



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Colby teen pleads not guilty; trial set

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

A Colby teenager pleaded not guilty in Thomas County District Court today to all charges, including second degree murder, stemming from a fatal accident last year.

Michael Thompson, 18, was charged with two counts of second-degree murder, with alternate charges of involuntary manslaughter while under the influence of alcohol, two counts of aggravated battery and driving under the influence and reckless driving.

Judge Glenn Schiffrer set a trial date of April 1, and a pre-trial date of March 20. Thomas County Attorney Allan Taylor and Thompson's lawyer, Calvin Williams, agreed to the date and that Thompson would remain free on a supervised bond until the trial.

The charges resulted from a two-vehicle collision on Jan. 29, 2000 on U.S. 24 about eight miles east of Colby. The Kansas Highway Patrol said Thompson was driving a 1976 Cadillac northbound on Thomas County Road

27 and failed to stop at the intersection of U.S. 24 and struck a 1995 Probe driven by Angela Duden, 17.

Justin Shaw, also 17, died at the scene and Duden was flown to St. Anthony's hospital in Denver and died at 10 a.m. the next day.

Thompson and William Peterson, 17, were flown to Denver and in critical condition for several months. Brice Reynolds, 21, was flown to Denver in fair condition and released a short time later. The state's definition of a second degree murder charge means that Thompson is alleged to have unlawfully and feloniously killed a human being, which was done unintentionally, but recklessly under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life.

The definition of involuntary manslaughter while under the influence of alcohol means that Thompson is alleged to have unlawfully and feloniously killed a human being and it was done while in the commission of the crime of driving a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol.

## Groups to meet here for the first time ever

By MAXINE NELSON

Colby Free Press

The Kansas Association of Community College Trustees, and the Kansas Association of Community College Presidents will meet in in Colby on Dec. 7-8. Dr. Mikel Ary, Colby Community College president told the board of trustees at their Monday meeting.

The Prairie Museum of Art and History will host the Friday night meeting, with an open house and hors d'oeuvres from 6-8, and then dessert at Sheila Frahm's home, followed by coffee at Dr. Ary's home.

Ary said this will be the first time the organizations have met in Colby.

In other matters at the board meeting:

- Room 107 of the Colby Community College Student Union will be a bit more attractive place to meet in come December, thanks to a decision by the board. They accepted a bid to replace the carpet in Room 107 from Northwest Decorating Center for \$2,694.59. Ary said the carpet had been in good condition 14 years ago, but since then they had a leaking roof and other problems.

The room will be recarpeted in time for the state KARL meeting to be held there in early December.

- The board also agreed to replace the carpet in the administration area and board room of Thomas Hall, which has been developing some mysterious green streaks over the years. The work will be done over Christmas vacation

to avoid disrupting college activities.

Ary said the carpet, which is a light beige, was replaced in 1992. It is not known why the carpet has green spots; speculation is that it might be chlorophyll tracked in from the Japanese rain trees.

Trustee Ken Poland said he hoped the new carpet would be a matching shade of green, and Ary said he thought they would get carpet with a pattern, probably including some green. The cost will be \$10,103.72 from Northwest Decorating Center. The board rejected bids from Office Works for \$10,730 for the administration area, and \$2,845 for Room 107.

- The board approved a contract with NCO Financial Systems of St. Louis to collect outstanding student loans. Ken Johnson, dean of fiscal affairs, said the college has done business with the firm since the 1990s, and the purpose of the new contract was to reduce costs. The firm will get 25 percent for the first (initial) contact, down from 33 percent, and 33 percent for the second contact. The firm is used after the college tries to collect the debt, and is used for Perkins Funds (federal money) and can be used for tuition money, also.

- A large painting by Ken Mitchell was on display. Ary said the painting had been in the Commercial Federal Bank which was purchased by the First National Bank of Goodland, and the bank had decided to donate the painting to the college.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 19.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

**ABOVE:** In very tight quarters, Marcus Rojas, Colby, volunteered his time on Tuesday to crush plastics at the Thomas County Citizens for Recycling Center. The new addition will serve as a warehouse to alleviate some of the crowding in the main facility, said Lynette Koon, coordinator. **BELOW:** Ron Kogler, with the City of Colby and supervising the concrete project at the center, is assisted by Jim Helus in directing the mixture. Other city employees (right) helped in evenly spreading the concrete. This concrete pouring was expected to be finished by today, Kogler said.



## Northern alliance closing in on key stronghold

JABAL SARAJ, Afghanistan (AP) — Aided by heavy U.S. bombing, opposition forces said they seized a district from Taliban forces today and were closing in on a key northern city.

Anti-Taliban troops took control of Shol Ghar district and some units were just eight miles south of Mazar-e-Sharif, said Ashraf Nadeem, a spokesman for the opposition northern alliance.

The northern alliance said it captured several areas south of the city on Tuesday.

U.S. jets played a critical role in the opposition advance, targeting several pickup trucks packed with departing Taliban troops as well as hitting fortified positions, Nadeem said by satellite telephone.

U.S. warplanes also bombed behind Taliban positions on the Kabul front

today. Witnesses said they heard no anti-aircraft fire from Taliban fighters, who have periodically tried to shoot down U.S. jets since the bombing began exactly a month ago.

U.S. jets dropped dozens of bombs late Tuesday and two bombs early Wednesday around positions about 30 miles north of Kabul. Some explosions were followed by up to 30 smaller detonations.

One bomb that exploded in the area sent up a huge streak of gray smoke that spread into a white mushroom cloud. U.S. planes circled overhead.

Abdul Maaruf, a 17-year-old opposition fighter with blue sparkling heart stickers decorating his Kalashnikov, said Taliban artillery fire had diminished in recent days, possibly because gunners were choosing to hold their fire.



# Christmas

## ON US! is back

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## Briefly

### Weather: Cooler is nearer

If you look outdoors you can see that cool weather coming. The National Weather Service said this morning that Colby can expect cloudy conditions tonight, a 20 percent chance for showers, lows in the mid-30s and north winds 15-25 mph, decreasing to around 10 mph late. Thursday, mostly sunny and cooler with the highs only in the lower 50s and north winds 5-15 mph, turning easterly. Thursday night, clear and cold, lows in the mid-20s. Friday, Saturday and Sunday, clear, lows in the uppers 20s to lower 30s and highs in the upper 50s to lower 60s. Colby's high Tuesday was 74 and the overnight low this morning was 33. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 56 degrees. The records for Nov. 7: 84 in 1980 and 10 in 1938 (*The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.*)

### School board meeting changed

The regular meeting of the Colby Board of Education scheduled for Monday, Nov. 19, has been changed to Tuesday, Nov. 20, said Superintendent Kirk Nielsen. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the board room of the administration building, 210 S. Range Ave.

### High school musical rescheduled

Officials at Colby High School are reminding everyone that the musical, *Little Shop of Horrors*, has been rescheduled from Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8, 9, and 10 to Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15, 16 and 17. The performance time has remained the same at 7 p.m.

### Groundbreaking planned Monday

Citizens Medical Center, Colby, is inviting the public to

attend its groundbreaking ceremony for the hospital's diagnostic center beginning at 10 a.m., Monday, Nov. 12. The event is being jointly sponsored by the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce and the hospital.

### Parent-player meeting Thursday

There will be a winter sports meeting at 7 p.m. on Thursday in the auditorium of Colby High School specifically for parents and players planning to take part in basketball and wrestling. Jeff Quenzer, activities director and vice-principal, said the purpose of the meeting is to go over general rules associated with participation. This meeting is only for high school students.

### Council meets tonight

The Colby City Council will hold its regular meeting today, beginning at 7:30 p.m., in council chambers. Some

items slated for action or discussion include review of the preliminary cost estimate for Willow Street extension and transfer of educational access equipment to Colby Schools.

### Youth group plans dinner

The Methodist Senior Youth Group will have their annual Thanksgiving dinner Sunday, Nov. 11, with serving from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Donations will be appreciated. For meals to go, call Barb Albers at 462-2761 on Saturday from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Senior UMY meets every Sunday from 6-7 p.m. with a light meal following.

### Marines to celebrate here Friday

The annual Marine Corps birthday celebration in Colby is planned for Friday, Nov. 9, beginning at 9 a.m., at the Colby County Club. All Marine veterans are invited to the event, said B.J. Melvin, one of the organizers.

