



12 pages

COLBY FREE PRESS

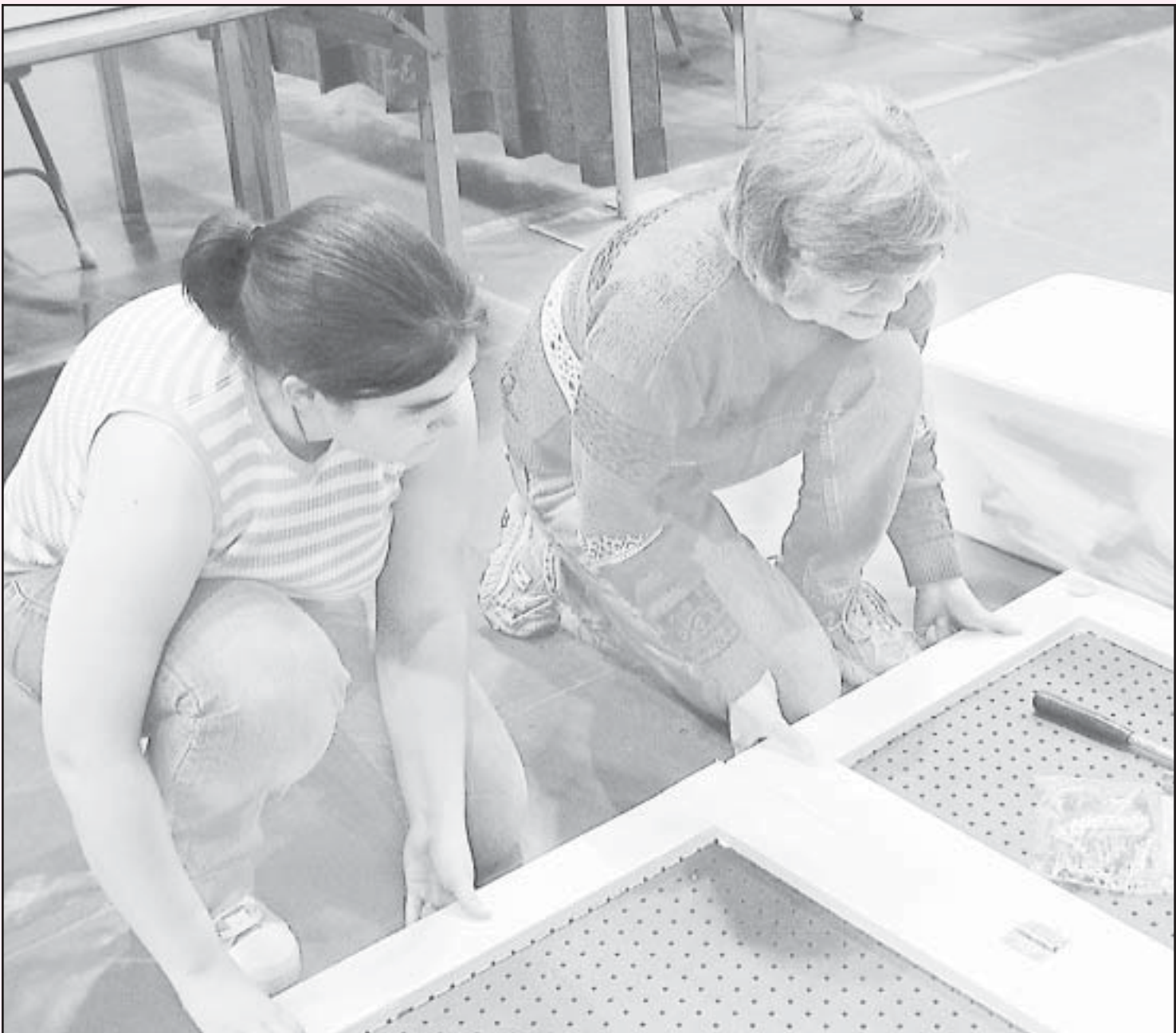
Friday

March 26, 2004

50¢

Volume 115, Number 49
Serving Thomas County since 1888

Preparing for the big show



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Karen Hopper and Dawn Beitz of The Gift Cache in Gem set up their booth for the Better Home and Living Show at the Colby Community Building this morning. The show begins tonight from

4 to 8 p.m. and continues on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m. The show will provide ideas for sprucing up lawns, homes, gardens and more.

Enrollment up at college

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The numbers are in and spring enrollment at Colby Community College is up over last year, said Debbie Schwanke, the school's public information officer.

Schwanke said with the combined enrollment between the Colby campus and nursing students in Norton, the college has 917 students enrolled. That number includes the 24 Norton students and everyone taking classes in Colby.

She said 716 full-time students (students who are taking 12 or more

hours a semester) are enrolled for the spring 2004 semester, an increase over the 680 students taking classes at the same time last year.

"We're very pleased with it," she said.

Schwanke said students are enrolled in 12,172 credit hours, compared to 11,800 in spring 2003.

"This is a significant number to us because our state aid is based on full time equivalency," she said.

Outreach numbers aren't available yet, she said. The college has outreach sites in 14 northwest Kansas counties.

Newspaper gets letter linked to serial killings

WICHITA (AP) — Police have received at least 32 tips since The Wichita Eagle received a new letter apparently sent by the BTK strangler, an unidentified serial killer who terrorized the city in the 1970s and claimed responsibility in the latest communication for a 1986 killing.

Lt. Ken Landwehr, who has been working on the BTK case for 20 years, confirmed Thursday the letter originated in the Wichita area. News of the letter's existence broke Wednesday night on Wichita-area television stations, and many of the tips came in overnight.

The deaths of seven people killed in the 1970s were attributed to the BTK strangler — a name that refers

to "bind, torture and kill." Letters claiming responsibility for the slayings, which remain unsolved, were sent to The Wichita Eagle and television station KAKE, the last in 1979.

Last Friday, The Eagle received a new letter, mailed on March 17. It contained information linked to the strangulation of Vicki Wegerle, 28, in her Wichita home on Sept. 16, 1986.

The letter contained a single sheet of paper with a photocopy of Wegerle's driver's license and three pictures, apparently of her body. Each picture shows the victim in a slightly different pose and with her clothing arranged in a slightly different manner.

House accuses the governor's office of authorizing break-in

TOPEKA (AP) — It began as a commonly used stalling tactic to keep the House voting board open to round up needed votes. It has become a political squabble over whether the governor's office improperly intervened.

House Majority Leader Clay

Aurand on Thursday accused Gov. Kathleen Sebelius' office of authorizing Capitol Police to enter a staffer's office in search of Rep. Mike Burgess, R-Topeka, who was missing during a roll call Wednesday on school finance legislation.

At issue is what's known as a call

of the House — when chamber leaders order the doors closed and nobody can enter or leave until the errant lawmakers are rounded up and brought to the floor to vote.

House Speaker Doug Mays said it's not unusual during such a call for a member of one or both parties

to disappear for a while. That buys lawmakers time to make phone calls or try to convince colleagues to vote a certain way.

In the end, the school finance bill failed, and another version was brought up for debate later in the day.

What has Aurand, R-Courtland, hopping mad is that someone from the governor's office summoned a Capitol Police officer to track down Burgess, which he said the governor's office doesn't have the authority to do.

"The only person who has that

authority is the sergeant-at-arms, and he didn't ask for help," Aurand said.

Sebelius said Thursday she didn't know who in her office asked the Capitol Police to open the door to the locked office where Burgess was found.

'Buffalo Bill' Cody monument being readied for Oakley

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

In life, William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody was a man who was recognized around the world. Since his death, he has become larger than life.

A new monumental bronze statue to be erected in Oakley in May will commemorate the birthplace of the legend of "Buffalo Bill" Cody. Charlie Norton of Leoti is the artist/sculptor responsible for the monument.

He was chosen by Lewis Evins, president of Farmers and Merchants Bank in Oakley, to do the statue, featuring Cody running down a buffalo on his horse, Brigham.

The statue's dedication is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 22 in Oakley. It will be accompanied by an exhibit of art by Charlie and his wife, Pat, at the Fick Fossil Museum in Oakley.

Evins said the entire project, including purchasing land and the statue itself has a cost of about \$500,000.

Most of the money has come from donations and Farmers and



This is a version of the bronze of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody to be erected in Oakley in May. The effort to bring the statue to the community has involved many people.

Merchants bank has contributed to the cause as well, he said.

The one and a half times life-sized statue should be delivered by the beginning of May.

Evins said the idea for the project took root back in 1995 when he first found out that Cody's reputation as Buffalo Bill first started in Logan County.

He said in 1868, Cody was working for the Kansas Pacific Railroad as a buffalo hunter.

"I felt that made Logan County the birthplace of the legend of Buf-

falo Bill," Evins said. In the spring of 1868, he said Cody and another buffalo hunter named Bill Comstock had a contest to determine who would take the title of "Buffalo Bill." Ten miles west of Oakley, the two men began the contest that ended with Cody killing 69 bison to Comstock's 46.

Evins said after that day, only Cody was called Buffalo Bill.

He also took a trip to the Buffalo Bill Cody Heritage Museum in Cody, Wyo., in 1995. "The first thing on the site was a sculpture,"

he said, adding that statue was placed in Cody in 1924.

Seven years later, there was a small museum. Now, there is a 330,000-square-foot facility housing the largest collection of Cody memorabilia in the world.

The sculpture in Wyoming gave him the idea for a two-times life-sized statue of Cody for Oakley.

Evins said it will be an asset to people in western Kansas and should become an attraction in its own right.

"It's our Mount Rushmore," he said, adding it should bring in about 100,000 people in the first three years.

He said there was never anyone else besides Charlie Norton he would've considered to design and sculpt the bronze so he commissioned the artist to do the project. Evins said Colby residents are already familiar with Charlie's work because he was the sculptor of the bronze in front of the Thomas County Courthouse.

The artist said it took some time and effort before reaching the final design for the Cody statue.

"I made many sketches as well as

smaller sculpture studies of this basic idea to try and capture the attitude and balance for this monument," Charlie said.

"I would have to say that the initial concept is a given after researching Bill Cody's method of hunting. Lewis Evins, my wife Pat and I collectively decided this final draft in design. Any failures are totally my own."

He said the statue's details are accurate, including the age of the buffalo and the looks of the mustang Cody is mounted on.

"W.F.C.'s best buffalo hunting horse, Brigham, was a small roan mustang with a rough barrelhead but could run with the best," Charlie said.

"I sculpt directly from live mustangs and buffalo to the original saddle, bridle, bit, guns and clothing for this bronze.

"This bronze could stand as a historical reference to future generations for many centuries to come."

The entire project has taken more than five years from inception to the final bronze casting. More than 10,000 pounds of bronze have been used for the statue, she said.

Briefly

Egg hunt planned in April

The Colby Kiwanis Club is sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt starting at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 3, in Fike Park. The event is open to children up to 9 years of age.

Fair board special meeting set

The Thomas County Fair Board will hold a special meeting at 8 p.m. on Tuesday at the Thomas County 4-H Building at the fairgrounds. Items on the agenda include approval of Colby Community College rodeo team lease, approval of Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and Women's Rodeo Cowboy Association application fees, executive session and new business. The meeting is open to the public.

Share delivery Saturday

The Heartland Share delivery is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. at the Sacred Heart School gymnasium. The menu for the month includes bacon, sausage, roast beef, chicken breasts, pepperoni pockets, broccoli, lettuce, onions, potatoes, apples, oranges, grapefruit, bananas and bundt cake. There are a few Shares left over if someone is interested in ordering. A share is \$17.50, said Gene Griffin, one of the coordinators. For questions or to buy a share, call her at 460-3579.

Puddle Duck sets enrollment

Pre-enrollment for Puddle Duck Preschool is scheduled for Wednesday, March 31 and Thursday, April 1, from 4-6 p.m., at 520 W. 5th, Colby. The preschool is non-denominational and open to children 3, 4, and 5 years of age. For information or questions, call Amy Jennings, director, at 460-2603 or 460-8388.

Guard to hold open house

The Colby Army National Guard unit is hosting an open house at 7 p.m., Friday, April 2, for family or anyone interested in the Kansas Army National Guard.

"We would like to educate families and others on the educational benefits the Guard has to offer," said Sgt. Billy Jones, public relations officer. "Those that would most benefit the open house are juniors and seniors in high school and parents," he said. The National Guard Armory in Colby is located at 475 S. Range Ave.



Look for the 60s

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area Tonight...Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Breezy. Lows around 50. South winds 20 to 25 mph decreasing to 10 to 20 mph after midnight. **Saturday...**Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Breezy. Highs in the upper 60s to near 70. Northwest winds 15 to 25 mph. **Saturday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 30s to near 40. Northwest winds 10 to 20 mph. **Sunday...**Partly cloudy. Breezy. Highs in the 60s. **Sunday night and Monday...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 30s to around 40. Highs in the upper 60s to near 70.

The numbers
Thursday's high, 81
Low this morning, 42
Records for March 26, 94 in 1907 and +1 in 1965
Year ago today, 77 and 34
Precipitation past 24 hours, 0.00
March total, 0.74
March snowfall, 1 inch
Soil temperature, 59
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.

