



12 pages

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## Kennedy accepts lecture series invite

By TOM (TD) DREILING  
*Free Press Publisher*

Chalk up another big name for the Dr. Max Pickerill Lecture Series at Colby Community College.

Tom Moorhous, chairman of the Series' committee, told the

*Free Press* this morning that Robert F. Kennedy Jr. will appear at the college on March 11, 2004.

Kennedy is recognized nationally for his stand on environmental issues. The son of the late Sen. Robert Kennedy, he is featured often on top television talk shows and is in

demand as a speaker throughout the country.

He joins a list of other noted figures, such as Susan McDougal, of the Whitewater scandal and former friend of the Clintons — William Jefferson and Hillary Rodham, Gen. Vernon Walters, former U.N.

Ambassador, and David and Julie (Nixon) Eisenhower, grandson of President Eisenhower and daughter of President Nixon, to appear at Colby Community College.

The Dr. Max Pickerill Lecture Series was created in 1992.

## City Council receives update from merchants

By PATTY DECKER  
*Free Press Editor*

The Colby City Council was given updates on the petition from downtown merchants regarding the intersection project at its meeting earlier this week.

The petition was mailed to the Kansas Department of Transportation in Norton on Monday, Aug. 11, said Linda Smith, co-owner of Palace Drug Store.

There were a dozen businesses that signed the petition which primarily was asking the transportation department to speed up the completion date for the project back to Sept. 1, which was the original date.

In a response to the downtown merchants within a week after the petition was sent, Chris McDiffitt, with the state's transportation department in this area, said the project would probably not be finished until the Sept. 23 date, but that the contract allows the completion date to extend up to Nov. 1, if necessary.

In the petition, the Colby downtown merchants requested allowing turn offs and onto U.S. 24 and Franklin Ave. that for the most part have now been resolved, along with who is responsible for making decisions on the project and the request for speeding up construction.

Due to safety concerns, said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, the state will not open the intersection at 4th and Chickamauga to southbound traffic until the pavement work is completed.

"The distance between the project and Chickamauga intersection is the same as the east side to Lake Street," she said, "however, there is a lot more traffic turning on and off at the Chickamauga intersection because of the bank, car wash and convenience store.

Smith said that in McDiffitt's letter he said that any questions or concerns about the construction should be directed to the City of Colby

since there is a partnership between the two entities during the project.

While most merchants would like to see the project completed sooner, Smith did say she was pleased that at least the state and city are listening and trying.

As for the request by downtown merchants for monetary assistance from the city, Armstrong explained to the council what progress they have made during the past two weeks.

Two signs have now been placed on the east side of the intersection of Veterans Memorial Drive and Franklin Avenue and on the east side of the intersection of Franklin and College.

The signs were created to offset the original ones that noted there was "no thru traffic." These newer signs no longer have the "no thru traffic," but in their place it now indicates that "Yes, we're open," so that people are aware they can shop downtown.

As for providing money for an advertising campaign, which was requested by many of the merchants at the Aug. 5 council meeting, Armstrong said they have some funds to help.

She explained to the council that they could take money from the Christmas decoration budget that would amount to about \$2,500 to \$3,000.

Armstrong's recommendation was to direct the advertising at "Yes, the City is construction zone free and open for business."

"I don't think the city should spend money directly targeting any specific area or business," she said.

The council unanimously approved Armstrong's recommendation to use money for an advertising campaign and was pleased with the work on signage.

"I think city staff and Carolyn have done a good job the past two weeks (regarding the signs and advertising)," said Mayor Warren Hixson.

## Enrollments climbing

EMPORIA (AP) — Increased enrollment has allowed Emporia State University to restore some cuts that were made last year, school President Kay Schallenkamp said. "You might wonder how we could do that and cut \$2.9 million," Schallenkamp said.

"Honestly, it's due to enrollment growth. We need to continue to be attentive to recruitment and retention."

An 8 percent cut in the university's base budget last year came out of with hiring freezes, overtime freezes, freezes of sabbaticals and cuts in travel funding, among other sources.

This year, with revenue from enrollments, a 16 percent tuition increase and, so far, no threat of further cuts from the state, some of that funding has been restored.

Among other things, the money

will go toward technology, graduate-assistant stipends and reducing class size, Schallenkamp told faculty Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Topeka's Washburn University reported Thursday that preliminary estimates show it will have a record 7,000 students — an increase of 8.6 percent over 2002.

Fort Hays State University in western Kansas also hopes to break its enrollment record with 7,500 students this fall.

The university set a record last fall with 6,549 students.

For the first time in school history, President Edward Hammond told faculty Wednesday, about 5,000 students will be in Hays on campus.

He said 2,500 students will be taking classes through the university's long distance learning college.

## Overflowing



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

The Colby Board of Education toured the building south of Dennen Field that formerly housed the district's buses. The "round top" building is now being used to store much of the maintenance equipment and eventually items from the old adminis-

tration building at 210 S. Range when they begin vacating it this fall. Some miscellaneous equipment is being stored outside temporarily until the district can make room for it, Superintendent Kirk Nielsen told the board.

## Fairgrounds custodian resigns

By TISHA COX  
*Colby Free Press*

The Thomas County Fair Board had to deal with a resignation at its Thursday night meeting in the 4-H building at the fairgrounds.

Custodian Richard Britton told the board he and his wife, Catherine, are resigning, effective Sept. 1.

Mark Miller, board president, said he had received a call last week from the county commissioners who said they thought the Brittons did a good job as caretakers.

Miller said this morning that the board was "absolutely" disappointed the Brittons were resigning. "They were doing a good job," he said. "It was more overwhelming than they anticipated. That was their hardest week of the year."

The board will start looking for someone to replace them as soon as possible.

In other business: Thomas County Rodeo Queen Kerrie Olson and rodeo princess

Brenda Wilson were at the meeting. "We think the fair was amazing," Olson said. "I loved to be here."

She thanked the board for allowing the pageant to be held and for her new saddle. "Thank you so much for putting on the pageant," Olson said. Wilson also expressed her appreciation for the pageant and said she thought it went well.

Gary Garrett said he trimmed \$7,000 from the rodeo budget. They saved money on the announcer because he had his own sound system. He said they also saved money on feed because hay was donated this year to feed the rodeo stock.

"That usually amounts to \$500, so that was quite a deal," he said.

Garrett said the rodeo had enough contestants but they were short on bulldoggers. "I'm sure we got hurt on the quality of contestants," Garrett said. "The rodeo itself was fine, I thought."

Marty Crampton gave a report on the fair races. "All in all I think it was pretty decent," he said.

Crampton said the races drew some good drivers, which made for a good field of racers.

He did say the track became hard after all the racing and wouldn't take water and said something needs to be done about it.

Miller said that overall the board was pleased with the fair and all the events that went with it. He said the rodeo did well, and the demolition derby and races made money.

"We're happy," Miller said. "We did well and people enjoyed it."

He did say he heard a few complaints but they were about the parade being moved from Tuesday afternoon to Saturday morning. Miller said the reasoning behind the change was to try to reach a larger audience and get more participants. The change, he added, also allowed for cooler weather — a cool morning instead of a hot afternoon.

He said they did lose some floats, mainly from the banks in the community. "We want to get them back," Miller said.

## Briefly

### Sen. Roberts coming to town

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts will be speaking in Colby on Wednesday, Aug. 27. A community luncheon will be held at noon at the Colby Country Club and all interested are cordially invited to attend.

### Dance team plans clinic, tryouts

The Colby High School dance team will continue holding its clinic from 6 to 7:30 p.m., today and next Monday with tryouts on Tuesday. Both the clinic and tryouts will be at Colby High School and all girls are encouraged to attend. For questions about tryouts, call 462-6736.

### Date changed for school pictures

School pictures for all freshmen, sophomores and juniors at Colby High School will be taken on Wednesday (Aug. 27) beginning at 7:30 a.m. and not Thursday (Aug. 28) as stated in the activity calendar. For questions, call 460-5300.

### City to spray for mosquitoes nightly

Due to the high number of mosquito complaints received, the City of Colby will be fogging nightly for mosquitoes over the next two weeks. For questions, call the public works department at 462-4420.

### Commodities still available

There are still commodities available for eligible persons who missed the Monday distribution. The commodities are distributed according to income guidelines, which have increased. To check guidelines and to make arrangements for pickup, call the RSVP Office at 462-7644.

### 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.

### Girl Scout registration next month

Girls in grades kindergarten through twelfth interested in Girl Scouts will have an opportunity to get involved during registration, from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 2, at the Colby Girl Scout Service Center in the basement of Puddle Duck Preschool, said Stacy Hall, co-coordinator for registration. This particular registration night is for all age levels to include Daisies (kindergarten), Brownies (grades 1-3), Juniors (grades 4-6), Cadettes (grades 7-9) and Seniors (grades 10-12). Adult volunteers are also encouraged to register that night. Any Girl Scout who hasn't re-registered from last year can also do so.

For questions or other information, call Shannon Koon at 462-6662 or Hall at 462-2497.



### Still hot

**Tonight...**Clear. Lows in the lower 60s. South wind 10 to 15 mph. **Saturday...**Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 90s. South wind 10 to 20 mph. **Saturday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 60s.

**Sunday...**Partly sunny. Highs in the upper 90s.

**Monday...**Mostly cloudy. A chance of showers and thunderstorms during the night. Highs in the lower 90s. **Tuesday...**Cloudy. Lows in the mid 50s and highs in the upper 80s.

#### By the numbers

Thursday's high, 94  
Low this morning, 60  
Records for the date, 106 in 1938 and 39 in 1904  
Year ago today, 92 and 65  
24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
Month's precipitation, 2.14  
Year's precipitation to date, 13.43  
2002's precipitation to date, 6.43

#### Water Usage/Colby

Aug. 21 = 2.909 million-gallons.

The forecast is from the National Weather Service. All other figures are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby and from the Colby Public Works Department.



