



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Two resignations accepted at college board meeting

By MAXINE NELSON

Colby Free Press

Resignations from Pauline Fishel and Kent Craghead were accepted by the Colby Community College Board of Trustees at their Monday night meeting. Both are in the mathematics department, and both will finish out their contract year, said Dr. Mikel Ary, college president.

Fishel, who has been teaching at the college for the past 12 years, is retiring. Craghead wants to be closer to his aging parents who own property near Dodge City, Ary said.

In other business:

- The board accepted a bid for a new air conditioner/heating unit for the area south of the multipurpose room of the student union, which includes Room 107 and Skip Sharp's offices. The present unit was installed when the area was added in 1979. Ary said the college had budgeted \$8,000 capital outlay for the job.

- The board accepted a bid of \$6,515.55 from McKee, Inc. and the work will be done as soon as possible. The board rejected bids of \$7,150 from McClure Plumbing and Heating, and \$10,325.75 from Northwest Refrigeration, Heat and Air.

- The board accepted a bid of \$6,829 from Phillips Brothers of Springfield, Ill., for 5,500 college catalogs (148 pages plus cover).

The catalogs are revised and updated every two years.

The board rejected bids of \$7,715 from Central Plains Book Mfg. of Winfield; \$8,217 from Creasey Printing Services of Springfield, Ill.; \$9,155 from Mennonite Press of Newton; \$9,255 from Towanda Printing; \$9,575 from Consolidated Printing of Salina; and \$15,543.75 from Cornhusker Press of Kearney, Neb.

Ary said the price was reasonable because Phillips Brothers is a large operation and prints many catalogs. The material can be sent via e-mail or

on a disk ready to be printed. He said Colby College has not dealt with this company before, but Deb Schwanke, public relations, called several references and other colleges they have done work for, who said they were pleased with the work.

- Dean of Fiscal Affairs Kenneth Johnson reported on the state health insurance plan which has been opened up to colleges and school districts. He said a representative of the plan will be at the college at 3 p.m. on March 4 to meet with the participants, and will meet with the college board at 5 p.m. He suggested the board attend the 3 p.m. session, and bring questions at 5 p.m.

- The board voted to pay claims in the amount of \$724,355.59.

- The board then went into a 10-minute executive session to discuss non-elected personnel. The board met for another 5 minutes in closed session, and took no action when they returned to open session.

- Don Keady and Kurt Stephens reported on a trip they took to Washington, D.C. to a meeting of the American Association of Community Colleges Association of Community College Trustees.

Stephens said the meeting was "very beneficial and very educational." He said community colleges graduate 60 percent of nurses, but four-year colleges get all the federal money. Ary said it amounted to 70 percent of nurses in rural areas, and this needs to be pointed out to legislators.

Ary said he had invited the retired president of Barton County Community College to talk to the board about a comprehensive development plan at the March 4 meeting. He was instrumental in a large building plan at Barton County.

The next regular meeting will be March 4 at 5 p.m. in the board room of the Thomas Hall Administration Building.

## Parents and others invited to take test

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The Colby School District is one of more than 140 school districts participating in a program that gives parents an opportunity to experience first hand what their children are going through on state assessments, said Joni Clark-Leiker, high school counselor.

The purpose of the activity, "Kansas Take the Test," is to demonstrate the knowledge and ability Kansas students are expected to acquire in different subject areas at various grade levels, she said.

The sample test will continue to be handed out to parents wanting to take the test during parent-teacher conferences today and will also be available to those who were unable to attend the two days of conferences, Leiker said.

The Kansas State Department of Education initiated the idea as a means for parents and taxpayers to gain a better understanding of what youth are required to do.

"I am excited about this opportunity for people all over the state to gain some experience with our state assess-

ments," said Andy Tompkins, education commission.

"I believe we have established challenging, but realistic standards for our students and I think that participation in the 'Take the Test' will demonstrate that to members of the public."

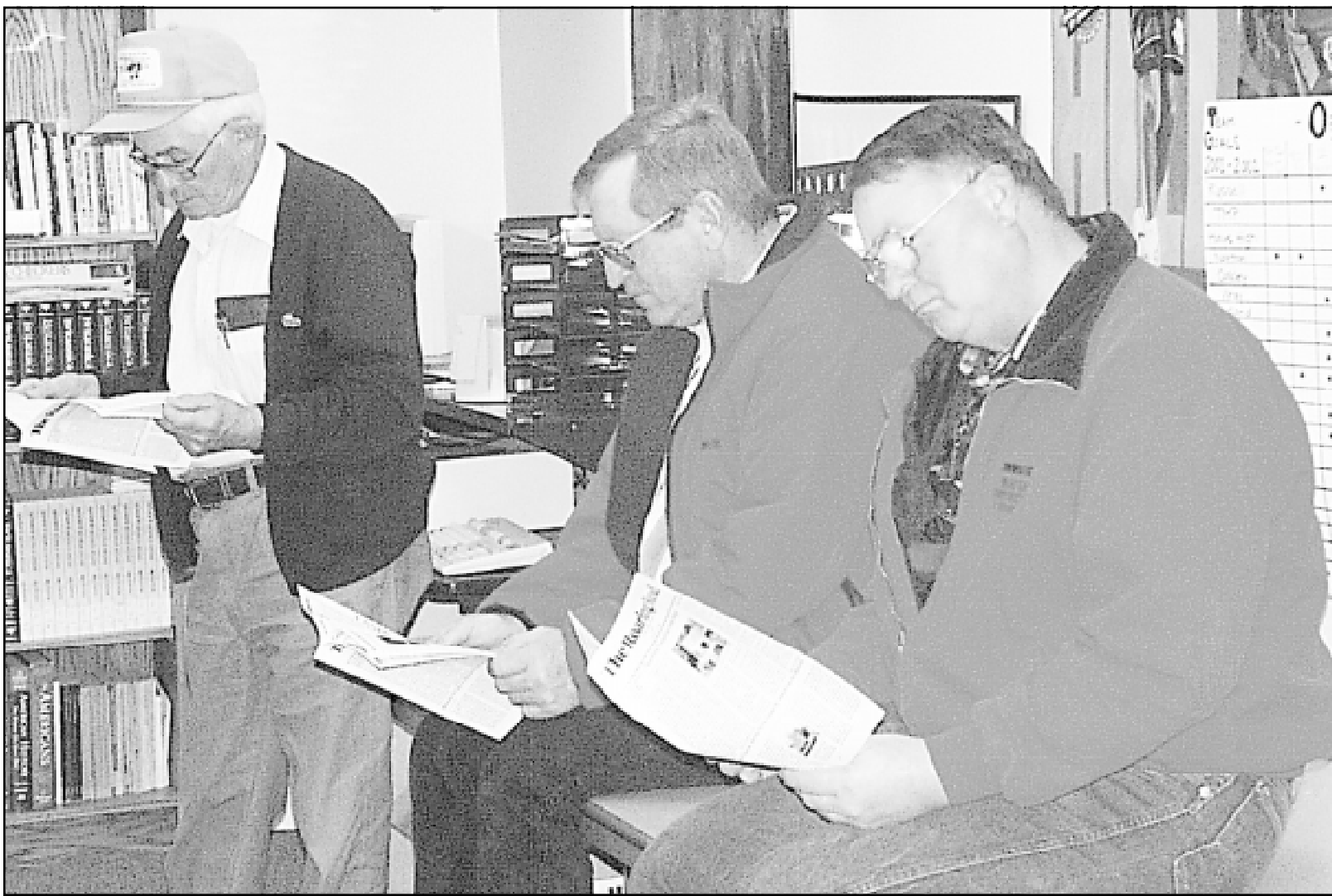
Leiker said the test is a sample assessment of what is given to the students and cannot be scored or graded.

"We hope that once people take the test, they will think about their impression of it and the academic expectations in place for students," she said.

Along with parents, hundreds of legislators and other public officials were invited to take the test as well, she said.

Organizations involved in coordinating the "Kansas Take the Test" were the state's department of education, Kansas Association of School Boards, Kansas National Education Association, Kansas School Public Relations Association and the United School Administrators of Kansas.

For questions or for those wanting to take the test, Leiker asks they call her at 465-5331 or Diana Wieland, curriculum director, 465-5005.



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Board members Bill Miller, center and Wilburn Holloway, right, along with district patron Lloyd Theimer, viewed a newspaper of events from

the 1920s and 1930s prepared by students in Derek Bissitt and Shelly Myer's history classes during the board meeting Monday.

## District insurance questions abound

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

Insurance was again a hot topic at the Colby School Board meeting Monday night as board members discussed bid specifications for nearly two hours.

Darvin Strutt, of F&M Insurance, who carries the district insurance now, was on hand to answer the many questions board members had.

The biggest questions, from board members Bill Miller, John Cranston and Wilburn Holloway, were about insurance on the administration building. Miller wanted to know why they were carrying replacement cost insurance on that building when "all the money goes to (Jon) Pope."

Strutt explained that the property insurance for the district was a blanket policy, meaning that all the buildings were insured under one policy.

He also explained the advantages and disadvantages of replacement cost insurance.

"A lot of items depreciate very quickly," he said, citing a carpet claim the district has now. The carpet is about five years old and in a high wear area. With an actual cost value policy, the district would also foot the bill for 50 percent depreciation.

"Actual cash value is okay in a total loss," he said, "but it can really bite you in a partial loss."

Replacement cost in a total loss would pay the actual cash value up front, then pay the rest of the value once a new building was built.

Holloway wanted to know if there was a way to limit the district's re-

sponsibility in a loss situation.

District manager Jo DeYoung also looked up the agreement with Pope, made two years ago when the board decided to sell the property to him for \$25,000 in return for a lease.

According to the agreement, the board is responsible for insuring the building, but any money from a loss also goes to the board, not Pope.

Cranston wanted to know how much removing the building from the blanket policy would cost and how much of the total property insurance bill of \$45,000 was on the administration building.

The administration building and outbuildings are currently insured for \$5.5 million. Strutt said he would have to get those figures, but it was possible to remove the building from the blanket and just put actual cash value insurance on it alone. He thought that would be more expensive on the administration building, but they might actually save a little money on the overall bill.

"But, if you have a partial loss, like a roof, you are left holding the bag," he said. Cranston also asked for an explanation of replacement cost, "Is it the exact building?"

Strutt said yes, including all the features of the hospital it once was, which could easily cost \$5.5 million.

"So, we're insuring to replace a useless building," said Miller.

Miller also said the replacement cost would be unnecessary because "we're not responsible for replacing the building anyway."

Miller also wanted to know why the administration building had \$250,000 in contents insurance and the high

school only had \$900,000.

Strutt explained that Employers' Mutual, the insurance carrier, required 25 percent in contents insurance.

"We got that dropped a little because of other insurance," he said, citing policies on band instruments and other equipment that has to be insured when it is off school property.

The remaining required contents insurance was spread around the district, Strutt said. He explained that the district's blanket policy allows them to draw from other insured property to cover larger than expected losses.

"If we had a \$1 million loss at the high school, we could use property insurance here to cover that," he said.

Cranston also wanted to know about the bleachers at Dennen Field, which are insured for only \$25,000, or about 10 percent of their value.

Holloway said he thought the blanket policy would cover that, but Strutt reminded the board that the insurance carrier required "reasonable replacement value."

"It will be hard to justify \$25,000 insurance on a \$250,000 stadium," he said. He added that there were still some things that were uninsured or underinsured.

Strutt also told board members he thought the district's insurance increase would be less than some others because of some money they had recouped on the roof damage at the high school a few years ago.

He said the district was at 1.07 on the insurance formula last year, meaning they paid seven percent higher than standard premiums. The formula takes into account the age of buildings and

the claim history.

Without the 1922 elementary school and with the recovery of some of the damages paid on the roof damage at the high school, Strutt said he didn't think the district would be above a one rating.

He cited two Class 4A districts, who had declined to be named, who were paying similar insurance.

District A insured \$25 million in property and had a total insurance bill of \$92,146 and district B had an \$82,572 bill with \$22 million in property. Both districts had ratings lower than Colby, whose bill was \$92,381 and total property value \$29 million.

Strutt also told board members that property insurance would be hard to find from some companies because Employer's Mutual was one of the few companies doing that and they wouldn't bid against one of their own agents. There was one other company interested, Investors and Insurers, from Salina, represented by Max Mountford and Jim Stanley.

In the end, the board decided to have Superintendent Kirk Nielsen modify bid specification to remove the administration building from the blanket and put an actual cash value policy on it, raise the value of the coverage on the bleachers and track at Dennen Field and remove the three year insurance stipulation.

"I think bidding this is a waste of time," said board president Stan Molstad, "but 90 percent of the work is already done."

(Remaining items taken up at the board meeting will appear in Wednesday's Free Press.)

## Couple sues after learning home scene of murder

OLATHE (AP) — Pam and John Westhoff followed the news reports of a grisly killing in Leawood — an elderly man beaten to death with a baseball bat, his new wife badly injured.

Eighteen months later, they bought a house in Leawood. The Westhoffs didn't connect the two events for another year. A neighbor's chance remark

to a contractor told them what nobody else had; that they had bought the house where Lawrence Kubik was murdered in 1999. Pam Westhoff said that when she learned of the house's history, "I became physically ill."

The Westhoffs have filed a lawsuit in Johnson County District Court, claiming they were victims of misrep-

resentation. They also claim the sale violated Kansas consumer protection laws. Their lawsuit alleges that the previous homeowners and the real estate professionals had a duty to disclose that a "gruesome murder" had occurred in the house.

The defendants say they had no such obligation, although in court docu-

ments answering the accusations, they maintain that an agent working for the Westhoffs was told about the crime. The Westhoffs' agent denies the claim.

Disclosure that a house was a crime scene is not required in either Kansas or Missouri, where the Westhoffs lived before moving to the Kansas side of the Kansas City metropolitan area.

### Red Cross classes set

The Thomas County Chapter of the American Red Cross is sponsoring a CPR and first aid class with two sessions on Monday, Feb. 25, and Monday, March 4, at 6 p.m. at the Colby Community College student union. This course, said Donna Finley, director of the Thomas County Red Cross chapter, trains individuals to act in an emergency and to recognize and care for respiratory or cardiac emergencies, sudden illness and injuries. To register or for those with questions, call Finley at 462-7161 or 462-2366.

### Brewster board meeting Thursday

The Brewster School board meeting will be Thursday, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the school cafeteria, 127 Kansas St. All meetings are open to the public.

## Briefly

### Weather: It'll be fine

The sun will be playing a sort of now-you-see-it, now-you-don't game in the Colby area for the next few days, according to the National Weather Service. Wednesday will bring sun, Thursday will bring clouds and Friday will bring sun. High temperatures during that period will range from the upper 50s on Wednesday, the upper 40s on Thursday and the middle 60s on Friday. Lows will be in the lower 20s tonight, middle 20s on Wednesday night, and the middle 20s on Thursday night. No precipitation is anticipated. Monday's high in Colby was 61 and the overnight low this morning was 27. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth has climbed to 41 degrees. Precipitation remains at 0.19 inches for the month, with 2.5 inches of snow. Today's high is expected to reach 43. The records for Feb. 19: 77 in 1930

and —1 in 1894. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

### Moran fund-raiser is today

Congressman Jerry Moran will be in Colby tonight from 5:30 to 7 at the Country Club. The event is being sponsored by the local Realtors Association as a fund-raiser for Moran. Everyone is invited to attend.

### Council could buy new truck

The Colby City Council will consider buying a new bucket truck for the public works and public power departments during its regular meeting at 7:30 tonight in council chambers of city hall, 585 N. Franklin Ave. In addition, the

council will take steps to make Horton Avenue a main traffic way, along with establishing project costs for upgrades; possible approval of a credit card for department heads and, if approved, subsequent purchasing policy with the card.

### Appreciation breakfast planned

The Colby Chapter of the FFA is having an appreciation breakfast from 7 to 8 a.m., Thursday, at the Colby High School ag shop (east of Dennen Field). All supporters of the FFA program are invited. For questions, call 465-5300.

### Pickup bids to be opened

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. Thursday to open bids for a pickup for the noxious weed department. The meeting is open to the public.

