



Charter school approval could happen Monday

By **PATTY DECKER**
Free Press Editor

The Colby Board of Education will consider approving the petition to establish a charter school at its regular meeting starting at 7 p.m., Monday, in the board room of the administration building. A public hearing was held on the proposed charter school earlier this week to gain input from the public.

As for the costs, salaries, materials, telephones, equipment, technical support, computer hardware and software, along with other miscellaneous items, would total \$175,000, based on an enrollment of 30 students. In the event the board approves the charter school proposal, operations could begin as soon as August of 2005.

Should the board approve establishing the charter school, the staff would include at least one teacher qualified for the grade levels/content areas being taught and at least one para-educator, according to information provided at the public hearing.

The proposed charter school would model an effective learning community for students based on an achievement-based system.

Officials at the public meeting also said that students at the charter school would meet the local academic requirements and state standards. The method of delivery and student involvement would be fundamentally different in this performance-based approach to learning.

Among the instructional methods, students would be given the freedom, support, and guidance to explore, interact, create, communicate, question and think independently as they construct their own knowledge and become engaged in their learning process, said Robb Ross, one of the administrative staff involved in the proposal.

In other school board business:

- The board will hear reports from principals, curriculum director and superintendent.
- Discussion will continue on the vocational agriculture and woods programs.

• Further discussion on track resurfacing is also on Monday's agenda.

- Emergency substitute license requests, coordinating council course recommendations and disposal of school property are all action items under new business.
- The board could also be discussing any resignations, employment recommendations or supplemental contracts.

For questions or to receive a board packet, call 460-5000.

Register of Deeds named

By **TISHA COX**
Colby Free Press

Thomas County's new register of deeds is a familiar face.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius signed a letter last week making Maybelle Moore the county's register of deeds.

Moore was the deputy in the office under Denny Burke, who retired in November, 2003 and was appointed as the interim register of deeds until the county's Republican Party could make a recommendation to the governor.

Moore said she's "definitely" happy to be the new register of deeds.

She started her county career at the courthouse in 1982 working part-time microfilming school records and became the deputy in the county appraiser's office in 1984.

Moore said she spent 18 years in that position before becoming deputy in the deeds office in 2001 under Burke.

Her own deputy is Lora Volk who has 19 years of experience in the county treasurer's office.

It was Moore's goal to get back to working at the deeds office. She said she enjoys the history involved with the work.

"It's full of history and the old records," Moore said, adding that despite her appreciation for the old ways of doing things, she means to upgrade the way things are done in the office.

She plans on getting everything on computer because everything is currently handwritten.

Moore only wants to get a basic program to help modernize the process of keeping track of everything.

If Moore wants to continue in the office after November, she will have to run for the position in the upcoming election.

She says she plans to do just that.



Thomas County Register of Deeds Maybelle Moore (standing) and deputy Lora Volk went over records Friday morning at the courthouse.

TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Former governor to speak in Oberlin on natural resources

Former Gov. Mike Hayden, who now serves as the secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, will be in Oberlin at 7 p.m. Tuesday at The Gateway for a meeting with the public.

A statement issued last week said that Secretary Hayden plans to speak on issues affecting the natural resources, including water rights, hunting and fishing.

A plan for the state to buy water rights and keep the level of Norton's Sebelius Reservoir up for fishing and hunting will be on the agenda.

The evening will begin with a dinner sponsored by the Oberlin Rotary Club.

The cost of the meal is \$10, and reservations would be appreciated by Friday. Call Glenva Nichols, Decatur County Chamber of Commerce manger, at 475-3441 or Connie Grafel, Gateway and economic development marketing director, at 475-2400.

Secretary Hayden, raised near Atwood, served as the speaker of the Kansas House of Representatives from 1983 to 1987 and then as the 41st governor from 1987 to 1991.



Mike Hayden

He later served as the assistant secretary of the interior for fish, wildlife and parks and was a lobbyist for wildlife issues in Washington.

In January 2002, Gov. Bill Graves appointed him as secretary of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

He also serves on the Pew Oceans Commission, which is an independent group of American leaders working on policies to restore and protect living marine resources in U.S. waters.

As the chair of a state sub-cabinet on natural resources made up of heads of the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Water Office and Department of Wildlife and Parks, Secretary Hayden will let people know about some state projects and issues. Some of those include the state's plan to buy the Circle K Ranch on the Arkansas River for its water rights, negotiations with the Almena irrigation district for water rights in Sebelius Reservoir near Norton, and the governor's budget comments in the State of the State address.

Doug Sebelius, who is the Norton County attorney and a brother-in-law of the governor, will join Secretary Hayden for the event. Mr. Sebelius is a member of the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission, which advises the secretary.

Everyone is welcome to attend.



Breezy, cooler

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area Tonight...Partly cloudy. Lows around 30. North winds 15 to 20 mph. **Saturday...**Partly cloudy. Breezy. Cooler. Highs in the mid 40s. North winds 15 to 25 mph. **Saturday night...**Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 20s. North winds 5 to 15 mph. **Sunday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s. Northwest winds 5 to 10 mph. **Sunday night and Martin Luther King Jr Day...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s. Lows around 20. **Monday night and Tuesday...**Mostly cloudy. Lows in the lower 20s and highs around 40.

The numbers
Thursday's high, 62
Low this morning, 29
Records for Jan. 16, 72 in 1894 and -15 in 1930
Year ago today, 33 and 10
Month's precipitation, 0.05
Month's snowfall, 1 inch
2003 precipitation to date, trace
Soil temperature, 34

The sources:
The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

Fair board elects officers; discusses barbecue contract

By **TISHA COX**
Colby Free Press

The Thomas County fair board elected its 2004 officers at their meeting Thursday night.

Board member Stan Strange replaces last year's president Mark Miller and Mark Anderson was selected for another term as vice president.

County Commissioners Ron Evans, Glen Kersenbrock and Duane Dawes were at the meeting because it was the fair board's first meeting of the year.

Evans said the commissioners are pleased with the board's work.

"You're getting good reviews on the

“**You're getting good reviews on the fair and you can all be proud of that. The fair board needs to be applauded for their efforts.”**

Ron Evans,
Thomas County Commissioner

fair and you can all be proud of that," he said. "The fair board needs to be applauded for their efforts."

The fair barbecue and work on the barns at the fairgrounds were also on the agenda.

The board discussed the barbecue briefly. Dan Carmen of the Gem Lions Club was there and let the board know the club wanted to know more

about what the barbecue entails.

Strange read a letter from the McDonald Lions Club expressing their interest in doing the barbecue again this year.

Board member Audrey Hines said those are the only two groups that have shown an interest in preparing the meat and serving the food for the event.

Nancy Rundel, board member, suggested having a taste test of the barbecue recipes before selecting a group.

Hines said the board would like to hear from any club or organization interested in helping with the barbecue. The board will decide at

its March meeting who will be in charge of the event.

Anyone interested can contact Darrel Dible at (785) 687-4861.

The board also talked about the work being done on the sheep, horse and beef barns at the fair grounds. Siding is being put on the barns, along with new doors.

Strange said the work on the sheep barn is progressing well and some concrete has been removed and will also need to be removed from the other barns and new concrete poured.

The board is going to check with the county and see if it is something they will pay for.

Briefly

Wellness Fair is Saturday

The 2004 Community Wellness Fair will begin at 9 a.m., Saturday, in the student union of Colby Community College and conclude at 1 p.m. Registration fee is \$5 and includes admission to the fair and many of the health screenings and educational booths. Children will be admitted free when accompanied by a registered adult. "Living with Osteoarthritis" will be presented at 10:30 a.m. in room 106 and laboratory results will be given at 9:30 a.m., 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and noon. Other screenings that are included in the \$5 registration fee are fitness testing, oral cancer, skin cancer, prostate exam, urinalysis, posture, video otoscope and many fun activities for children. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend the fair for a healthier start in 2004.

'Great Strides' meeting Sunday

The first meeting for the 2nd Annual Northwest Kansas "Great Strides" walk-a-thon benefiting the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation will be held at 2 p.m., Sunday, at the home of Doris and Craig Reed. Anyone interested in getting involved should call Doris Reed at (785) 465-7907.

Video concert Sunday

Another Gaither Homecoming Video Concert will be held on Sunday beginning at 6 p.m. at the Colby Wesleyan Church. The concert, "Singin' in my Soul," will be shown on the big

screen television. Organizers encourage everyone to attend and "enjoy the great gospel music and refreshments." For questions, call 443-1994.

College board to meet

The Colby Community College board of trustees will hold its regular meeting at 5 p.m., Tuesday. Items on the agenda include contract clarification, sealed bids for sale of auto, approval of amendments and compliance to cafeteria plan, approval of contracts, approval of agreements, president's evaluation, payment of claims and negotiations.

Promotion meeting planned

The next Colby Business Promotion meeting will be held at 7:30 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 27, in the basement of Sunflower Bank, 500 N. Franklin. The promotion meeting is open to all businesses in Colby and everyone is encouraged to attend. This month one of the highlights will be a "giveaway." The purpose of the promotion meetings are to keep all Colby businesses in front of the consumer and to bring out-of-town business here.

Benefit, open house planned

There will be a benefit barbecue and open house on Sunday, Jan. 25, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Heartland Christian School, 1995 W. 4th in Colby. In addition to the barbecue,

which will feature barbecued meat, baked potatoes, corn, rolls, salad and dessert bar, an auction will be held. Auction items include handmade quilts, bed and breakfast package and more. Everyone is invited to attend.

Ag profitability meeting set

The 2004 Ag Profitability Conference will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 5, in Colby. The event begins with registration at 8:30 a.m. followed by a presentation on water issues in western Kansas, breakout sessions, lunch, a presentation on land values and cash rents. Registration is due by Thursday, Jan. 29. Call, 462-4582.

Amusement Association to meet

The Thomas County Amusement Association will meet at 7 p.m., Monday, at the Thomas County Office Complex. With only a little over six months left until the 2004 Thomas County Fair, association members need to continue preparations. Anyone wanting to offer assistance is encouraged to attend the meeting.

Obedience school Tuesday

The Thomas County Trackers 4-H Dog Club will once again be offering obedience training this winter and spring. Although the orientation meeting was Tuesday, interested persons can still attend next Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the 4-H building. For questions, call (785) 460-3816.

