



COLBY FREE PRESS

Staying healthy in 2004



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Organizers for this year's Colby Wellness Fair held last weekend at the Colby Community College student union said they were pleased with the attendance and the amount of healthcare providers participating in both educational and informational booths. Many providers offered fun activities for children. **Above:** Nathalie Higerd (right) with SmartStart and Jennifer Higerd, assisting, demonstrated the danger in shaking a baby by showing

how delicate the brain is. **Below left:** Kalea Robert of Colby was at a booth sponsored by the Colby College nursing students, which showed young people the importance of brushing their teeth. Robert was given an egg soaked in Pepsi for only 10 minutes and was then asked to brush away the staining that developed. **Below right:** Bonnie Werth, LINK, helped Jeni Wood of Brewster make an inkpen even prettier using designs and glitter.



Sheriff won't seek another term in 2004

The filing deadline for August primary set for June 10

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Thomas County will have a new sheriff after the fall elections. That's the only certainty so far in the local political picture.

Tom Jones, sheriff, isn't seeking re-election, said Tracey Perkins, county clerk/election officer.

Mike Baughn, undersheriff, has already filed by petition to replace Jones, she said today.

Perkins said that on the county level, voters will have to decide on her own office, the county treasurer, register of deeds, county attorney and two county commissioners, in addition to a sheriff.

Currently filling those positions are Donita Applebury, treasurer; Maybelle Moore, register of deeds; Laurence A. Taylor, county attorney; and Glen Kersenbrock, county commissioner (District 2) and Duane Dawes, county commissioner (District 3).

Perkins said no one has filed yet to run for any of those positions; however the deadline is still nearly 5 months away.

She said she plans on running for re-election and will file by petition.

She also said there aren't any city council nor school board elections for Colby this year.

Neither Rexford nor Brewster have any city council or school

board members whose terms are up, Perkins said.

No one in the southern Thomas County, part of which is in the Oakley school district, is up for re-election.

There are two open township positions, trustee and treasurer, which are county-wide and Perkins said no one has filed yet.

The deadline to file for the August 2004 primary is noon on June 10, Perkins said.

She said state Rep. Jim Morrison has filed through the Kansas secretary of state's office to run for re-election.

Morrison represents Thomas, Sherman, Sheridan and Graham counties.

State Senator Stan Clark's term is also up and he will face opposition from Goodland Republican Dan Rasure for the 40th District Senate seat.

Kansans will have some important decisions to make in November, including whether or not they want to re-elect U.S. Senator Sam Brownback, who has opposition from Joan Ruff, a lawyer from Mission Woods.

Also up for re-election are all four representatives from Kansas' four Congressional districts to Washington, D.C.

Those include Congressmen Jerry Moran, R-Hays, Jim Ryun, R-Lawrence, Dennis Moore, D-Overland Park, and Todd Tiahrt, R-Wichita. For questions about filing applications or the election, call Perkins at 462-4540.

Winter Sports Section Included in today's issue

Prices at the pump and at home are going up

Midwest Energy representative says bills will be higher

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Area residents could be feeling a pinch in their wallets on their gas bill and at the pump in the near future.

Natural gas bills could go up 10 to 15 percent around the area, said Bob Helm, manager of corporate communications with Midwest Energy in Hays,

Helm said the natural gas market plus demand drives the price up and down.

He said producers can't keep up with the constant demand because there are currently so many plants

that use natural gas to generate electricity.

And along with the existing power plants, more are being built, increasing demand even more.

Demand has also remained constant from summer to winter because those same plants are in high gear to supply electricity for air conditioning.

Helm explained there isn't a shortage of natural gas, but the problem is storage.

He said it's difficult for producers to keep gas in storage because of increased usage.

Also, Helm said, it takes three to five years to tap into new sources and build the infrastructure needed to move the gas, such as pipelines.

"We're a good couple of years behind on that," he said. "There's no shortage of natural gas. It's there."

Helm said Midwest Energy customers aren't facing as large an increase as Public Service customers in Colorado. He heard their customers could see their bills go up 70 percent.

The market is also part of the reason prices go up. He said natural gas is a commodity, and the market works similar to the agriculture market.

"We buy the natural gas," he said. "We don't own it, we don't transport it."

Also, Helm said when customers look at their gas bill, 60 percent of the cost is the actual price of gas.

The other 40 percent are charges that the company can't change, he added.

Demand is also what pushes up gasoline prices at the pump.

Jennifer Love Meyer, public re-

lations director with Loves Country Stores, said the stores really can't do anything about the price of gas but the company does try to keep fuel prices low.

"Many times there's not much we can do," she said.

The possibility exists that gasoline prices could go up before summer but Love Meyer said trends normally cause a slight increase.

"I can't imagine that someone could predict prices that far into the future," she said.

Right now, Love Meyer said prices are going up slightly because of the extreme cold in the northeast.

Meyer said the northeast uses heating oil instead of natural gas, and heating oil is refined from crude oil.

More demand for heating oil drives up the cost of crude oil,

which in turn makes less oil available for refining into diesel and gasoline.

"Then it becomes simple price and demand," she said, adding when the price of crude goes up and down, it has an overall effect on gas prices. Love Meyer said prices tend to go up closer to summer because of price trends and Environmental Protection Agency regulations that require certain urban areas to get fuel with additives, gasoline that goes only to certain cities.

She said that price goes up, and with less fuel in the system, overall, gas prices go up.

Bob Luck, manager of J & J Oil in Colby, said gas stations are subject to the prices of their suppliers.

He said if the price of gas goes up, there's not much that can be done about it.

Briefly

Girl Scouts begin selling cookies

The Colby Girl Scouts will begin taking orders for cookies today, said Shannon Koon, service unit manager. The annual cookie drive will continue through Friday, Feb. 6, she said, and many of the favorites will be available, along with a new type of cookie this year, Pinatas. This is one of the scouts largest fund-raising events with nearly one-quarter of the profits staying with the local troops to finance girl-activities, Koon said. In case a scout misses someone, Koon encourages them to call her at (785) 462-6662.

Heartland School benefit Sunday

There will be a benefit barbecue and open house on Sunday 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.

Senior center holding elections

The Senior Progress Center will have election of officers at 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27. Four board member positions

will be filled. Those running are Dora Hopson, Willie Engelhardt, Rick Tremblay, Emma Rogers, Merle Wolf and Maxine Jones. This meeting is open to the public and will be conducted by Kansas Legal Services of Hays. For information, call 460-2901.

All businesses invited to meeting

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."

Share delivery Saturday

Delivery for this month's Heartland Share program will start at 10:30 a.m., Saturday, at the Sacred Heart gymnasium. There are still a few shares left and anyone interested can call Gene Griffin, one of the coordinators, at (785) 460-3579.

Dennen Field fund raisers planned

The Colby Booster Club is sponsoring a soup supper beginning at 5 p.m., Friday, Jan. 30 at the Colby Community Building. All proceeds from the event will benefit the Dennen Field project, said Shawn Stephens, committee member.

College auditions start Monday

The drama department at Colby Community College will conduct auditions for the spring play next Monday and Tuesday from 7-9 p.m. in the Frahm Theatre located in the Cultural Arts Center on campus. Auditions are open to students and the community.

Benefit lunch next Sunday

A benefit pasta lunch for Christopher Eteeyan, infant grandson of Larry and Mary Maxwell, born with liver and heart complications, is planned from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 1, in the Sacred Heart Church basement. Admission is free-will donation and everyone is welcome. Call Amanda Wahlmeier, 465-9145 or Terry and Linda Stover, 626-9068 with questions.

Rotary soup supper next month

The annual Colby Rotary soup supper will be from 5 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 17, during the Colby High School basketball game against Goodland at the Colby Community Building. All proceeds from this event go to benefit various organizations. Tickets will be available at the door or from any Rotary Club member.



Turning colder

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 20s. South winds 5 to 10 mph. **Saturday...**Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s. East winds 5 to 10 mph. **Saturday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s. North winds 5 to 15 mph. **Sunday...**Partly cloudy. Cooler. Highs in the lower 40s. North winds 10 to 20 mph. ...Partly cloudy in the evening then becoming mostly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of snow. Lows around 16. **Monday...**Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Cooler. Highs in the mid 20s.

The numbers
Thursday's high, 49
Low this morning, 17
Records for Jan. 23, 75 in 1967 and -12 in 1915
Year ago today, 17 and 4
Month's precipitation, 0.05
Month's snowfall, 1 inch
2003 precipitation to date, trace

Soil temperature, 35
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.

