



## Journalism students place high

By PATTY DECKER

*Free Press Editor*

Colby High School placed three students in the Kansas Scholastic Press Association state competition held last Saturday in Lawrence.

"This was the first time in the school's history that three students placed at the state level in this type of contest," said Donna Henry, high school journalism advisor.

The three placers were Alicia Leavitt, senior, Matthew Hull, junior, and Maret Peterson, sophomore, who were recognized for their work in editing, editorial cartoon and newspaper sports writing, respectively, Henry said.

Leavitt came home with a third place in the editing area; Hull was awarded honorable mention in the editorial cartoon category; and Peterson took honorable mention for sports writing.

"We took 11 students to the state contest, who were entered in 13 classifications," she said "Three students had double-qualified and the three who placed were also high school newspaper students."

Other students who qualified for contest included Rachel Albers, sophomore, sports writing; Jamie Quenzer, senior, page layout and theme development; Kelsey Strickler, senior, yearbook copy editing; Leanne Juenemann, senior, yearbook copy writing; Elizabeth Merryman, senior, news writing; and Darla Nichols, junior, editorial writing.

In total there were 139 high schools competing for placement in the contest with 1,034 entries submitted, she said. Students qualified for the state contest by placing at one of the six regional contests in February, Henry said.

The 18 categories available at the state contest included advertising, editorial cartoon, headline writing, newspaper design, yearbook copy writing, yearbook sports writing, outline writing, editorial writing, infographics, newspaper and yearbook photography, yearbook layout, yearbook theme development, editing, feature writing, news writing, newspaper sports writing and broadcasting.

"This was the largest number of entries that qualified for state and the largest number of students who placed at state in Colby High School's history," Henry said.



### Expect rain

Thomas, Logan Counties

Tonight...showers and thunderstorms likely. Breezy. Lows in the mid 40s. East wind 15 to 25 mph with gusts to 35 mph becoming north late. Chance of rain 60 percent. Saturday...cloudy with a chance of showers. Cooler with highs in the mid 50s to around 60. Northwest wind around 20 mph. Chance of rain 30 percent. Saturday night...mostly cloudy...Then becoming partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 30s. Sunday...partly sunny. Highs in the mid 60s. Sunday night...partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 30s. Monday...cloudy. Highs in the lower 70s. Tuesday...cloudy. Lows in the lower 40s and highs in the lower 70s.

### The numbers

Thursday's high, 79  
Low this morning, 37  
Year ago today, 63 and 32  
Records, 98 in 1911, 30 in 1909  
24-hour precipitation, 0.00  
Month's precipitation 0.67  
Year's precipitation 4.69  
**Water Usage/Colby**  
May 8 = 1.211 million gallons



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Fair board members Jim Malcolm and Gary Garrett were among well-wishers on Thursday night as the Thomas County Fair Board honored Fred and Jeri Stephenson for their years of service as the groundskeepers, a job they held since 1987. They were given a plaque and \$500 by the board as they took a break from loading their moving van.

## Fair board honors retirees; votes to increase ticket prices

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS

*Colby Free Press*

After maintaining the Thomas County Fairgrounds since 1987, Fred and Jeri Stephenson will no longer be functioning in that role, notifying the board of their decision to retire some months ago. At Thursday night's meeting of the fair board, the couple received a plaque and a check for \$500 from the board as an expression of their appreciation to the couple for their years of service. Richard Britton is the new groundskeeper.

The board, in the business portion of its meeting, decided to raise ticket prices for the grandstand events for the coming fair. In the past tickets for each night have been \$8 for adults and \$4.50 for children ages 6 to 12. Prices will now be \$10 for adults and \$5 for children for each night.

In an effort to offer an economical solution for families, the board also voted to offer a limited number of all-event tickets. These tickets which will be good for each night of the fair and will be based on last year's prices and will be \$40 for an adult and \$20 for a child.

The board voted 5-4 to raise ticket prices, but with the solution to offer an all-events ticket all but one member was in favor.

In other business:

- Thomas County Extension agents D'Ette Scholtz and Doug Musick told the board that they will once again be offering trophies to 4-H grand and reserve champions.

- Jim Malcolm reported on the buildings and grounds. He said many things have been repaired or updated on the property, such

as shingles and plumbing on one of the bathrooms, the roof on the observation deck and the 4-H arena roof. He also reported the E.L. Garrett sign in the rodeo arena is off and needs to be touched up and then reinstalled and the yard light near the commercial building needs to be repaired.

- In the committee report for the carnival, Darrel Dible said the Amusement Association has purchased three rides and have a total of nine that have been bid on.

The Para-Trooper is currently being installed and he said that if the weather is good on Saturday, the Tilt-A-Whirl will be put together. The Zipper is also being worked on at Hi-Plains Co-op.

- Gary Garrett gave an update on the rodeo. He told the board about a drill team named Old Fort Dandies who will be staying in the area during the time of the fair en route from Steamboat Springs, Colo. to Dodge City Days.

They have agreed to perform at the Tuesday night rodeo for accommodations for their families and horses.

Garrett said this would be a great opportunity since the board voted to have no specialty act this year. The board voted and gave approval to make the arrangements.

- The contest to find a theme for the fair parade was not as successful as the board had hoped. Only one school in the county returned a response, Heartland Christian School.

The school had three options, one from the first, second and third grade classes. It was voted that the third grade class would be the winner with the theme, "Tumble on into the Thomas County Fair — Weeds

love to see you there."

The class will be given a pass to the rodeo for each student and the teacher and a donation of \$250 will be awarded to them to use in their classroom.

- Nancy Rundel reported the rules for the demolition derby have been copied and will be mailed out in June to a list of participants. She said the Colby Lions Club also has a list of rules and can be contacted if anyone is interested in getting a copy.

Rundel also reported that the antique tractor show will be the day of the free barbecue at 3 p.m. and will be held in the parking lot of the 4-H Building.

- Some changes were made and finalized for the fair book as it is soon to be printed.

- A \$2,000 budget for advertising was approved for the race committee.

- The board had applied for money from the drug seizure funds and has not heard for sure whether or not they will get any money. Last year, the fair board received \$7,000 and used the money to raise the premiums.

Without the additional money, the premiums were lowered and returned to the amounts from the 2001 fair. The board decided if the money were to come in, they could add extra money to the premiums.

- It was approved to allow the dog club to purchase a small storage building to be installed on the grounds. The club said they would buy the building if the fair board would pay for the concrete to put it on. The board agreed to pay up to \$250 for the materials to construct the slab.

## Commission chair reports on meeting with hospital board

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS

*Colby Free Press*

Sticking to a promise made earlier to a group of residents, Thomas County Commission Chariman Ron Evans met recently with the board of trustees of Citizens Medical Center and reported on that meeting during Monday's county commission meeting.

The commissioners, confronted by a delegation of concerned residents at their April 14 meeting, agreed to set up a meeting with the hospital board to fulfill the request made by that delegation.

The commissioners made it known back in October that they would not get involved in the hospital controversy because the hospital is a private institution and it would not be appropriate for them to interfere in their business.

Evans reported at Monday's meeting that he had been invited to an informal meeting with the hospital's board and administration last week. "As with others I have spoken to," Evans said, "I told the board that is not the intent nor desire of the Thomas County Commissioners to meddle in the CMC's business."

Evans said, as he did in the April meeting, that the commissioners have no regulatory or statutory authority in a not-for-profit corporate matter. "However, I did say that we, like most citizens in Thomas County, hope that a resolution to the current medical situation is in the near future."

He went on to say that the commissioners realize this is a legal matter and is in the hands of the court.

In other business:

- The commissioners heard their first budget request of the year from the Thomas County Extension office. They requested a \$27,000 increase in funding for 2004 due to increases in insurance costs, increase in rent and the addition of another full time agent.

The commissioners were upfront about the budget for the coming year in light of the cut in state funding. "Quite frankly, the three of us are not going to pick up the load of the state of Kansas," Evans said.

He did praise the efforts of the extension office, along with many other programs in the county, saying, "We have a lot of good things going on in Thomas County."

Commissioner Duane Dawes added, "The only thing we are short of is cash."

The three agreed to evaluate the budget request and do what they could when they finalize the budget.

- Kathy Ryan, county health nurse, gave an update on the health department. She said she has been interviewing people for a nurse replacement and would be making an offer to a candidate in the near future.

Ryan also said that Kay Weston is leaving the department on July 31, but part-time workers would be taking over the duties, increasing their hours instead of hiring another person to fill the slot.

The state of Kansas is mandating that the health department install wireless Internet, but Ryan said the state would be funding the project.

The commissioners will hold their next meeting on Monday at 9 a.m. in the commissioners room of the courthouse. The public is encouraged to attend.

## Fire victims are in need of clothing, other items

By PATTY DECKER

*Free Press Editor*

A Colby couple and their two children lost everything they had when a fire destroyed their home last week and members of their family are asking the community for help.

Beverly and Julio Lawson, and their children, Nicolas 3 and Zachary 2 were out of town at the time of the fire, said Beverly's mother, Sherry Duque of Colby. The fire broke out on April 30 in the mobile home park on the corner of Fourth and Country Club Drive.

"It would be so much appreciated if anyone can help by donating

clothing for the boys, Beverly or Julio," she said.

Duque said Nicolas and Zachary wear clothing sizes 4 and 5 and their mother is a size 12. Julio wears medium to medium-large T-shirts, size 34 waist and length in pants and 15 1/2 in shirt size.

Along with clothing, the fire also destroyed furniture, bedding, kitchen supplies and all the things that make a house a home, Duque said. She also said that a special fund for the family has been established at Farmers and Merchants Bank in Colby.

For questions or to find out where to drop off clothing call 462-2541.

Salute to our  
Graduates  
in today's Free Press

## Briefly

### 'Work days' set by carnival group

The Thomas County Amusement Association is planning to hold "work days" each Saturday until fair time and everyone in the community is encouraged to lend a hand.

The association, the driving force behind the home-owned carnival, has purchased several rides and with help on work days may be able to have some of those in operation by July 4th. Contact the association's vice president, Chad L. Zimmerman, if you need additional information.

### Hospital to hold public meeting

Citizens Medical Center is sponsoring a special community meeting next Wednesday at 7 p.m. in the Colby High School auditorium, said Vern Schwanke, president of the hospital's board of trustees.

The purpose of the meeting, he said, will be to discuss and answer any questions regarding the Colby hospital's critical access status and transition.

### Church announces program

"I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream!" That's the cheer coming from the Colby First Presbyterian Church in announcing a choir concert, featuring hand bells, on Wednesday, May 21 at 7:30 p.m.

And they want everyone to come. No charge.

### Youth plan performance next week

A multimedia production called, "Come to Me," will be presented on Wednesday, May 14, at 7 p.m. at the Bedker Building on the Colby Community College campus.

The presentation is by *The Remnant*, a group of 10 young people who use drama, video, music, and dance to communicate a message of hope in hurting times.

*The Remnant* is a traveling ministry of Youth With a Mission. A free-will offering will be taken and the program is open to the public. For questions call Rachael Walker at (785) 462-6432.

### 'Great Strides' needs teams

Teams are now forming for the Western Kansas Great Strides 2003 event to raise money in the fight and cure of cystic fibrosis, said Doris Reed, co-chair in Monument.

This is the first time the Great Strides walk will be held in Colby, she said, with the event planned for May 31, with check-in at 8 a.m. and the walk beginning at 9 a.m. at Fike Park.

For questions, call 465-7907.

### Barbershoppers plan guest night

The Tumbleweed Barbershop Chorus is sponsoring a special guest night at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, May 15, at the Colby United Methodist Church.

Barbershoppers are inviting everyone to come and enjoy the fun, food and fellowship of the Tumbleweed Chorus and bring a friend.

For questions, call 460-8640 or 462-6552.



