



COLBY FREE PRESS

Not many have filed with deadline near Incumbents, challengers have until Tuesday to get on ballot

By DARREL PATTILLO

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Courthouse will be open for regular business on Monday — Martin Luther King Jr. holiday — so candidates for city and school board positions will have time to file. The deadline is Tuesday at noon.

Information from the office of Tracey Perkins, Thomas County Clerk/Election Officer reveals that not many incumbents or newcomers to the political arena have put their names on the line — yet.

Elections for city council positions in Thomas County, school board positions at Oakley, Brewster, Colby and Golden Plains, and Colby Community College Board of Trustees will be held in April.

However, if more than two candidates file for a position, a primary election will be held on Feb. 25 to narrow the field for the general election, Perkins said.

Here are the positions up for election, and candidates who have filed as of this morning:

- City of Colby: Mayor — incumbent Warren Hixson has filed.
- City council, Ward 1, incumbent Ken Bieber has filed.
- Ward 2, incumbent Francis Britton has not filed.
- Ward 3, incumbent Darrel Follis has not filed; however, James A Brown and Monti Montgomery have filed for that seat.
- Ward 4, incumbent Todd Barrows has not filed.
- Brewster City Council — Mayor Mike Baughn has re-filed, councilmen Ron Ribordy and Gene Schoenberger have not yet re-filed.
- Gem City Council — Margie Flanagan, Larry Higerd, Monica Miller and Mayor Phyllis Ziegelmeier have not yet re-filed.
- Menlo City Council — Troy Staats, Terry Moss, Leroy Nueharth and Mayor Delores Seeberger have not yet re-filed.
- Rexford City Council — Michael L. Johnson, Gidget Mosier, David Williams and Mayor William Dible have not yet re-filed.
- Brewster School District — Position 1, Greg Mills, Position 2, Joan Jamison, Position 3, Stephen Bear and Position 6 (at-large), Leroy Moore, have not yet re-filed.
- Colby School District — Stan Molstad has re-filed; Bill Miller, Cathy Gordon and Wilburn Holloway have not yet re-filed.
- Golden Plains School District — Position 1, Mark Miller, has re-filed. Position 2, Kathy Albers, Position 3, Leroy Spreser and Position 7 (at-large), Paul G. Bruggeman, have not yet re-filed.
- Oakley School District — Jim Keller, Mark Dumler, Tracey Stark and Wade Park have not yet re-filed.
- Colby Community College Board of Trustees — Don Kready has re-filed; Matt Hamill and Ken Poland have not yet re-filed.

Senator is booted from budget committee for unproductive behavior

TOPEKA (AP) — Two days after he tried unsuccessfully to put an ally in Senate leadership, a conservative Republican was removed from his seat on the chamber's budget committee.

Senate GOP leaders took the Ways and Means Committee seat away from Sen. Tim Huelskamp, of Fowler, for what they described as unproductive behavior. The Organization, Calendar and Rules Committee, nine Republicans, disciplined him Wednesday.

The organization committee's meeting was closed to the public, and Huelskamp was not allowed to remain.

"Sen. Huelskamp has been unwilling to apply constructive criticism and positive solutions to the myriad of budget problems of the

Bush eyes malpractice reform

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush was making a fresh pitch today for his solution to high malpractice insurance costs: a nationwide limit on the amount injured patients can win from doctors.

In the 18th trip of his presidency to politically important Pennsylvania, Bush was calling on Congress

state," said Senate President Dave Kerr, R-Hutchinson. "We have no time to deal with anyone who is unwilling to be part of the solution."

Replacing Huelskamp on the budget committee was Sen. Bill Buntin, R-Topeka, who previously served 28 years in the House, including eight years as chairman of its budget committee.

Huelskamp said he was removed from the budget committee "because I wasn't a team player." He said he also was removed because he didn't support Kerr last year in his failed bid for the GOP nomination for governor.

On Monday, Huelskamp nominated Sen. Stan Clark, R-Oakley, as Senate vice president. Clark lost to Sen. John Vratil of Leawood on a 30-9 vote.

to deliver on medical malpractice reform.

President Bush was to argue, in remarks at the University of Scranton, that lawsuits are behind soaring health care costs and doctor shortages and that limiting jury awards in medical malpractice suits is the way to solve the problem.

The computer gang



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

The computer lab is up and running at Colby Grade School. It opened at the start of the second semester with 24 brand new eMac computers purchased by the school district. The computer lab is for the use of all of the students in the primary building. Melissa Reed's kindergarten class used the lab this morning to work on the program "James discovers Math!" Pictured is Kyler Gray (looking at camera), Matthew Barnum, Sabrina Foster, Cayla Carter, Tanner Rook, Mrs. Reed and Heather Woolsey (on far wall).

Under Sebelius' proposed budget Road projects, cities, counties would feel bite

TOPEKA (AP) — Gov. Kathleen Sebelius' proposed budget would take money from cities, counties and highway projects to protect some social services and save education from further cuts.

Sebelius also is recommending that the state operate like a family living paycheck-to-paycheck, building up almost no cash reserves before the 2004 fiscal year ends on June 30 of that year.

The \$10.2 billion budget she presented to legislators during Wednesday night's State of the State address does not require tax increases, but some agencies would increase fees. For example, the cost of a driver's license would jump to \$18 from \$12.

Some cities and counties could face cutting the services they provide or increasing property taxes. Also, the state's small administrative agencies would see cuts averaging almost 13 percent.

Sebelius defended her proposals, saying she wanted to put money into education and vital social services.

"There's no question that, like a family, if you have to tighten your belt you may put off the remodeling of one room in the house," she said after her address.

While Sebelius, a Democrat, endorsed many actions former Gov. Bill Graves, a Republican, took in his final months in office, she asked lawmakers to undo about two-thirds of the cuts he ordered in social services.

Those proposals encouraged some advocates. In the audience for the address was Sharon Joseph, a 51-year-old Topeka resident who volunteers at the Topeka Independent Living Resource Center, which provides services to the disabled.

"I thought it was very hopeful that she paid attention to what we've said about seeing the most vulnerable people get services," she said. "She'll spread what there is of the wealth."

As expected, Sebelius' fellow Democrats were pleased with her speech and began the applause that

interrupted her 20 times. Reactions from Republicans were mixed.

Sebelius acknowledged after her address that she gave legislators "a tough message."

"But I tried to keep the commitments I made during the course of the campaign and stretch the funds we have to meet the needs of the most vital services," she said. Her promises included not cutting education spending and not seeking higher taxes.

Under her budget for fiscal 2004, public schools would continue to receive \$3,863 per student in state aid, and higher education would lose only \$5 million in general tax dollars, mostly in the central Board of Regents office.

But she would take \$165 million from highway projects and eliminate \$86 million in aid to local governments — on top of the \$95 million Graves withheld from highway projects and \$48 million he kept from cities and counties.

Sebelius also made a campaign promise to build all projects prom-

Pharmacy case gets March date

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The case against a relief pharmacist employed at Colby's Citizens Medical Center will continue in March with a pretrial conference, according to court documents recently filed in Thomas County District Court.

Robert Duane Schroeder, 35, of rural Colby, was arrested on Dec. 20, 2001 and released the same day after posting a \$10,000 bond. Charges included two counts of burglary, two counts of theft, and two counts of possession of a narcotic drug.

Schroeder appeared in district court in October of 2002 with his attorney, Donald F. Hoffman of Hays, and was advised of the charges. Although Schroeder did not respond as to whether or not he was guilty, the journal entry noted the court entered a not guilty plea on his behalf.

Following the arraignment, a pretrial conference was scheduled for March 5 at 2 p.m. in district court with Judge Glenn D. Schiffner to preside. The trial date was also set for March 31, April 1-2, at 9 a.m.

The arrest warrant for Schroeder was issued after authorities were alerted by hospital personnel that there might be a problem with missing pharmaceutical drugs. During routine inventory checks, hospital officials discovered they were coming up short on some narcotic drugs, said Colby Police Chief Randy Jones in early December of 2001.

After requesting assistance from the Kansas Bureau of Investigations and over the next couple of weeks, authorities were able to gather enough evidence to support the charges against Schroeder, Jones said. At that time, the KBI interviewed witnesses and using specialized forensic-type evidence, along with testing for drugs, Schroeder was charged.

WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley area

The numbers

Wednesday's high, 32
Low this morning, 10
Soil temperature, 33
Temperature at 10:15, 21
Records for this date: 72 in 1894, -15 in 1930

The forecast

Tonight, partly cloudy, lows around 10 above, northwest winds 5-10 mph, becoming south late. Friday, partly sunny to sunny, highs 35-40, south winds 5-15 mph, becoming northwest later in the morning. Friday night, clear, lows mid teens. Saturday, sunny and breezy, highs 35-40.

Briefly

Soup supper to benefit project

In an effort to raise money for the Dennen Field Stadium-Track project, members of the Colby Booster Club are sponsoring a soup supper beginning at 5 p.m., Friday, at the Colby Community Building. The event is being held in conjunction with the Colby High School vs. Hoxie basketball game. All proceeds will go towards refurbishing the track and a new stadium at Dennen Field. The cost is a free-will donation.

Blood drive on month's agenda

The Thomas County American Red Cross blood drive coordinators report that there will be a blood drive in Colby on Wednesday, Jan. 29, from 7:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. at the Comfort Inn and organizers are encouraging your participation. Questions can be directed to either Jackie Stephens at 462-8122 or Jo Frahm at 462-2082.

Job shadowing scheduled

Second through fifth grade students at Colby Grade School

will be job shadowing in area businesses on Friday, Jan. 31, from the opening of that business until 10:45 a.m., said Terrel Harrison, principal. Parents will ask the business to give approval on a permission slip, which will need to be returned to the grade school office. For those with questions about the project, can call Harrison at 465-5100.

Club offering extra money

The Colby Booster Club is looking for any school group or team interested in earning extra money for their group's specific mission, to work at its concession stand during home wrestling matches and basketball games, said Shawn Stephens with the club. In the event there is no school or team response, the club will extend the offer to church youth groups and other organizations. Call Stephens at 462-6929.

Landfill addresses new regulations

Because of new Kansas Department of Health and Environment regulations, only trees and shrubs will be allowed

in the Thomas County landfill burn pile. All other wood products, including unpainted wood and pallets, must be placed in the construction and demolition area of the landfill, said Larry Jumper, supervisor. All debris that enter the construction and demolition area is subject to the \$10 per ton tipping fee, with a \$2 minimum, he said. Call Jumper at 462-8139.

Deadline extended for program

There's still time to register for the Master Gardener Program scheduled to begin in February. This program is sponsored by K-State Research and Extension and will certify participants in horticulture and related areas, said D'Ette Scholtz, extension agent. For information or to pick up a registration form, call the Thomas County Extension Office.

Landfill hours posted

The Thomas County landfill is now on its winter hours, which are: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.

