



COLBY FREE PRESS

Today is 'Decision Day'



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Doris Duden received her ballot this morning from Lou Kersenbrock while in the background Robert Wither prepared to sign-in, along with

Carolyn DeBoer and Mildred Barnett. Poll workers said 134 voters had marked ballots in Ward III by 10 a.m. today.

Firearms, ammo found in student's car at high school

By **PATTY DECKER**

Free Press Editor

A 16-year-old Colby youth was arrested Monday after a search of his vehicle on school property resulted in the discovery of firearms and ammunition, said Randy Jones, chief of police.

Although the name of the teenager is being withheld by authorities pending further investigation and a full report being forwarded to the Thomas County Attorney's office, Jones did say that the firearms were found in the youth's vehicle which was parked in the parking lot at Colby High School. "We received a report (at 1:59 p.m.) that a Colby High School student may be in possession of firearms on school property," Jones told the Free Press today.

After following up on the report and receiving a consent to search the vehicle, police officers collected a .357-caliber handgun, a .22-caliber handgun, a pellet gun, a 30-06 rifle and many rounds of ammunition.

The youth was then taken to the Law Enforcement Center, Jones said, and has been cooperating with police as the investigation continues.

The Juvenile Justice Authority was called and it was agreed that for now the 16-year-old be placed under house arrest and released to a parent after being processed, Jones said.

"This investigation is ongoing and all reports will be forwarded to the county attorney's office after completion," he said.

No other details were made available today.

Bio-terror plan update given commissioners

BY **MICHELLE L. HAWKINS**

Colby Free Press

Kathy Ryan, county health nurse, updated the Thomas County Commissioners at their Monday meeting on the bio-terrorism report.

Ryan said she recently met with Colby Police Chief Randy Jones, Sheriff Tom Jones, and members of the EMS, hospital staff and several local pharmacists to discuss the plan.

She said the plan has already been sent to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and returned with suggestions and revisions that need attention. Ryan said the plan modifications are to be sent back in by Jan. 1, 2003.

"This is an on going project," said Ryan. "There will be more additions to this (the plan)."

She said that such a project as this, will continually be modified to meet the needs that exist.

Ryan also talked about regionalization fund grants available to counties in the amount of \$10,000.

She said that the stipulation for the grant is that at least three contiguous counties combine to work on the project. Thomas County has joined with seven other counties for a total of \$80,000 in grant money, she said.

Ryan said they are planning to use the money to contract a person to assist in writing bio-terrorism policies and procedures for the counties.

"It would take some of the load off of the locals (counties)," she said.

It was also reported by Ryan that the health department administered a fair number of flu vaccinations. She said of the 1,000 doses ordered, only 200 are left.

In other business:

- The loan papers were signed for the no fund warrant on the landfill. The \$700,000 loan is being distributed throughout the budget for five years in the amount of \$157,716.45 each.

- Vern Roemer was appointed to the Lacey Township Board to replace Steve Bugbee, who moved to Summers Township.

Says he had no choice

Israel's Sharon surprises all with call for quick elections

JERUSALEM (AP) — In a surprise move, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Tuesday dissolved parliament and called snap elections, to be held at the beginning of February, after he failed to rebuild his crumbling government.

The dramatic developments throw Israel into a likely unruly election campaign at a time when the nation is facing severe problems — the 2-year-old conflict with the Palestinians, a deepening economic crisis and the possibility of an Iraqi attack on Israel in the event of a U.S. strike against Saddam Hussein.

Sharon said he made the decision reluctantly, but that he had no choice

because the alternative — succumbing to political blackmail by potential coalition partners — would have been worse.

"Elections are the last thing this country needs right now," Sharon told a hastily called news conference at his office. He chided his former Labor party allies and a far-right party, blaming them for the fall of his 20-month-old government. Israel has had five prime ministers in the past seven years.

The February date for elections would leave an unusually short time for campaigning, and both Sharon and the main opposition party, Labor, face likely leadership challenges.

School board hears charter school presentation

By **DARREL PATTILLO**

Colby Free Press

The Colby school Board heard a presentation on charter schools Monday night at its regular board meeting. District curriculum director Diana Wieland and Colby Grade School principal Terrell Harrison told the board that money would be available soon to start a charter school, which would "focus on kids that aren't achieving what they could be achieving," as Harrison put it.

"We have kids that need to learn how to learn," she said. "A charter school would be achievement based, rather than time-based," Wieland told the board. "It wouldn't necessarily be re-

stricted to certain months of the year, like regular school. Each child would progress based on performance, rather than time spent in the classroom."

A charter school would resemble the Sylvan Learning Centers, Harrison told the board, and would consist of lab-type settings where children would be working together as a group. Students wouldn't be restricted to just the charter school, but would be able to take those kinds of classes as well as attend regular school. "Parents will have a lot of input into what classes their children will participate in," Wieland said.

Harrison stressed to the board that attendance wouldn't be just for under-

achieving kids. Board member Bill Miller wondered whether kids would "feel like they were being labeled for having to attend the charter school." Harrison said that "taking classes at the charter school would be a privilege. Kids will want to take those classes. And it wouldn't be just underachievers. I have some gifted students right now that could benefit by a charter school."

In other business, the board:

- Tabled discussion on the Blue Cross/Blue Shield health plan until the next board meeting when business manager Jo DeYoung will present the board with the state healthcare plan. The board will then decide whether to

join with the state or continue with its own healthcare plan.

- Approved the revised board policies. This year the changes were minor rewordings.
- Selected Tracy Rogers to serve on its calendar committee.
- Declined to approve an out-of-district field trip request for students to attend a basketball game in Denver.
- Went into executive session to discuss personnel. Upon returning to open meeting, no action was taken.

The next regular board meeting will be on Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. in the board room of the administration building at 210 South Range. The public, as always, is encouraged to attend.

Council to review application for federal money

By **PATTY DECKER**

Free Press Editor

The Colby City Council will be reviewing an application for federal money at the Ace Services Superfund site when it holds its regular meeting tonight at 7 p.m. in council chambers.

In the application, Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, will be requesting the council consider the state and federal assistance so that the city can operate the water treatment plant for the next five years at the superfund site.

The application request is for just over \$3.5 million and would go

hand-in-hand with another agenda item asking the council to consider a contract that would allow city employees to handle the water treatment plant.

In other council business tonight, a resolution encouraging cooperation between Citizens Medical Center and physicians was drafted and will be considered for approval. While the city has no legal standing or authority in this matter, Armstrong said today, the resolution would put the city on record as being very concerned about the matter.

In addition, another resolution could be passed designating no parking on Country Club Drive from Fourth Street north to Kyle Railroad from Jan. 1,

2003 to Jan. 1, 2004.

The request was prompted by the Lutheran Church on Country Club in order to allow their congregation time to become familiar with the detour before the Kansas Department of Transportation detour becomes effective, according to information provided.

The bids for that project are scheduled to begin in February of 2003.

The council is also expected to consider approving the issuance of general obligation bonds in the amount of \$540,000 and authorizing sale and delivery of those bonds for the work on Horton Avenue.

Discussion will also take place regarding renting office space at the Colby Municipal Airport. Mark Ostmeyer, manager of the facility, was inquiring as to whether or not someone could rent the space formerly used by the weather modification program and if the business would have to be aviation related. According to Ostmeyer, the office space is 24' x 31'.

Prior to this issue coming before the council, the Colby Municipal Airport board met earlier today and plans to have their recommendation available for the council to review, Armstrong said.

Bishops sex abuse policy is branded a secretive rollback

By **The Associated Press**

American Roman Catholic bishops' new draft of their sex-abuse policy was quickly branded by victims' advocates as a cumbersome, secretive rollback from the sweeping changes approved at a historic summit this year.

The draft, released Monday, is a re-

vised version of the abuse policy that bishops endorsed in Dallas in June.

The Vatican had misgivings about the Dallas proposal, saying elements conflicted with universal church law.

Bishops will vote on the changes at their Nov. 11-14 meeting in Washington.

Priests said the changes would ensure due process for the accused, but advocates were skeptical.

Under the revised policy, allegations would trigger a "preliminary investigation," during which an accused priest would remain in place. The policy said his reputation would be

protected during the investigation.

David Clohessy, director of Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, said the revision would prevent congregations from learning about allegations against priests and "enable abusive priests to remain in ministry, and unidentified, longer."

Briefly

Marines invited to coffee

All former Marines are invited to a coffee in celebration of the Marine Corps. birthday, said B.J. Melvin, a coordinator of the event. The coffee will be held at the Colby Country Club at 9 a.m., Friday.

All former Marines are cordially invited to attend.

Breakfast to benefit students

All hunters are invited on Saturday to a biscuit and gravy breakfast at the Sacred Heart Church. Serving will begin at 5 a.m. All proceeds will go to middle school students attending the Washington, D.C. trip next summer.

Turkey supper set at Brewster

The annual Brewster United Methodist Women "Turkey Supper" will be held at the church on Wednesday from 5:30-7:30 p.m. A free-will offering will be taken, and all are invited.

Dinner scheduled at Rexford

The Lions Club and Royal Neighbors will be holding their Annual Turkey and Ham Dinner on Saturday with serving to begin at 11 a.m. The dinner will be held at the Rexford Community Hall. The Harvesters 4-H Club will also have a cookie sale that same day.

Methodist youth schedule dinner

The Senior United Methodist Youth "Thanksgiving Dinner" will be held Sunday, Nov. 10, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. If anyone would like to donate cooked or uncooked turkey for the dinner, pies or a dessert, please call LaDonna at 462-7747 or Barb at 462-2489. All are invited to attend. Free-will donations accepted.

Sign-up near for women's luncheon

Registration deadline for the Heart of Women's Health luncheon to be held on Nov. 13, at the Quality Inn, is this coming Thursday. The luncheon will feature speaker Marcia McCoy,

coordinator for the Women's Cardiac Center Mid America Heart Institute Saint Luke's-Shawnee Mission Health System. The cost is \$10 and will include a meal to be served at noon and the presentation from 12:30 to 1 p.m. For information or to register call Betty at 462-3939.

Child Birth Class begins

The Colby Child Birth Education Class Series will begin for the month of November on Thursday, Nov. 6. The four-week series will be each Thursday through Dec. 4, but will not meet on Thanksgiving. Classes will be held from 7 to 10 p.m. and will be in the Health Science Building at Colby Community College. For information or to register, call Jeanne Brown at 462-4850. The next class will begin on Jan. 9.

Next 'Share' sign up announced

SHARE sign up is Nov. 4-8, at State Farm Insurance office in Colby with the delivery set for Nov. 23, at 9 a.m. in the Sacred Heart School gym. For information call 462-3579 or 462-3733.

WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley area

The numbers
Monday's high, 43
Low this morning, 23
Year ago today, 77 and 32
Soil temperature, 38
Temperature at 11:00 today, 46
Records for Nov. 5, 84 in 1945, 8 in 1967
The forecast
Tonight, clear, lows upper 20s, northwest winds up to 20 mph.
Wednesday, sunny, highs 60-65, northwest winds up to 20 mph.
Wednesday night, clear, lows lower 30s. Thursday, sunny, highs mid 60s. Thursday night, clear, lows mid 30s.

