



COLBY FREE PRESS

Scouts seeking donations

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Two Colby girl scouts in Troop 162 are working toward their bronze award and have placed boxes in various locations in hopes others will help them with donated items.

Jessica Kennedy, 11, and Sarah Oesterreich, 12, have decided to make hygiene and comfort disaster relief packets for the Thomas County Red Cross, said Deanna Oesterreich, bronze award advisor for the troop.

"The girls have set their goal at 400 packets with 100 hygiene bags for adults and 300 comfort bags for children," she said.

The boxes are being set up today at Colby Photo, Pioneer Memorial Library, College Drive Assembly, the Berean Church and the *Colby Free Press*.

"For the adult hygiene bags, we need donations of adult and child toothbrushes and travel-size toothpaste, travel-size deodorant, combs and white wash clothes," said Jessica, one of the two girls involved in the project.

"For the children's packets," said Sarah, "coloring books, crayons, small tablets of paper and colored pencils are needed."

Oesterreich said this is the first award the girls can earn as junior girl scouts. Other scouts, said Jan Barnum, who is the troop leader, are working on their bronze award as well. Some of the girls will be teaching first grade Brownies how to use the recorder and the other scouts will be working on the Colby ballfields painting and minor repair of the bleachers. Ryan Sturdy, recreation director, is coordinating the effort with Girl Scouts.

In addition to the boxes located at places around town, Colby Photo will also be accepting monetary donations so that the scouts can finish the project by purchasing any items missing to complete the bags.

"If there is any money left over," said Oesterreich, "it will be given to the Red Cross as a donation."

For questions, call 462-3267.

'Love you too'



CRYSTAL RUCKER/Colby Free Press

The Hedrick Exotic Animal Petting Zoo, owned by Monte McClurg of Nickerson, will be at the Oasis Travel Center today through Sunday from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m. ABOVE: McClurg (getting a huge kiss from Sheila, his 9-year-old camel) said there is a \$1 admission with camel rides on Sheila available for \$3. McClurg said he has been involved with the zoo his entire life, having started it as a summer job when he was 14. The zoo includes zebras, camels and kangaroos as his major species along with turtles and other smaller animals. His reason for stopping in Colby, he said, was to promote the Oasis Travel Center and he hopes everyone will come by to see his exotic animals. "Don't forget to get a ride on Sheila," he said.

Charter school, 'spy eyes' focus of school board

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The charter school and surveillance cameras at the high school were the focus of Monday night's Colby School Board meeting.

Diana Wieland, the district curriculum director, updated the board on the progress for the school. She said the state is making decisions now on how much money will be given this fall for charter schools.

So far, she said 10 districts have acknowledged they will be going ahead with their charters and four others haven't yet indicated their plans.

Wieland said how much money Colby will get for its first year this fall is contingent on how many schools accept their charters.

The board approved the charter school petition in January.

The school's first year, in 2004-2005 will be a planning year and the first students will be accepted in 2005-2006 with grades five through eight.

Grade school Principal Terrel Harrison said they're thinking about using two teachers part-time to begin with or a team of people after school hours, drawing from the expertise of the district's teachers and administration.

Wieland said they will probably also concentrate on getting equipment in for the charter school.

The board also heard reports from principals.

Colby High School principal Brian Kraus said they're working on the master schedule and enrollment for the next school year. Preparation for graduation and the end of the current school year is also in high gear.

Kraus said Michael Schwanke has been chosen as the graduation speaker.

He also said they will be submitting a proposal to Sheriff Tom Jones to see if drug money will be available to help pay for surveillance

cameras at the high school.

Kraus said they will be taking a close look at the systems at Hays High School and Ransom.

School board president Stan Molstad wanted to know where cameras could potentially be placed.

Kraus said they would be external only to begin with but would later expand to interior later.

He said they would start with the exterior because of safety issues in the parking lot, such as reckless driving and keeping an eye on exterior doors to keep anyone unauthorized from getting in.

Middle school principal Rob Ross said they're finishing testing and are getting results back from informal reading tests. He said the reading test is done by the school to evaluate what grade level students are reading at and he said the results are looking positive.

Grade school principal Terrel Harrison said they're also getting ready for the end of the school year with picnics and field trips. They're in the process of updating the school handbook.

Board member Kevan Taylor wanted to know if more people are interested in the all-day kindergarten.

Harrison said more people have been calling and wanting that option instead.

Superintendent Kirk Nielsen also gave his report. He said the board is invited to prom Saturday night and also reminded them graduation is coming up.

He also said the district is celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week this week along with Secretary Day and Food Service Day. Nielsen added the board is invited to lunch with the secretaries and food service people but a date hasn't been set yet.

"It's a small thing to do for people who work so hard during the year," he said.

Wellness center funding explored by trustees

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees took action on starting to raise funds for the college's wellness center.

The board approved a motion by trustee Larry Arehart to request that the Colby Community College Endowment Association raise money for a capital campaign with emphasis on the wellness center.

Hartsook Companies, Inc. is being considered as a possible professional fund raiser.

Bob Hartsook is a former dean of student affairs at the college, serv-

ing from 1974-78. Larry McDonald, another board member, also said that Hartsook Companies is the second largest fund raising organization in the nation, with its home office in Wichita.

With respect to the capital campaign, Arehart said it would not only benefit the wellness center, but would include other funds such as endowed funds and more.

The fund raising project will be about two years, plus expenses for the professional fund raisers.

College president Dr. Mikel Ary said that included in the fee to raise money would be expenses.

However, he said if the endowment association isn't happy with the company's efforts, they do have a way out.

"The endowment has the right after six months to cancel the contract," he said.

Board member Curt Stephens liked the idea of getting the endowment involved in the effort.

"It's not a bad deal if the endowment's willing to kick in," he said.

Nick Wells, director of the endowment association, said now would be the time for the office to get involved instead of later.

He's happy to get the chance to be

part of the effort to raise money for the center.

"I'm excited about getting the campaign underway," Wells said "This will at least help us get the campaign started."

He said the board "threw the ball" at the association.

"It was going to come through our office anyway," Wells said.

"They put the endowment office in charge of initiating the campaign."

In other business, the board approved the resignation of nursing instructor Candi Hetrick. They also approved the hiring of Ruth Wol-

fram as a new nursing instructor.

Ary said they're in the process of getting the nursing faculty in place for next year and there are still two more positions to fill.

The board also finished going over the policies and procedures manual and will get a draft copy at the next meeting.

They also went into executive session twice to discuss personnel issues and negotiations.

Also discussed were comments from the student/trustee dinner on April 21. The board was pleased they received mostly positive comments from the students.

Briefly

Taxes due by May 10

The 2003 second half of property and real estate taxes for Thomas County residents are due by Monday, May 10, said Donita Applebury, county treasurer. She wanted to remind anyone with taxes due to make sure and submit those taxes by the May deadline since this is a change from previous years when taxes were due on June 20. Questions, call 462-4520.

Women wanted for Friendship Day

May Friendship Day 2004, sponsored by the Church Women United, is Friday, starting with a fellowship coffee at 9:30 a.m., followed by the program at 10 a.m., at the First Presbyterian Church, 515 W. 4th, Colby. Organizers of the friendship day are encouraging all women of all faiths to come join them.

Letter carriers to collect food

Letter carriers with the Colby Post Office will be participating in a food drive, Saturday to benefit the Genesis food bank. Anyone interested in helping postal carriers with this drive are asked to leave a food donation by their mailbox, said Sharlene Scheck, coordinator of the Colby food drive. Due to the overwhelming response from residents in the past few years, Scheck said, the carriers have asked some non-carrier volunteers to help them. "Please help us to help our community," Scheck said on Monday.

SHARE sign-up continues

Heartland SHARE sign-up continues through Friday at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. 4th St., Colby. This month's SHARE delivery is scheduled for Saturday, May 22, in the gymnasium of Colby Sacred Heart School. For questions, call Gene Griffin, 460-3579.

Soybean referendum requests begin

From now through Friday, May 28, producers can receive a form requesting a referendum on the Soybean Promotion and Research Order, said Ross Sloan, Farm Service Agency director. Producers, he said, must certify and provide documentation that shows they produced soybeans and paid an assessment on the soybeans during the period of Jan. 1, 2002 through Dec. 21, 2003. Mail-in requests must be postmarked no later than May 28 and received in the Farm Service Agency office by Monday, June 7. For questions, call Sloan at 462-7671, or stop by at 915 E. Walnut, Colby.

Underclassmen to be honored

Colby High School has scheduled an awards ceremony for students in 9th, 10th and 11th grades starting at 1:15 p.m. on Tuesday, May 11, in the school auditorium. The public is invited to attend this event to honor students with academic and attendance accomplishments. Cameras are welcome. For questions, call 460-5300.

Volunteer banquet next week

The Volunteer Appreciation Banquet for Older Americans, which is now in its eighth year, will be held on Thursday, May 13, in the Colby Community Building. Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m. with a dance following at about 7 p.m., said Larry Koon, organizer. Students in Colby College psychology and sociology classes will be helping with the event and there is no charge for either the dinner and dance. For information or questions, call Koon at 462-3984, ext. 341.

Volunteers wanted for new center

The Convention and Visitors Bureau is looking for volunteers to work at the new Colby Visitors Center located near Interstate 70 on Range Avenue. For those who enjoy visiting with the traveling public, this volunteer job would be perfect, said Leilani Thomas, Colby Convention and Visitors Center director. If interested, there will be a training session at the Prairie Museum of Art and History, Friday, starting at 10 a.m. The hours at the new center are flexible, she said, and questions can be directed to Thomas by calling (785) 460-7643.

National Day of Prayer

The 53rd annual National Day of Prayer will start at 12:10 p.m. Thursday. The event will be held at the Thomas County Courthouse.



Continued warm

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 50s. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph. **Thursday...**Mostly sunny. Highs around 90. Northwest winds around 10 mph shifting to the northeast 10 to 15 mph in the afternoon. **Thursday night...**Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 50s. East winds 5 to 15 mph and gusty. **Friday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 80s. North winds 5 to 10 mph. **Friday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 50s. **Saturday and Sunday...**Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Highs in the upper 80s. Lows in the mid 50s.

The numbers
Tuesday's high, 79
Low this morning, 50
Records for May 5, 96 in 1936 and 26 in 1944
Year ago today, 72 and 40
Precipitation past 24 hours, 0.00

May total, 0.06
Soil temperature, 66
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.

