



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Planning board looks for input on super center

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The Colby Planning Commission is wanting public input from businesses and residents regarding the possibility of allowing a mega/super center to locate within the city limits.

Brent Wiedeman, with the commission, along with others on that board met late last week to discuss the economic impact that a mega center, such as the type Wal-Mart has in other communities, would have on Colby businesses and its impact on future development.

In a letter he sent to the city council, Wiedeman said that such a super store would have a domino effect on virtually every business owner in town with many on the commission believing this would eventually put most of those stores out of business.

The issue first came to the attention of Wiedeman and others that a Super Wal-Mart was considering Colby as a location. While there is no set limit for square footage within the zoning regulations, other than according to the lot size the building would be located on, the

commission believes this should now be considered by the city council.

The commission would like the city council to review its recommendation to limit any individual store or retail space by not allowing it to exceed 50,000 square feet.

Following last Thursday's planning commission meeting, Wiedeman sent Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, a 13-page report to review and pass along to the council.

In the report, Wiedeman said he believes a Super Wal-Mart would be "a step in the wrong direction," citing page after page of newspaper articles, statistical studies and various comments from other planning commissions around the country on how such a store has affected them.

The council will discuss the issue during its regular meeting on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

However, no action on this particular item is expected.

Planning commission members, in addition to Wiedeman, are Charles Schwanke, Ken Frahm, Ivan Lee, Hal Kistler, Tylon Mengel, Paul Bailey, Al Gerstner and Lana Johnson.

## Council agenda noted

The Colby City Council will hold its regular meeting on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers.

In addition to the council discussing concerns raised at the recent planning commission meeting, it will also be discussing the petition from downtown merchants on the intersection project, a resolution to authorize improvements to the city water supply, improvement to the Armory building parking lot and an amendment to the city's investment policy.

The council is expected to decide on a proposal to develop a grant application for updating the airport layout plan, awarding bids for the electric department's pickup and amending an ordinance dealing with storage containers within the city.

There will be a closed-door session on contract negotiations and discussion on diamond grinding intersections.

For questions or an agenda, call 462-4410.

## Health supervisor resigns

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Commissioners at their meeting this morning accepted a resignation at the health department and approved new equipment for the county landfill. The board went into executive session to discuss personnel issues, which resulted in the resignation of Kathy Ryan, R.N., as head of the Thomas County Health Department. Her resignation is effective Sept. 1 or when the commissioners find a replacement. Ryan, however, will continue full-time with the department as a nurse.

"We accept it with regret," said Commissioner Ron Evans. "She's been a wonderful head for our health department."

Larry Jumper, landfill superintendent, was given permission last week to start a search for a used trash truck for the landfill. He came back today with information on a used 1996 Ford refuse truck from a company in Tampa, Fla.

The commissioners approved the purchase of the truck and delivery for approximately \$40,000, which was \$5,000 under cost and freight, Evans said.

Jumper told the commissioners the truck doesn't come with a warranty but the company will inspect it before delivery and help pay for parts if something goes wrong during the first 30 days.

"It's at least something," he said.

The truck will be delivered by flatbed truck. "I'm glad you're getting it delivered," said Commissioner Duane Dawes.

The commissioners also appointed Gene Huelsmann as clerk for South Randall Township.

Evans also had praise for the fair board. By speaker phone, he told Mark Miller, chairman, "The Thomas County Commissioners are extremely pleased with the 2003 fair." He said the event was "outstanding" and that the board's cooperation with the amusement association was "wonderful."



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Sgt. Jim Griffin and Sgt. First Class Don Morton of the Kansas National Guard get ready to lead a group around the track during the Survivor's Walk to kick off the 2003 Thomas County Relay for Life on Friday at Dennen Field in Colby. The event raised about \$9,000 for cancer research for the American Cancer Society. Members from 10 teams walked all night at the event.

## Thomas County Relay for Life raises \$9,000

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

This year's Thomas County Relay for Life raised approximately \$9,000 for the American Cancer Society. The event was held from 7 p.m. Friday to 7 a.m. Saturday at Dennen Field in Colby.

Event organizer Cheryl Schwarz said the amount was down from last year's total of

about \$18,000.

She said this year there were fewer teams entered.

"Not as good as last year," Schwarz said. "But we had a good time. There's always another time to bring it up."

There was still a good turnout for the event, she said, and it brought the community together.

Schwarz said she wanted to thank

the sponsors and the committee for their hard work and also Tucker Stover, who provided music all night for the event.

Sponsors were BankWest, Kansas Quick Lube, Jeannie Solko, Secrest Inc., Farmers and Merchant Bank, Tom and Mary Hurtt, Taco John's, Time Warner Cable, First National Bank, Cheryl Schwarz Dance Center, Palace Drug Store,

Colby Bowl and Fun Center, Comfort Inn, Village Laundromat, Leroy's Printing, Camp Inn Gas and Oil, National Guard Armory, Midwest Energy and T&S Productions.

Schwarz also has a jumpstart on next year's Relay for Life. She said if anyone wants to enter a team for 2004 or be on the planning committee to call 462-3232.

## From Mingo with love

# Reluctant sheriff 'arrests' stinky suspect

By TOM (TD) DREILING

Free Press Publisher

MINGO — There's just no way to write about skunks without stinking up the place.

Or is there?

Willie Engelhardt, of Mingo, and neighbor Bill Frerichs, together have disposed of somewhere near 60 of the black and white outcasts this year. Engelhardt's total, as of this morning, was 18 and Frerichs' was 40 plus.

Their traps are kept busy.

They feed them cat food. Not because they like skunks, but because skunks like cat food. And that's the lure to get them to enter their traps.

Once inside and the trap door slams shut, they're dead ringers.

Engelhardt puts his trap bearing the skunk in the trunk of his car, heads out of town, pulls off to the side of the road, opens the trunk, grabs the trap, opens the trap door, lets the skunk out and takes careful aim, and ... bam! End of skunk.

"I've actually been doing this since late in December," Engelhardt said. "They are such pests. There are so many of them." He wasn't ready to advance his theory for the seemingly endless population in this little town south of Colby.

Engelhardt said most people, when they think of skunks, think of the awful smell they discharge. "Skunks aren't out looking for people to spray," Engelhardt said. "If you see one and it appears to be

walking in your direction, simply freeze — it'll go by right you and won't bother to spray you." They will discharge their dreaded odor toward someone if they feel threatened.

Engelhardt related a humorous story, involving a skunk he had caught, but before destroying it he wanted Sheriff Tom Jones to see it. "Tom thinks I make up a lot of this skunk stuff," Engelhardt said. "So I drove into Colby to the Law Enforcement Center to show him the skunk."

With Sheriff Jones and Undersheriff Mike Baughn looking on, Engelhardt opened his trunk and pulled out the trap. He had a gunnysack with him and he put it over the trap door so when he opened it the skunk would run into the sack.

Well, it did...and out the other end. Engelhardt was unaware there was a hole in the other end of the gunnysack so he was forced to recapture the skunk.

He started chasing the thing around the Law Enforcement Center's parking lot to the booming laughter of both Jones and Baughn, and he overheard Jones comment on one of his passes, "This is the first time I've ever seen a man chase a skunk."

A couple of laps later, Engelhardt prevailed and recaptured the four-footed odor machine. He invited Sheriff Jones to hold it. The sheriff wasn't buying into that invitation. But Engelhardt wouldn't give in,



Willie Engelhardt holds a gunnysack as Thomas County Sheriff Tom Jones holds the contents.

after all he spent several minutes entertaining the two law enforcement guys by engaging in a foot-chase with a skunk in a public place. Jones eventually gave in.

"He was skeptical of my explanation that a skunk can't spray if you pick it up by its tail," Engelhardt said. He showed Sheriff Jones how it's done "You come up behind the thing, which has its tail pointed

straight up, and grab the tail quickly, taking it off its feet."

The explanation and demonstration convinced the sheriff.

Jones picked it up and smiled for the camera as proof that the long arm of the law won't be thwarted by a skunk.

So, in Mingo, bingo means another one bit the dust. One less skunk. But there will be more.

## Forecast

**Tonight...**Partly cloudy with a chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the mid 60s. South wind 10 mph. Chance of rain 30 percent. **Tuesday...**Partly sunny with a chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the lower 90s. South wind 10 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 30 percent. **Tuesday night...**Partly cloudy with a chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the 60s. .

**By the numbers**

Sunday's high, 94  
Low this morning, 63  
24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
Month's precipitation, 1.88  
**Water Usage/Colby**  
Aug. 15-16-17 = 2.526 million-gallon average per day

## Briefly

### Colby School Board meets tonight

The Colby School Board will meet at 7 p.m. today in the board room at the Administration Building, 210 S. Range. Items on the agenda include reports from the school principals, curriculum director and superintendent; tour of district facilities; out of district student requests; first reading of board policy changes; and the stadium and track.

The meeting is open to the public.

### MDA boot drive is Saturday

The Colby firefighters are once again holding their annual Muscular Dystrophy Boot Block Drive from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday in the Wal-Mart, Dillons, and Oasis Travel Center parking lots. In year's past the group has also been on Fourth and Range, but with the construction, said Rick Dickman, assistant fire chief, they will be at the Oasis Travel Center instead. For questions, call the fire department office at 462-4454.

### Sneak Peek planned at grade school

The Colby Grade School will be open from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday for students to meet with their teachers and tour the classrooms. For questions, call 460-5100.

### College board to meet

The regular meeting of the Colby Community College Board of Trustees will be at 5 p.m. today in the board room of the Administration Building. Business items on the agenda include resignation and liquidated damages, approval of contracts and agreements, board retreat, silage purchase, change in meeting dates and payment of claims. The meeting is open to the public.

### Yearbooks to be distributed tonight

The Colby High School yearbooks for the 2002-03 school year will be available tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the school, said Donna Henry, coordinator. Students who ordered the book can pick it up at that time. Students who are 2003 graduates

can pick up their yearbook anytime during regular office hours at the school, she said. For questions, call Henry at 460-5300.

### First aid classes planned

The Thomas County Red Cross is offering classes on Saturday, Sept. 6 at Colby Community College Student Union for childcare providers and others interested parties. First aid begins at 8:30 a.m. and adult, infant, child CPR begins at 12:30 p.m. Call the chapter office at 785-462-7161 to register.

### Gem Lions hosting hog roast

The Gem Lions Club will host its annual hog roast at the Gem Community Building (formerly the Gem Church) from 5 to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 27. The evening will include blue grass, folk and country music as well as food and fellowship. The group will accept free-will donations and net proceeds will go to community betterment projects.



