and reducing the likelihood that they will become tobacco users," Rothchild said. "Kids want to be like their dads. Be a good role model. If you use tobacco, quit. If you can't quit, keep trying."

Children from families who smoke are twice as likely to become smokers themselves. Rothchild said it is also important to

protect children from the cancer-causing substances and poisons in secondhand smoke, which can lead to disease and premature death in children and nonsmoking adults. A recent study found that more than 50 percent of children ages 3 through 11 have had recent exposure to cigarette smoke.

Kansas has a toll-free tobacco quitline, (800) 784-8669. Coaches work with callers to prepare for a quit date and help them make a free quit plan. All calls are confidential. The quitline also offers a supplemental online tool designed to complement and enhance the phone-based counseling sessions.

The Thomas County Coalition works to reduce tobacco use among local citizens. The coalition has information on how to help reduce tobacco use and help people who use tobacco quit.

The Kansas Tobacco Use Prevention Program provides resources and technical assistance to community coalitions for development, enhancement and evaluation of state and local tobacco prevention initiatives. For information visit www.kdheks.gov/tobacco.

Thomas County Relay for Life

June 17 • Dennen Field

6 p.m. Survivor BBQ
7 p.m. Welcome
7:40 p.m. Live Auction
9:15 Luminaria Ceremony

Face Painting • Games • Massages • Music by Reed, Megan & Ryan Jacques • Sweet Adelines • DJ Wayne Williams

Call Margaret to register as a Cancer Survivor 785-443-2121.
Call Irene to purchase a luminaria to honor or remember loved ones affected by cancer 785-443-0974.

Relay sponsors are cordially invited to join us for recognition during the Welcome Ceremony!

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