



COLBY FREE PRESS

The final moments



LEFT: The graduation for Colby Community College was held Saturday at the Colby Community Building where graduates heard a speech by state Sen. Stephen Morris of Hugoton. **MIDDLE:** Colby High School had three valedictorians in the 2004 graduating class. They were (l to r): Erika



Erickson, Taylor Miller and Amanda Seemann. There were 76 students making up the Colby High School Class of 2004. **RIGHT:** Brewster High School 2004 Valedictorian Ashley Cook gave her speech during commencement ceremonies Saturday at the Brewster High School gym.



PATTY DECKER & TISHA COX /Colby Free Press

Commencement ceremony features 1996 graduate

By PATTY DECKER
Free Press Editor

It's not typical, but at this year's Colby High School commencement ceremony on Sunday at the Community Building, there were three valedictorians in the Class of 2004 and the speaker was a 1996 graduate. Erika Marie Erickson, Amanda Kaye Seemann and Taylor Cole Miller all took to the podium at the same time to deliver a message reflective of their era coming to its close and the gifts they received from the school. The message was serious, yet light-hearted in its tone. Prior to the threesome, Matthew Joseph Hull, the salutatorian, spoke briefly about the value of other students and how he wanted to congratulate everyone for their personal accomplishments.

Michael Schwanke, this year's commencement speaker and graduate of Colby High, talked about success and how Colby schools provided him the tools to go to college, get a job and give television broadcasting a try.

"It was the 'attitude of success' I was exposed to in the Colby school," he said.

He also spoke of many fellow graduates in his class and how at least one is a pharmacist, one a highway patrolman, another a teacher and countless others that have gone on to college, vocational schools or other successful endeavors.

"I mention these people not because they are exceptional, but because they are all products of Colby High School," he said.

In speaking to the parents of graduates, Schwanke said to them that as their children begin this big step in their lives, they need to be there supporting them and that support cannot be quiet.

"One of my favorite quotes about attitude is by Harry Banks," he said. The quote was: For success, attitude is equally as important as ability.

"There's a lot of wisdom in that saying and most everything we think and the way we are shaped is by our attitude," he said.

In describing attitude he brought up three points. First, attitude is a choice; second, attitude will determine a person's approach to life; and third, attitude makes people resilient.

Schwanke also wanted to remind everyone that success is not measured in dollars and cents.

"A person we should all admire and remember is Pat Tillman of the Arizona Cardinals," he said. "He believed in country over self, that evil must be faced head on, and he slams the charge of materialism right into the ground."

Schwanke said that Tillman gave up a multi-million dollar contract to serve his country and measured his success in life not in dollars, but by his love for country and family.

"When you (graduates) leave here today, continue with the 'Attitude of Success' that you have achieved during your years at Colby High School.

In addition to presentations from the valedictorians, salutatorian and speaker, the Colby High School band and choir performed.



Much warmer

Colby-Oakley-Hoxie
Tonight...Partly cloudy early then becoming mostly cloudy. A 40 percent chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the upper 40s. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph with gusts to around 35 mph.
Tuesday...Mostly cloudy in the morning then becoming partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 70s. East winds 10 to 20 mph.
Tuesday night...Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Not as cool. Lows in the upper 50s. Southeast winds 15 to 20 mph decreasing to 5 to 15 mph after midnight.
Wednesday...Partly cloudy. Much, much warmer. Highs in the lower 90s. South winds 5 to 10 mph shifting to the southwest in the afternoon. Wednesday night...Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the mid 50s.

The numbers
Sunday's high, 83
Low this morning, 42
Records for May 17, 102 in 1927 (warmest May reading on record for Colby), and 29 in 1976
Year ago today, 78 and 46
Weekend precipitation, 0.31
May total, 0.58
Soil temperature, 64

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.

Colby College confers 350 degrees on Saturday

By TISHA COX
Colby Free Press

Colby Community College conferred degrees and certificates on 350 graduates in front of a standing room only crowd at the Colby Community Building during commencement ceremonies on Saturday.

The graduation featured music by the school's concert band and choir and a commencement address by Sen. Stephen Morris of Hugoton, who represents Kansas State Senate District 39. Kenton and Sheila Krehbiel of Colby were the honorary degree recipients.

Other award recipients were Clayton Kaiser who received the Dr. Mosier Award as outstanding student of the year. Kaiser is the son of Danielle Kaiser of Colby and Carl Kaiser of Grainfield. Biology instructor Vernon Wranosky was given the Dr. Tangeman Award as outstanding faculty member.

Morris touched briefly on the current legislative session before getting into his address. He said he just wanted to assure people the state's public schools will be open this fall instead of being closed.

"That won't happen," he said.

Morris said the graduating students had reached a threshold and would eventually have to decide if their paths will take them further abroad in the world or back home someday to their rural roots.

He said most of the students were probably from rural Kansas and hopes most of them one day return to raise their families or to work and start businesses. Morris said people are rural America's greatest resource and need to be developed just as any other resource is.

"You are our best products," he said.

Morris said two examples of Kansans who went on to do great things are Dwight D. Eisenhower

and former Sen. Bob Dole who he called "two of the greatest Americans ever."

He said they both made a difference on a national and world scale but like them, one person can make a difference no matter their circumstances.

Morris went on to say that people returning to their rural roots can help enhance the quality of life in such areas and he encouraged them to do so.

had to write because graduation signals the end of a safe and constant time in the class' life and the beginning of something new and unknown.

Selby also thanked his family but extended those thanks to his teachers also, who helped prepare him for the future. He said because he was expected to do well, he did.

"It's because of them I've accomplished what I have today," Selby said.

Brewster Class of 2004 hears from former superintendent

By TISHA COX
Colby Free Press

Brewster High School's seniors said good-bye to high school during graduation ceremonies Saturday at the high school gym.

Twelve students were in the 2004 graduating class, including Quentin Bear, Jolene Bremenkamp, Jarrett Carpenter, Ashley Cook, Jena Cranston, Amber Fulwider, Martina Hernandez, Joel Selby, Chanel Siruta, Miranda Starns,

Sean Swanson and Jace Terry.

Before diplomas were handed out, the ceremony featured speaker Ward Cassidy, former superintendent at the school and speeches from Cook and Selby, who were the class valedictorian and salutatorian., respectively.

There was also a slide presentation on the students.

Cassidy talked about his experiences with each of the students and said several of them spent time in

his office when they were younger, but he added they each grew into exceptional young adults.

During his address, he said respect is something people need to learn and the best way to do that is with a parent's influence in their children's lives.

He said despite outer influences on a child, parents have the ultimate responsibility to teach them what they need to know, including respecting others. Cassidy said that

includes working to be successful, saying "please" and "thank you."

"You can't say them enough," he said. "When you respect people it will come back to you. Nobody owes you anything."

He also wished the students luck.

In her speech, Cook talked about the support she's received from her family and friends and thanked them for it.

She also said the speech she gave was one of the hardest she's ever

board room at the Administration Building. Items on the agenda include the consent agenda, reports from the principals, superintendent and curriculum director, a curriculum presentation, superintendent evaluation process, educational and out of district trips, the high school parking lot, 2004-2005 orthopedic and sports medicine agreement, 2004-2005 tentative board meeting dates and personnel matters. The meeting is open to the public.

Briefly

Amusement meeting rescheduled

The Thomas County Amusement Association meeting scheduled for tonight has been rescheduled to next Monday, May 24, at 8 p.m., in the Thomas County Office Complex.

Council meets Tuesday

The Colby City Council will hold its regular meeting Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers. Items on the agenda include approval of specs for roof replacement at community building; report on dilapidated structure at 405 W. Ash; discussion of Southwestern Bell franchise; presentation on recreation facility; variance request for sign on Methodist Church property; resolution to authorize sale of 2004 general obligation street bonds; amending zoning regulations for provisions on sexually-oriented businesses and report of public officer on environmental code at 660 N. Franklin Ave.

College board to meet

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will

meet at 5 p.m. today in the board room of the Administration Building. Items on the agenda include a vet tech/Kansas State University report, approval of contracts and agreements, software and licensing agreements, preliminary budget, auditor bids, approve an application for federal grant, capital outlay, air conditioning unit for the Cultural Arts Center, payment of claims and negotiations. The meeting is open to the public.

Oakley announces dedication

Dedication ceremonies of the birthplace of the legend of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody will be at 11 a.m. on Saturday in Oakley with the unveiling of a more than two-times life-sized bronze statue by sculptor Charlie Norton. In conjunction with the dedication is an exhibit of western art by Charlie and Pat Norton at the Fick Fossil and History Museum in Oakley.

School board to meet

The Colby School Board will meet at 7 p.m. tonight in the

Flea market donations needed

The Thomas County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council is sponsoring its annual flea market. As in years past, organizers are taking donations, which will be tax deductible. Larger or bulkier items can be picked up on request by calling the ADAC office.

This year's flea market will be held Saturday starting at 8 a.m. For other questions, or to request a pick up, call 462-6111. Donations go to benefit programs sponsored by the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council.

