



COLBY FREE PRESS

Jazz fans have treat in store Saturday

By **PATTY DECKER**
Free Press Editor

Band directors from around the area will once again present the “Flatland Big Band” in the Colby High School auditorium beginning at 7:30 p.m., Saturday.

“Every year since 1993, on the first Saturday in May, band directors gather and rehearse together all day,” said Julie Groom, who formed the group to get students interested in this American art form.

“On Saturday evening,” she said, “a program of great jazz, both old tunes and new are performed in concert with the 2002 Colby High School Eagle Jazz Ensemble.”

Area musicians include Chris White, Dodge City Community College; Clint Raynes, formerly of Wichita County High School, Mission Valley Middle School, Kansas City; Shawn Martin, Lakin High School; Joey Nickols, Colby High School alumni and music education major at Fort Hays State; along with Bob Lee III, Pratt High School.

Other musicians are Kenny Roe, Centre High School; Quentin Breese, Southeast of Saline High School; Elton Armbrister, former director of bands at

Colby High and now principal at Natoma; Mark DeWald, Trego Community High School; Andy Rust, Douglass High School; Darrell Cox, Lawrence High School; Cliff Francis, Scott City; Bill Dietz, Quinter High School; Mike Quilling, Holcomb High School; Brad McCullough, Hugoton High School; David Wiggins, Marysville High School; Roger Winter, Scott City; and Jeannette Raynes, Roeland Park Elementary School, Kansas City, vocalist.

The Eagle Jazz ensemble includes Alex Marshall, Hope Daniels, Josh Cox, Tony Brown, Matt Augustine, Jesse Jacobsen, Amanda Seemann, Jennifer Schwindt, Luke Rogers, Jodi Nicholson, Jason Erickson, Rusty Helin, Jared Dinkel, Collin Bielser, Shane Carter and Theo Kleinsorge.

“From rock to swing and everything in between, this concert promises to have everyone’s toes tapping and fingers snapping,” Groom said today.

“Each year audiences come away from the Flatland Concert having enjoyed themselves and the music to no end.”

There is no admission charge and everyone is encouraged to attend.

Wheat in Colby area not promising

WICHITA (AP) — Fewer planted acres, coupled with drought in the far western counties of Kansas, are expected to cut the 2002 Kansas wheat crop to 297.1 million bushels, the annual wheat tour estimated Thursday.

Last year Kansas farmers harvested 328 million bushels of wheat.

This year’s tour included 55 participants — among them producers, millers, bakers, university experts and other industry officials — who inspected 480 wheat fields across 90 percent of Kansas wheat growing country.

The group also estimated the average statewide yield at 35.6 bushels per acre, slightly better than their estimate during last year’s tour.

“This year we are going to need moisture just to maintain the yield and bushels that are out there,” said Brett

Myers, executive vice president of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers. He said the group found no disease or insect damage in the fields where they stopped.

“For the most part, we’ve seen pretty good wheat,” Myers said.

Wheat growing in the northern tier of counties along the Nebraska border looked even better than last year.

But from Atwood to Colby, stands were poor. Lack of rain is the big culprit. And forecasts aren’t holding out much hope for the immediate future.

Counties bordering Colorado in far western Kansas and the southwestern corner of the state were in pretty bad shape.

“No amount of rain in the world is going to make any difference — there is nothing there,” Myers said of those counties.



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

The Houston house turned off of Highway 83 to begin the final leg of its journey into Rexford this morning. Traffic on the highway was diverted through county roads from Rexford to the Highway 83-Highway 24 junction while the house was traveling from Gem to Rexford.

Resident watches as part of her life moves along county road to Rexford

By **MAXINE NELSON**
Colby Free Press

Maxine Houston Neville of Colby has donated the Houston family house in Gem to the Shepherd’s Staff in Rexford, and it was moved this morning.

“It (the house) was built in 1906 and has been in the family all these years,” she said. “It has not been lived in since 1973, when my brother died, but it has been kept up ever since.”

Neville said she was having the house moved to Rexford “because

the Shepherd’s Staff is a good organization, and I wanted someone that would appreciate and make good use of it. It was the family’s home. There were three of us born in that house.”

Observing the moving process, Neville said, “That’s my life going down the road.

“I’m sitting right here back of it and will be there until it gets there. It has a lot of history.”

She said the house is a huge, two-story structure. It is Colonial style and has three bedrooms and a bath upstairs; and two living rooms, a dining room,

kitchen, two bedrooms, a big closet and bath downstairs.

“They (the highway department) are taking down all the light wires going down the road. They closed the highway to get the house down the road. They have been very cooperative,” she said.

Mrs. Neville’s father, Philip S. Houston, was a prominent citizen involved in ranching, farming and real estate. He also operated the Gem State Bank and built elevators in Gem, Halford, Levant and Goodland.

The house will become a part of the

Shepherd’s Staff Christian Conference Center, and is expected to eventually be used as a bed and breakfast. Located on the corner of Main and Kansas Streets, it will remain closed to the public until restoration is completed, said Joan Dingwerth, board member of the Shepherd’s Staff.

The Shepherd’s Staff is a non-profit Christian organization located in Rexford since 1983. The ministry is sustained by contributions from churches and individuals.

House approves compromise budget after negotiators plead for support

TOPEKA (AP) — A \$4.4 billion budget that keeps funding for schools and universities flat but is \$299 million out of balance faced an uncertain fate in the Senate.

On Thursday, the House approved the plan by a two-vote margin, but on the eve of today’s scheduled Senate action, its Republican leaders weren’t sure they could muster the support of 21 of 40 members.

The spending plan for fiscal 2003, which starts July 1, was drafted by House and Senate negotiators reconciling differences in budgets passed earlier by the two chambers. Passage in the Senate would send it to Gov. Bill Graves.

But lawmakers would still have to pass a budget cleanup bill and consider

a \$299 million tax increase to balance the budget, which already relies on using \$110 million from the state’s cash reserves.

In all, the compromise budget would appropriate \$137 million less from the state’s General Fund than the \$4.54 billion spent in the current fiscal year. The decline reflects the gap — now estimated at \$777 million — between revenues and spending mandated by state and federal laws or pledged during earlier legislative sessions.

Several House members rose to criticize the budget bill before it was approved on a 63-61 vote.

Although it protects some social service programs from cuts, the bill was denounced by some moderate Republicans and Democrats as too harsh.

“All across the state, the word is that the Legislature is going to implode; they’re not going to finish their work; they’re going to have a special session. That doesn’t have to happen.”

Kenny Wilk, R Lawrence
Appropriations chairman

And while it maintains state aid to public schools at \$3,870 per pupil and holds higher education spending flat, critics said school districts and universities need more money to meet higher payrolls and health insurance costs.

Some conservative Republicans, meanwhile, insisted the compromise budget still contained some fat.

They pointed to a provision allowing the state to issue \$11 million in bonds for renovations on a newly pur-

chased office building near the Statehouse that will serve as the Department of Transportation’s headquarters.

Sensing that the measure might fail, House Republican leaders slowed the voting Thursday with speeches. Two of the House negotiators — Appropriations Chairman Kenny Wilk, R-Lansing, and Rep. Melvin Neufeld, R-Ingalls — spoke in defense of the compromise.

“I realize there’s little to like in this budget bill,” Wilk said. “All across the state, the word is that the Legislature is going to implode; they’re not going to finish their work; they’re going to have a special session. That doesn’t have to happen.” The tactic worked. With the roll held open for supporters’ speeches, enough members switched

their votes to put the proposal over the top. Graves hasn’t said whether the compromise budget is acceptable, even though he opposes dipping into cash reserves.

Budget Director Duane Goossen said Thursday after the House vote that the only significant differences between the compromise budget and Graves’ recommendations were in the use of cash reserves and school aid, where Graves wanted a \$20 per pupil increase, to \$3,890.

But the use of cash reserves bothered some House members who voted against it.

“All of this stuff is Band-Aid, patch, without really getting to the root of the issue,” said Rep Nile Dillmore, D-Wichita.

Briefly

Thunderstorms expected

Thunderstorms are mentioned each day through Monday, according to the National Weather Service forecast issued at 11:30 this morning for the Colby area. Low temperatures tonight through Monday will vary from the upper 30s to near 50, with highs generally in the 70s, but expected to move into the lows 80s on Monday. Winds aren’t expected to be a big factor during the forecast period. Colby’s high Thursday was 64 and the overnight low this morning was 33. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 56 degrees. Precipitation remains at 0.01 inches. The records for May 3: 96 in 1965 and 22 in 1907. *(The temperatures and precipitation are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)*

Singles dance tonight

The Colby Singles Group is sponsoring its monthly dance from 8 p.m. to midnight, today, with entertainment provided by Off Limits, featuring Dick and Maybelle Moore of Colby. Don Birzer, coordinator, said the dance is open to all alumni and single people. For information, call Birzer at 462-2127.

College board to meet

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will meet at 5 p.m. Monday in the board room of the Thomas Hall administration building. Items of business on the agenda include: a presentation by Dr. Jimmie Downing, former president at Barton County Community College on the comprehensive development plan; discuss Website/mail computer server bids; state health insurance plan; and administrative fee for health insurance runoff. They will approve agreements, contracts, ONEOK gas contract and the rodeo agreement with the fair board for 2002-2003. They will also discuss classified personnel, student-trustee dinner comments and any other item any member wishes to discuss.

Commissioners meet Monday

The Thomas County commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. Monday in the commissioners room of the courthouse. Ken Patton of the sheriff’s department and Boz the new drug dog, will give a demonstration at 9 a.m. Ross Rodenbeck and B.J. Melvin will discuss a road at 9:15 a.m. Tami Grandison will discuss Big Brothers/Big Sisters at 9:30 a.m.

The commissioners will open compactor bids for the road department at 10 a.m. Landfill supervisor Larry Jumper will discuss closure costs and prior months reports at 10:30 a.m. Reba White of the Northwest Research-Extension Center, will discuss the Extension office budget at 11 a.m. The meeting is open to the public.

Christian School sets meeting

A Heartland Christian School informational meeting will be held Monday at 7 p.m. at the Colby Ramada Inn for anyone wanting information on enrolling their children either now or in the future. Please call the school office at 462-6419 for details.

Traveling team tryouts Sunday

Colby’s 12 & under traveling baseball team will be conducting tryouts this Sunday, May 5, at 2 p.m. at the Colby Recreation Complex. For more information, contact Jeff Krzycki at 462-2657 or Blake Arnberger at 462-6915.

School board meeting May 20

Colby Public School officials are reminding people that

the Monday, May 6 regular school board meeting was held on Monday, April 22. The next regular meeting of the board will be Monday, May, 20, at 7 p.m. in the board room, 210 S. Range Ave. For questions, call 465-5000.

City/county clean up planned

The Thomas County Commissioners are participating with a County-Wide Cleanup for the week of May 6-11, city officials said. Small tree branches will also be picked up by city crews during this cleanup. Disposal of large tree branches and entire trees needs to be handled by private contractors. Appliances, furniture, and other large items which are cluttering yards can be removed by calling the City Office at 462-4410.

Waste facility open Saturday

Items will be accepted Saturday, May 4, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Household Hazardous Waste Facility, 190 W. 4th in Colby. Please observe these criteria: This is a *free* service to Thomas County households only, no business wastes can be accepted. Used motor oil should be taken to the county landfill for recycling.

