



COLBY FREE PRESS

Horse barn work



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

John Thompson with Mazanec Construction of Colby worked today on a window on the horse barn at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Mazanec Construction won a bid earlier to side the horse, sheep and poultry barns and also put on new doors. The work should be completed by the beginning of June.

Colby street project hits snag at meeting

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

One councilman asked for more time to review a petition requesting improvements to Copeland Avenue from W. 5th to W. 7th Streets during Tuesday's Colby City Council meeting.

After hearing from homeowners and fellow council members, Jim Tubbs asked if the issue could be tabled until the next meeting thereby giving him time to look over the proposal and street in question.

Prior to Tubbs' request and after some discussion, Councilman John Bremenkamp made a motion to approve the street project, but the action item failed for a lack of a second.

The petition and improvements proposed would result in the widening of Copeland Avenue, make improvements to the storm sewer and add curb and guttering at an estimated cost of \$38,900 was initially brought forward to the council with 53 percent of homeowners signing.

However, Todd Voss, representing Voss Rentals, LLC and Paul Bedore, speaking for Colby Sixth Street Club, both voiced concerns with the street improvements. There were also others in favor of the improvements at the meeting.

Voss told the council that he cannot understand why there is a need for tearing up the yards of three homes in that vicinity and why there needs to be improvements on a drainage area that has always been there.

As for the petition, both Voss and Bedore said they have never seen a petition or been able to sign off on

“Everybody should have had a chance to look at the petition.”

Councilman Jim Tubbs, regarding Copeland Avenue improvements

it one way or the other.

“Everybody should have had a chance to look at the petition,” Tubbs said. Although Mayor Warren Hixson pointed out that sometimes when a petition reaches the 52-53 percent of acceptance, the petitioners stop circulating it.

The percentage of those opposing the new street is estimated at 47 percent, according to information provided at the council meeting.

The property owners that have front footage include Scott and Bronwyn King, Colby Sixth Street Club, Voss Rentals, David and Sherry Kriegshauser, Mark and Rebecca Peterson, Charles Baalman, Keith Baalman, Terri Grillo, Dr. Gary and Jane Slavens, Larry and Sarah Jane Barrett and Steven and Linda Vaughn.

Of those names submitted to the council, property owners not signing the petition were Colby Sixth Street Club representatives, Voss Rentals, David and Sherry Kriegshauser, Mark and Rebecca Peterson and Terri Grillo.

It was not confirmed at the council meeting as to whether or not those who failed to sign had even seen the petition.

In the event the council were to approve the widening and upgrades on Copeland Avenue, Joel Kriss,

city attorney, said it would not require a public hearing. The only thing necessary, he said, was verifying the percentages, which was already completed by Greg Gordon with Gordon Company.

Opponents of the street upgrades also questioned whether or not it could be done without a recommendation from the state.

Bedore said it was his understanding, based on conversations he had with a state official, that any time there is a change in the water drainage from the existing area, it will require a state recommendation.

In this particular situation, Kriss said he didn't believe that would be necessary since the change appeared to not be significant enough to change the water flow from the original draw on the north end of Copeland where the widening would occur.

Another issue Kriss brought up was the fact that under statutes, the city is not required to act even with a petition based on the language noting that the wording is “may” and not “shall.”

In addition to tabling the issue until Tuesday, March 30, Tubbs suggested that owners wanting to offer their opinion are encouraged to talk with him about it.

Maintenance company adds public information representative

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Detachment 2 170th Maintenance Company in Colby has a new unit public affairs representative, but it's a face people will recognize even though he no longer lives in the community.

Sgt. Billy Jones has been a member of the National Guard for six years, assigned to the Colby unit but only recently became the

public affairs representative. He moved to McCook, Neb. last month but is still with the Colby Guard unit.

“A lot of people know me there in town,” Jones said, adding he was a member of the Colby Fire Department, Tho-



Sgt. Jones

mas County Emergency Medical Services and worked for Servi-Tech before he moved.

He said he became the community affairs representative because he was asked by 1st Sgt. Manuel Rubio, of the 170th in Colby if he would take on the additional duty.

Jones said he wants the community to know he will be there to answer questions about the Guard, from parents wanting to

know about educational opportunities for their kids to any other questions they might have. Jones is an equipment unit dispatcher and it's his job to make sure equipment is combat ready and that preventative maintenance is performed each month. He's also a team leader in his squad and helps guide new soldiers coming into the Guard.

Jones said he joined up six years ago because the military seemed like it was ideal

for him.

“It just kind of fit me,” he said. “I'm a neat, organized person. The military fits me kind of well.”

The discipline and opportunity to stay fit were also draws. So was the chance to learn more about Colby. He said the Guard is active in the community and that was also appealing. “That was another reason I'd done that,” Jones said.

Thomas County clerk reports no new election filings

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

There has been no new filing activity since the beginning of the month, Thomas County Clerk Tracey Perkins said today, in reference to the August primary election.

“People just aren't there yet,” she said. The deadline to run for the Aug. 10 primary is June 10 at noon.

Several residents have filed, including Republicans Bert Stramel and Bill Miller, Jr. for county commissioner of District #3, currently

held by Duane Dawes.

Republican Undersheriff Mike Baughn has filed for the seat held by Democrat Sheriff Tom Jones who said earlier that he wouldn't be seeking reelection. .

Rep. Jim Morrison, R-Colby,

also filed. He represents District 121, made up of Thomas, Sherman, Sheridan and Graham counties.

Other residents who have filed are Lyman Bear, a Republican for Brewster-Barrett Township trustee and Wilbur F. Henry, a Republican

for Rovohl Township trustee. Also up for election are County Treasurer Doneta Applebury, County Attorney Laurence A. Taylor, Register of Deeds Maybelle Moore, Perkins, and County Commissioner Glenn Kersenbrock, District #2.

House panel to review school plan; Senate plan pending

TOPEKA (AP) — With a plan from House Republicans for increasing school funding by \$92 million facing debate in committee, the GOP is far from united.

“Trying to get Republicans to agree is hard, let alone 125 people,” said House Education Committee Chairwoman Kathe Decker, R-Clay Center.

Decker's committee was to begin debate Thursday on what House Speaker Doug Mays, R-Topeka, and Majority Leader Clay Aurand, R-Courtland, have acknowledged is a short-term solution to school finance issues. Both planned to testify.

An endorsement by the committee would send a bill containing the

plan to the entire 125-member House for debate.

The plan would allow school districts to increase spending on special education programs by \$40.5 million, but districts would have to reduce or eliminate a property tax break for home owners to get some of the funds.

Kansas currently exempts the

first \$2,300 of a residential property's assessed value from the state's school levy, saving owners \$46 a year. The levy is \$20 for every \$1,000 of a residential property's assessed value.

The plan also would increase spending on teacher mentoring, bilingual education and programs for children who are at risk of dropping

out by about \$28.5 million, through existing state resources yet to be identified.

Rep. Bill Kassebaum, isn't impressed. “It's not my plan,” said Kassebaum, R-Burdick, who was part of group of freshmen legislators who proposed a school package last year, funded through statewide tax increases.

Briefly

Endowment banquet scheduled

Heartland Christian School will hold its “Partners for the Future” endowment banquet at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 2 at the Colby Community College Student Union. Tickets are \$10 each and the deadline for purchasing tickets is Thursday, April 1. Tickets may be purchased from any Heartland Christian School family or by calling 460-6419.

Program planned at grade school

First grade students at Colby Elementary School are planning a program entitled, *From the Inside Out*, at 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m., Thursday, April 1, in the grade school auditorium. The event is free and open to everyone.

Baked potato bar Sunday

In observance of Red Cross month, the Thomas County Red Cross is serving a baked potato bar from 11:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., Sunday. The event is planned at Fairview Estates, 1630 Sewell Avenue, Colby with free will donations being

accepted. Board members and other local Red Cross volunteers will be serving. For questions, call Mary Smith, chapter manager, (785) 462-7161.

Free sports physicals offered in May

Colby Medical and Surgical Center, 175 S. Range, will offer free physical examinations for students in Colby, Rexford and Brewster for the 2004-05 school years. All physicals will be given on Tuesday, May 11 with students from Colby Middle School arriving by 5:30 p.m.; Colby High School by 6:15 p.m., and for Golden Plains and Brewster students, 7 p.m. This is a free service for area students who plan to participate in athletic events next year. Any student planning to participate in the physical examination is asked to bring the forms with them, which are available at the schools. For questions, call (785) 462-3332.

Boy Scout soup supper

Boy Scout Troop 141 will hold a soup supper starting at 4:30 p.m. Sunday at the Colby Community Building. The

supper is being held in conjunction with the All-Star game at the community building.

College endowment auction planned

The Colby Community College Endowment Association is sponsoring its annual dinner and auction, beginning at 4:45 p.m., Saturday, April 3. This year's event entitled, “Hollywood,” will be held at the Comfort Inn Convention Center in Colby. Tickets for the benefit dinner and auction can be made by calling (785) 462-4684. Deadline for ticket reservations is Monday, March 22. The buffet dinner will begin at 5:30 p.m. with the live auction at 7 p.m.

Early childhood screenings planned

The Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center staff will be assisting Brewster Public Schools with free early childhood screenings on Thursday, March 25. The screenings will be offered to children with special needs. For an appointment, call Sheri Horney at Brewster Schools, (785) 694-2236.



Comfortable

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area
Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows around 40. South winds 10 to 15 mph. **Friday...**Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Warmer. Highs in the mid 80s. West winds 10 to 15 mph. **Friday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 40s. West winds 10 to 15 mph shifting to the northwest 10 to 20 mph after midnight. **Saturday...**Partly cloudy. Cooler. Highs in the lower 60s. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph. **Saturday night through Sunday night...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 60s. Lows in the mid 30s. **Monday...**Mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 70s.

The numbers

Wednesday's high, 70
Low this morning, 31
Records for March 18, 90 in 1921 and -3 in 1958
Year ago today, 54 and 39
Precipitation past 24 hours, 0.00
March total, 0.74
March snowfall, 1 inch
Soil temperature, 49

The sources:

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

