

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2006

\$1.25

GREAT BEND TRIBUNE WEEKEND Edition

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DEATHS

Jerry D. Ramey, 59,
Great Bend

Carl J. Austermler, 67,
Farmington Hills, Mich.

Erika Benintendi, 74, Topeka

Edward Drees, 71, Great Bend

Ruby Estes Warner, 83,
Great Bend

See Obituaries, Page A5
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Sunny



High 100, low 73
today.

Details on Page A2

SEE

PARADE



INSIDE!



NFL football

Hall of Fame class
inducted

A9



Pretty

but poisonous

B1

Community Bank

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High-Speed pursuit ends in Rice County

By TERRY SPRADLEY
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Kansas Highway Patrol Troopers used stopsticks to end a high-speed pursuit involving a 16-year-old female runaway in stolen vehicle that began in Barton County at 12:10 a.m. Saturday morning.

Trooper Ryan Walton initiated the pursuit approximately three miles east of Great Bend just after midnight when he noticed the eastbound

1994 Grand Prix moving erratically.

Troopers attempted to stop the car before it entered Ellinwood by deploying stop sticks at the Y-intersection west of town on U.S. 56. The driver managed to avoid most of the deflating devices, hitting only one of them, which was not enough to stop the vehicle, according to Lt. Steve Billinger with the highway patrol.

The cars hit speeds of 105 miles-per-hour as Billinger joined the pursuit, with the fleeing juvenile passing through Ellinwood at speeds of 85 to

90 mph.

The chase ended in Rice County when a third highway patrol officer, Michael Farmer, deployed another set of stop sticks at Silica Hill. The second set of stop sticks deflated three tires on the car, which continued on for approximately another half-mile before coming to a stop.

"We were just lucky that we were able to

PURSUIT
continued on A14

The heat is on

Kansas heat wave turns tragic

By CHUCK SMITH
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State news turned this week to a tragic incident in Topeka where a 23-month-old boy died after being left for hours in a closed vehicle, but safety officials are warning — as the current heat waves continues with no relief in sight — that in just a short amount of time vehicles that are closed and in the sun will become dangerous.

In fact the heat is reaching deadly levels in general, according to state officials.

The Associated Press reported this past week about Vidal Vela, the infant who died of hyperthermia, which is defined as an advanced state of heat stroke or sunstroke.

According to the story, police reported the child was left inside the vehicle for several hours after a trip with his grandmother. A detective's report filed Wednesday indicated the incident occurred between 9 a.m. and 3:48 p.m., when the child was found by his 11-year-old sister. The investigation is continuing and the case will go to the Shawnee County Attorney's Office for decision about whether or not charges are filed.

Also this week, the Kansas Department of Health and

HEAT
continued on A14



TERRY SPRADLEY/Great Bend Tribune

Six-year-old Garrett Darling of Great Bend cools off by pouring water over his head at Veterans Park's ball fields while adults endured the triple digit heats on the ball diamond during a four-team softball tournament Saturday afternoon.

KDHE tips help stay cool, healthy

By CHUCK SMITH
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Reacting this week to several deaths across Kansas that are attributed to the continuing heat wave, state officials have

released the following recommendations for staying healthy, despite the heat.

The recommendations came

TIPS

continued on A14

NRCS eyes area offices for closing

Ag officials float reorganizational plan

By DALE HOGG
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Even if Congress leaves funding untouched over the next couple of years, state level federal agriculture officials may have to make some changes, changes that could include closing or combining some Natural Resource Conservation Service offices in Kansas.

"The NRCS is going to be doing some realignment," said Harold Klaege, state conservationist for the NRCS. The NRCS is a branch of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The possible changes would affect the NRCS only, not the Farm Service Agency, another USDA offshoot that often shares offices with the NRCS.

Eying the 2008 budget, Klaege said his department will analyze staffing and other resources. "We need to talk about how NRCS is going to maintain offices throughout the state."

Currently, the agency operates offices in 104 of Kansas' 105 counties. Kansas is one of only a handful of states in which the NRCS keeps offices in almost every county.

The NRCS is looking at 24

NRCS
continued on A8

'The NRCS is going to be doing some realignment.'

- Harold Klaege, state conservationist for the NRCS

Local event to help Katrina victims

By CHUCK SMITH
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Time may continue to distance the rest of America from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, for those who live and work and go to school in New Orleans, there are still many scars and a local church is hoping that it can help to ease those scars for a historic black college there.

Rev. Diana Coberly said the First Congregational United Church of Christ will host an evening of live entertainment

VICTIMS
continued on A14

Tuesday tax deadline is approaching

By CHUCK SMITH
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According to Barton County Treasurer Jan Karlin, Tuesday will be the last day that county property owners can settle delinquent property taxes before they are published in the Great Bend Tribune legal section.

She noted that first publication is planned for Aug. 15 and the list of properties will be published three times.

This is just one of the steps that is taken leading up to the October tax sale.

Karlin reported this past fall that, while only \$14,770 was taken in at the tax sale, her office had already collection almost \$400,000 in taxes, leading up to that point, which is the reason for the whole process, the county treasurer explained.

Karlin's department actually took in \$378,323 in delinquent taxes and fees. "This is what makes the sale worthwhile," she commented at the time.

The year before, the department took in more than \$300,000 leading up to that tax sale, she reported, with almost \$25,000 taken in at the sale.



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WORLD BRIEFS

Fighting intensifies as Israeli commandos raid port city, Hezbollah rocket blitz continues

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Israel and Hezbollah sharply intensified fighting with a blitz of airstrikes, dozens of rocket attacks and brutal ground combat on Saturday, each apparently trying to inflict as much damage as possible to strengthen their bargaining positions.

In a sign of progress on the diplomatic front, the United States and France agreed on a U.N. Security Council resolution that calls for the fighting to end but would let Israel defend itself if attacked.

Israeli commandos battled Hezbollah guerrillas in a raid on an apartment building in the southern port city of Tyre, while warplanes blasted south Beirut. The fighting across Lebanon killed at least eight Lebanese and an Israeli soldier, while a Hezbollah rocket volley killed three women in northern Israel.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State David Welch also met with Lebanese officials in Beirut for talks focused on establishing a lasting political framework and an international force to support the Lebanese army in moving into the south.

“My meeting today was an important step to putting behind us forever the terrible violence witnessed in the past three weeks,” Welch said after meeting with Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora.

Teens arrested in theft of laptop holding data on up to 26.5 million veterans, military personnel

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two teenagers were arrested Saturday in the theft of a laptop and hard drive containing sensitive data on as many as 26.5 million veterans and military personnel, authorities said.

The government-owned equipment was stolen May 3 during a burglary at the Maryland home of a Veterans Affairs employee. The laptop and hard drive were turned into the FBI June 28 by an unidentified person in response to a \$50,000 reward offer.

The equipment contained the names, Social Security numbers and birth dates of veterans discharged since 1975. The theft was the worst-ever breach of government data.

Jesus Alex Pineda, 19, and Christian Brian Montano, 19, both of Rockville, Md., were arrested early Saturday, Montgomery County police said.

Pineda was charged with first-degree burglary and theft over \$500. Montano was charged with first-degree burglary, conspiracy to commit first-degree burglary, theft over \$500, and conspiracy to commit theft over \$500.

Palestinian security officials: Israeli forces have arrested Palestinian parliament speaker

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Israeli forces arrested the speaker of the Palestinian parliament at his house early Sunday, Palestinian officials said.

The officials — the director of the speaker Abdel Aziz Duaik’s office and security officers — said about 20 Israeli army vehicles surrounded the house of Duaik, a member of Hamas, and took him into custody.

The Israeli military had no immediate comment.

U.S. reinforcements take up positions in Baghdad amid new warning of civil war

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — U.S. soldiers sent to beef up security in Baghdad were seen for the first time on the streets of the capital Saturday as Iraqi police used loudspeakers to reassure people that the Americans were there to protect them.

But at least 21 people were killed or found dead, most of them in the capital, which is being wracked by bombings and sectarian slayings. The dead included a Shiite couple and their two daughters abducted earlier in the day in Baghdad’s mostly Sunni area of Dora, police said.

With Sunni-Shiite killings on the rise, about 3,700 soldiers of the Army’s 172nd Stryker Brigade were brought from northern Iraq to bolster U.S. and Iraqi security forces that have struggled to contain the violence in Baghdad.

Several Stryker armored vehicles took positions in the mostly Sunni district of Ghazaliyah, one of the city’s most dangerous areas. Police used loudspeakers to encourage residents to reopen shops and go about their business normally because the soldiers would protect them.

U.S. commanders hope the presence of heavily armed American troops will intimidate sectarian death squads believed behind many of the killings and reassure Iraqis — especially Sunni Arabs — that they will be protected by Iraq’s predominantly Shiite security forces.

Al-Qaida’s No. 2 leader says a new Egyptian militant group has joined the terror network

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — Al-Qaida’s No. 2 leader announced in a new videotape aired Saturday that an Egyptian militant group has joined the terror network.

It was the first time that al-Qaida has announced a branch in Egypt, the Arab world’s most populous nation. The Egyptian group, Gamaa Islamiya, is apparently a revived version of a militant group of the same name that waged a campaign of violence in Egypt during the 1990s but was crushed in a government crackdown.

“We announce to the Islamic nation the good news of the unification of a great faction of the knights of the Gamaa Islamiya ... with the al-Qaida group,” Ayman al-Zawahri said in the videotape aired on the Al-Jazeera news network.

Al-Zawahri said the Egyptian group was led by Mohammed al-Islambouli, the younger brother of Khaled al-Islambouli, the militant who assassinated Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat in 1979 and was later executed.

The video included a statement by Mohammed al-Hakayma, identified as another top leader of the revived Gamaa. Al-Hakayma was shown talking in a grove of palm trees.

Pursuit

Continued from Page A1

deflate the tires and bring it to a stop without injury,” Billinger said. “One of the most dangerous things we face is a juvenile runaway in a stolen vehicle.”

Billinger stated that if they

know the suspect they are chasing is a runaway juvenile they will usually break off the chase for the safety of the fleeing youth and other citizens. The identity of the driver in this case was not known until the conclusion of the chase.

“We were lucky that nobody

got hurt going through Ellinwood and that there were enough officers in the area to stop her before she got to Lyons,” Billinger said. “She would probably have tried to go through there as fast as she did Ellinwood.”

The stop sticks deployed in

Rice County also damaged the front bumper and turn signal as rubber from the tire wrapped around the wiring for the turn-signal and ripped it off.

The stolen car is owned by Brett Hilegeist. Billinger said the keys were left in the vehicle.

Heat

Continued from Page A1

Environment reported that the incident in Topeka was only one of the deaths in Kansas associated with the current heat wave.

According to the KDHE, the following deaths were recorded just from July 16-20:

- A 65 year-old man in north-central Kansas
- A 67 year-old woman in north-central Kansas
- An 89 year-old man in north-central Kansas
- A 46 year-old man in southeast Kansas
- A 79 year-old man from northeast Kansas

- A 56 year old in south central Kansas
- Details of those deaths were not released by the state health agency, but KDHE Health Director Dr. Howard Rodenberg did have recommendations for addressing the continuing danger.
- “It is a reminder of the

importance of protecting yourself from high temperatures by drinking plenty of water, taking breaks from the heat and wearing light colored, loose clothing. Also, please remember to check regularly on relatives and friends who don’t have air conditioning,” Dr. Rodenberg said.

Tips

Continued from Page A1

from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment that was reporting to the state on six deaths that had been reported to the state agency, and those were reported prior to the state news this week about a Topeka infant who died after he was left locked in a closed vehicle.

The recommendations include:

- When planning to remain in hot environments for extended lengths of time, get acclimated by gradually spending more time in the heat each day over a period of four to seven days.

- Drink plenty of fluids. People in the heat should always drink lots of fluids like water, juices, and sport drinks. Caffeinated drinks like coffee and soft drinks, as well as alcoholic beverages, should be avoided because they actually dehydrate the body. Drink at least a gallon of water a day when spending time outdoors.
- When children play outdoors, dress them lightly, and make sure they take frequent breaks indoors and drink plenty of fluids. A child should never be left in a hot, closed car or near a sunny window. Also, young children should wear a sunscreen of

SPF 50 to reduce their risk of sunburn. Infants should have very little or no contact with sunlight.

- Friends, relatives, and neighbors of elderly people should periodically visit them during the summer months, and take them to a cooler environment if needed. Elderly people without air conditioning are considered at risk for heat-related illness.
- Wear loose and light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers.
- Take frequent breaks to cool off.
- Eat light meals like fruits and salads. Replenish salt and potassium in the body that

sweating strips away. Eat apricots, bananas, cantaloupes, oranges, beans, broccoli, potatoes, and tomatoes to increase potassium.

- Schedule outdoor activities for morning and evening, and when outdoors try to stay in the shade.
- Spend most of your time indoors and in an air conditioned room. If you do not have air conditioning, most larger communities have places where you can go during heat waves including the local health department, senior citizen center, hospitals, and Red Cross. Also, basements are usually cooler than ground-level floors.

Victims

Continued from Page A1

and home made ice-cream at Jack Kilby Plaza Saturday to raise money for Dillard University.

Dillard is, according to the school’s Internet site, “a private, historically black, liberal arts institution. Dillard has as its purpose the development of graduates who are broadly educated, culturally aware, concerned with improving the human condition and able to meet the competitive demands of a global and technologically advanced society. To achieve

this purpose, the university strives to create and maintain an academic climate that is conducive to the pursuit of scholarship through programs of excellence anchored in the liberal arts.”

Students from the college were forced into hotels and other make-shift facilities following Hurricane Katrina and there was even serious talk about closing the school, which dates back to 1869 when the American Missionary Association of the Congregational Church founded Straight University, and, on July 8, the

Freedman’s Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church established Union Normal School, according to the university’s history. “Straight University and Union Normal School were subsequently renamed Straight College and New Orleans University, respectively. Initially, both institutions offered instruction on the elementary level, then expanded to include the secondary, collegiate and professional levels.”

Eventually it all came together as the university and it continues to offer educa-

tional advances, despite the set backs last year.

Plans are for students to move back into campus buildings next month, but a great deal remains to be done, and the fund raiser will help.

Coberly said a local band, Danger/Peligro, will perform at the ice cream feed. The band is made up of Marcus Mull, Jared Wheeler, Matt Vink, Jaren Zamarripa and Alex Moyers, she said.

There will also be a “bounce house” for the kids and other activities.

The event is planned from 6-8:30 p.m. Saturday.

Officials say Castro steadily recovering from surgery, as Cuba prepares for possible attack

HAVANA (AP) — Cuban officials said Saturday that Fidel Castro was steadily recovering from surgery and that the government was still preparing for its worst-case scenario: an attack by government opponents taking advantage of the leader’s health crisis.

Castro, whose 80th birthday is Aug. 13, has made no appearances in the five days since his surgery for gastrointestinal bleeding was announced to the Cuban public. Defense Minister Raul Castro, his younger brother and the man named to temporarily replace him as the island’s top leader, also was nowhere to be seen.

Vice President Carlos Lage said that Fidel Castro is recovering satisfactorily from surgery and that the communist leader sent his “fraternal greetings” to the people of Bolivia, according to Cuban news agency Prensa Latina. Lage was in the South American nation for the Sunday opening of a convention to rewrite its constitution.

Lage is among a group of six Cuban leaders assigned leadership responsibilities by Fidel Castro after the leader’s surgery. He is charged with overseeing Castro’s “energy revolution,” a massive renovation of the island’s antiquated electrical grid.

Cubans had been warned there would be few details about the leader’s health —

called “a state secret” in a Tuesday statement attributed

to Castro. Yet some private-

ly speculated the lack of information could indicate he was extremely ill.

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