



COLBY FREE PRESS



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Colby Public Schools continued enrollment today for new students. On Tuesday, returning students at all grade levels finalized classes for the 2003-04 year in the commons area at the

high school. In addition to a new year, the high school welcomed a new principal, Brian Kraus (left, above) talking with Jeff Quenzer, activities director and assistant principal, at enrollment.

New captain of the ship Colby High welcomes principal Kraus

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Brian Kraus is the new face in the principal's office at Colby High School. He assumed the duties on July 28, succeeding Don Barta who resigned in May.

"I am excited about the opportunity," he said in an interview on Tuesday.

Kraus, 45, said he is originally from WaKeeney and prior to accepting the position in Colby was a counselor at Eudora,

which is about seven miles east of Lawrence.

A graduate of WaKeeney High School, he then attended Colby Community College from 1976-78, and was on the varsity wrestling squad under coach Steve Lampe.

From Colby College, Kraus said he attended Bethany College in Lindsborg where he received his bachelor of science degree. While at Bethany, Kraus was the strong safety on the football team.

Following graduation, he spent

two years teaching English, psychology and sociology to middle and high school students in the Smith Center Public Schools.

In the fall of 1983, Kraus said he stopped teaching and returned to school himself. "I attended Kansas State University and received my masters degree in counseling," he said.

Before accepting the job in Eudora, he said he was the counselor at Marian High School for two years.

Kraus and his wife, Nanette, have two boys: Brandon, 11, who will be in sixth grade and Austin, 8, entering third grade.

His wife will be employed with the Colby district as the accompanist working with the choir. Kraus said his wife also has her bachelors degree from Bethany College in piano performance.

Kraus said he believes that expectations should be clearly communicated to the students. "Consistency," he said, "is the key."

Merchants seek help of council

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Prompted by a dramatic decrease in business caused by road construction and detours, some downtown merchants approached the Colby City Council at its meeting Tuesday night to ask for help.

Those owners said they were taken by surprise in early June when the barricades went up and now the completion date has been pushed back to the latter part of September.

Jeff Horlacher, co-owner of Horlacher Jewelry, gave each of the council members a letter highlighting the many issues facing the merchants. In his letter he said the road construction has created a difficult, indeed, a hostile business environment.

"People have begun to avoid downtown Colby, and I understand the city in general," he said. "A friend commented to me he was surprised at the number of his customers who have told him they no longer come to Colby, but go to other towns where they do not have to contend with the maze construction has caused."

Selena Lee, with Daylight Donuts, also voiced similar concerns. "The construction has devastated a lot of our businesses," she said.

One suggestion that she and others offered the council was to come up with a revitalizing campaign to "bring Colby's downtown back to life."

Horlacher said an advertising campaign once the construction is completed would help a lot and requested an allocation of between \$6,000-\$10,000 for radio, television and newspaper coverage.

"We could let the whole trade area know within a 100-mile radius," he said.

Randy and Linda Smith, owners of Palace Drug Store, also had suggestions and comments for future construction projects and the detour. Linda Smith suggested opening up the intersection for "right-hand" turns (off the south) on Fourth St. so that shoppers could at least go around the block.

It was also suggested that a sign be placed on Veterans Memorial Drive and Franklin noting that the route has access to downtown traffic. Currently, the sign at that intersection says there is no through traffic, which discourages people from driving into the downtown area.

Another idea was to place a sign at Range and College with a similar message.

Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, along with the council, agreed to help the merchants with a petition to the Kansas Department of Transportation, which has control of the project for access on right-hand turns. Armstrong also said she would prepare a letter for the merchants to sign requesting access on Fourth and signage at Veterans Memorial and Franklin.

In addition, Herb Sunderman, councilman, said he would like the city to consider helping merchants with their suggestion for an advertising campaign.

"We could do something like 'Colby's Open for Business' campaign," Sunderman suggested. The council agreed and instructed the city manager to look for funds to help them.

"It is important to communicate with businesses when projects of this nature are scheduled," Horlacher said. "I was surprised by this one."

Business owners present at the meeting included Dave Jennings, His Shop; Donna Inlow and JoAnne Henry, Inlow Interiors, along with representatives from the Sports Shoppe, Daylight Donuts, Horlacher's and Palace Drug.

"More than 65 percent of my business is from shoppers out-of-town," said Jennings, "and my merchandise is seasonal." The construction has hurt his spring and summer men's fashions, which Jennings said can only be sold for about five months.

"I now have a lot of dead merchandise and the selling season will be over by the time the construction

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Colby School District

Board approves budget; hearing draws only one voice

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Colby School Board approved its 2003-2004 budget without much fanfare after the public hearing Monday night.

Jo DeYoung, the school district's business manager, gave a brief explanation of the budget at the outset of the hearing. The board then approved the \$10,505,414 budget after the hearing concluded.

DeYoung said it is the maximum amount of money the district is authorized to spend, but that doesn't mean it will.

"Nothing has changed in it," she said. The district also didn't raise the mill levy this year. "It's slightly less but that's subject to the county valuation," DeYoung said. Last year, the mill levy was 42.975 and

this year it is 42.972.

She added the district will get more tax dollars this year because it is getting a payment for next year this year. It only means more money and is not a tax increase.

"It'll work," said Superintendent Kirk Nielsen. "It'll get us through the year, I believe."

Nielsen said he thought the comments made by Lloyd Theimer, who handed out a letter during the public hearing, should be directed at the state legislature.

Theimer read his letter out loud to the board, which voiced his concerns over the importance of the public attending the district's annual budget hearing and the district's uses of capital outlay funds.

"My main purpose in attending

this Budget Hearing (of the Colby School District) this evening, August 4, 2003, is to make sure tomorrow's Free Press will not report that no one attended. Which leaves the impression that everything is satisfactory. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Some of this board may not even know that the LOB (Local Option Budget) was petitioned to a vote and voted out.

"Topeka politics gave you the Baby LOB and now tonight you take that to the limit, in spite of the majority no vote. The same no vote on the Capital Outlay issue resulted in the fund being increased from approximately one hundred seventy thousand to over one half million (dollars).

"This administration along with

a majority vote of the board have completely ignored the wishes of the voting taxpayers. Instead of controlling, gave this valuable administration property away for a dollar and are right now in the process of buying a new wooden one for over \$400,000.00 with capital outlay money.

"Now my question to each of you board members is: Why should anyone attend a budget hearing?"

Nielsen said the way things are being done right now is because it's the way the state has set things up, by putting it back on the schools to fund the systems instead of the state.

He said he thinks things are moving away from state to local funding.

During the meeting, Nielsen also mentioned he hasn't been able to

give the owner of the current administration building a solid move-out date yet.

He said they don't know when they'll be able to get out all of the items belonging to the school district. "To move in over there (the new building) isn't the problem," Nielsen said. "It's great."

He said construction is progressing well and the district will be able to move in around the beginning of November. Nielsen said there are old desks, items from a kindergarten room and old prom decorations upstairs in the current administration building that need to be moved out.

"It's all kinds of things you wouldn't even imagine," he said. "It's just a great big building that's a magnet for stuff."

Briefly

Trustees set budget hearing

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will hold a public hearing on the proposed budget on Monday, Aug. 11 at 5 p.m. in the board room of the administration building. The public is encouraged to attend.

Share sign up is underway

August SHARE sign up is being held this week through Friday at State Farm Insurance, 905 E. 4th, Colby, with delivery scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 23 at 10:30 a.m. at Sacred Heart School's gym. For more information call 460-3579 or 462-3733.

Leadership Class seeks applicants

Leadership Thomas County is seeking applicants for its new class, beginning in October. Call 460-3401, 460-7643 or stop by the Chamber office at 350 S. Range for an appli-

cation. The program is seven months long — October to April. Ten adult members will be selected. Alumni can be contacted to discuss their experience with those interested. Completed applications are due back to the Chamber office by Aug. 22. The 2003-2004 class will be announced on Sept. 19.

Recreation pictures available

The Colby Recreation Department team pictures are here and can be picked up at the Colby Community Building, said Ryan Sturdy, director. For questions, call 462-4440 or stop by their office at 285 E. 5th St.

Sacred Heart to enroll Aug. 12

Sacred Heart School enrollment will be Tuesday, Aug. 12 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information call 462-2813.

DivorceCare Classes to begin

A 13-week video series and support sessions on

DivorceCare offers understanding and guidance on such topics as the emotional upheaval, financial stress, forgiveness, new relationships, reconciliation and kid care, according to information provided the Free Press by the sponsoring organization. The classes will begin on Thursday, Aug. 14 at 7 p.m. at Colby Wesleyan Church, 320 Pine. These free sessions are open to anyone who is going through or has gone through a divorce. To register, call 465-9077.

Mud volleyball tourney Saturday

The Colby Jaycees are planning a co-ed mud volleyball tournament on Saturday beginning at 9 a.m. There will be no pre-registration and the event is open to those 21 years and older. The tournament will be held behind the Jaycee Center just southwest of the Colby Animal Clinic, 810 E. 4th.

School district has new prefix

Reminder: Colby Public Schools has changed all telephone numbers from the "465" prefix to "460."



Continued warm

Tonight...Partly cloudy. Slight chance of showers and thunderstorms. Lows in the middle 60s. Southeast wind 10 to 20 mph. Chance of rain 20 percent. **Thursday...**Breezy. Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 90s. Southeast wind 15 to 25 mph. **Thursday night...**Partly cloudy in the evening then becoming cloudy. Lows in the middle 60s. **Friday...**Partly cloudy. Highs near 101.

By the numbers
Tuesday's high, 98
Low this morning, 64
Records for the date, 109 in 1934 and 46 in 1974
Year ago today, 94 and 65
24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00
Month's precipitation, 0.02 (recorded Aug. 2)
Year's precipitation to date, 11.31
2002's precipitation to date, 5.94

Water Usage/Colby
Aug. 4 = 2.898 million gallons
Aug. 5 = 3.009 million gallons

The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other figures from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby.

