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County deputy, school officials debate incident

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

A Thomas County Sheriff's deputy did not test Golden Plains High School students for alcohol during a dance Saturday because school officials did not specifically ask for "I talked to the officer and he

didn't indicate the school wanted him to come out and administer preliminary breath tests," Thomas County Undersheriff Jason Moses said this morning. Moses said, in speaking with

Deputy Brian Dirks about the incident, the issue of testing students had not come up before school officials started letting students leave

"By the time the deputy would individual at 11:59 p.m. requested have arrived at Rexford, half the kids may have been gone," Moses

"I feel the deputy handled the situation properly as it was presented to him that evening."

Golden Plains Superintendent Dr. Roger Baskerville reiterated his statement he made Monday that he called the Thomas County Sheriff's Office requesting a deputy breath test students.

Alcohol was found in a restroom during the school's annual Sweetheart Dance.

According to the Thomas County Sheriff's Office communication log Feb. 18, Baskerville called at 11:48

The dispatcher's entry states Baskerville told the sheriff's office

about the alcohol. office at the time of the call and

Baskerville requested the phone number to the county attorney. "I called the county attorney's

was not a working number," Baskerville said. Baskerville said he made three

phone calls after finding alcohol in He called the sheriff's office and

the county attorney's phone number he had been given.

The third call was made to an individual who "might be able to directly contact a deputy," he said. He declined to say a name.

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> Jason Moses, Undersheriff

a deputy call Golden Plains. That individual advised the dispatcher school officials were "contacting parents to come and pick up kids.'

Baskerville said after the individual called the law enforcement center, Dirks called the school saying he declined to administer the preliminary breath tests "because of implications with minors."

"In retrospect, Brian gave me some good advice," Baskerville

"I visited with Sheriff Mike Baughn this morning about the issues and it's still an ongoing investigation."

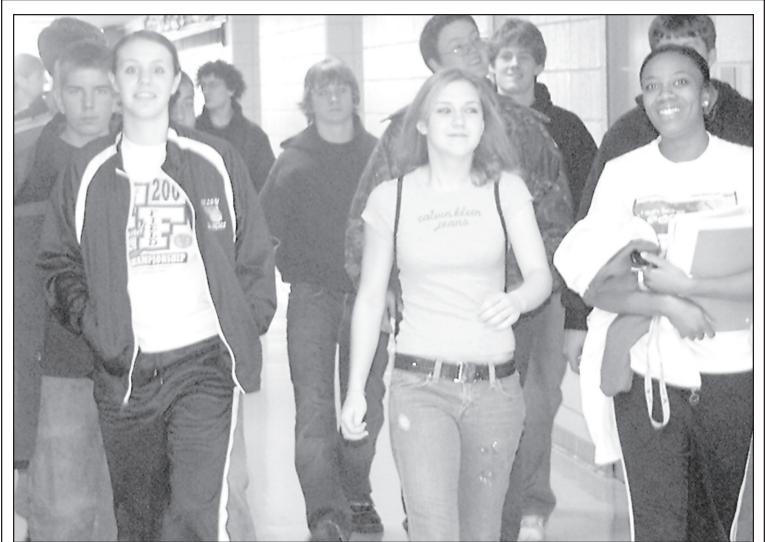
Moses said the call log does not indicate Baskerville requested a deputy to test the students for alco-

However, Moses said the she-It also states no deputy was in the riff's office "fully intends to find out who brought the alcohol to the school and where they got it."

Moses said the sheriff's office policy of leaving decisions to test number and a recording said that for alcohol use will continue to be the discretion of each deputy.

> Baskerville said he and Dirks have a good working relationship and is pleased with the advice he was given Friday.

> Baskerville on Monday received support from the school board to implement a policy administering breath tests before school dances. Plans to purchase or share a breath testing machine with a nearby school are being considered, Bas-



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group of Colby residents are researching the feasibility of a youth weekends.

Colby High School students walk to their next class Tuesday. A center for Thomas County youth to utilize after school and on

Youth have center of attention

By John Van Nostrand

Colby Free Press

There were as many ideas and thoughts about a proposed youth center in Colby as there are youth who may attend such a facility.

And about 25 people at that Monday meeting were interested in turning those ideas into a place appropriate for Thomas County youth.

Colby's Todd Stramel is spearheading the proposal, something he has wanted to do for about 15

ters before," he said. "But not like what we anticipate to build. This will be much more substantial."

Chris Shubert facilitated the discussion about what the people thought the center should be like. People agreed having a center targeted toward middle school age through college age that provides a substance-free, safe, entertaining environment.

"We need to be unified more than anything else," Shubert said. "That is what we are trying to do

here." Figuring out exact details and talked about how much spirituality amenities of such a place has just

People suggested having typical youth-oriented activities like a gymnasium, pool tables, pingpong tables, stereos, television sets, DVD players and concessions.

Opinions about the mood or personality of the center differed.

Intended for youth in age from 13 to 20, some said some certain age groups may not attend because they know another age group will be

"There is an age-related segrega-"There have been youth cention in our society," Shubert said. the history and operation of other but eventually lose interest and 'This is a rocky area.

> People discussed having certain nights of the week or month dedicated to certain age groups so each group won't have to mix with others. People also in the audience suggested having events for entire families.

> One teenage girl said it is possible youth will stay away knowing too many adults will be at the center, even though adults are needed to

> operate and supervise the center. During the discussion, people

should be involved in the center.

"Are we going to be talking to people about spiritual things," Shubert asked.

the center should take a passive approach to spirituality with the youth. Although there may be Christian-like symbols in the center, it does not mean the volunteers or employees of the center will lecture to youth about their spirituality. Some of the answers to those questions may be close by.

youth centers, like the YMCA in falls apart. McCook, Neb., Back 2 Life in Kansas City, Mo., and a new center in Norton. The Norton center opens this month. One person in the crowd volunteered to acquire information about the Norton center.

The meeting did not include talk want," he said. of where a center should be located

Although that is a priority, Stramel said knowing what is in the cen-meeting has been tentatively set ter and how it operate is important at 7 p.m. March 6 at Pioneer at this point. Stramel volunteered to Memorial Library.

write by-laws for the center and inquire about tax status.

'We need to eventually create a board," he said.

"We need to look at other cen-Those in attendance consented ters. We may need to do this in phases.'

Stramel hopes the response to Monday's meeting continues and grows as the center gets more organized.

"I'm just playing quarterback to keep it moving," he said. "I hope others will step forward. With other things, there has People at the meeting discussed been a lot excitement up front

> Stramel encouraged those who may be interested in helping with the center to do their own research.

"If you know of high school kids, please find out what they

For information about assisting with the center, contact Stramel at 460-3222. The next

Eagle wrestlers off to state

By Tracy Rogers

Colby Free Press

Colby High School wrestlers are gearing up for the state tournament this weekend at Salina.

This is the first year that 4A schools will be at a location by themselves.

The Eagles are one of four regional champions competing for the state team title. Other regional winners are Abilene, who have eight wrestlers, five of which won their weight class at regionals. Columbus also has eight competitors, four being regional champs. Baldwin is the other regional winner and they are sending seven wrestlers to Salina, four of them regional champs.

Defending state champ Clay Center will be a factor as they are sending 11 wrestlers.

Two teams Colby competed with at Russell that figure to be in the mix are Goodland and Andale. Good- from Concordia. land sends 11 wrestlers including two regional champs. Andale sends eight wrestlers, five of them having 30-4 from Columbus. won their weight classes.

round matchups are as follows:



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Colby High School Eagle wrestlers (from left to right) Kyle Withington, Taylor Finley and Daniel Gonzales listened to fellow wrestler Cole Garcia (with microphone) talk during a send-off today.

103 lbs.: Bryan Brewer (sophomore) 30-7 vs. Austin Atwood (sophomore) 23-7 from Wamego.

112: Brent Luedke (sophomore) 30-4 vs. Jared Ribelin (sophomore) vs. Aaron Quisenberry (sopho-26-7 from Royal Valley.

119: Trenton Powell (junior) 23-8 vs. Nathan Sommer (freshman) 31-11 from Prairie View.

125: Hunter Olsen (sophomore) 22-13 vs. Jake Hoesli (junior) 34-11

130: Jared Flanagin (sophomore) 26-17 vs. C.J. Napier (freshman) 11-14 vs. Ethan Leroy (senior) 29-

135: Daniel Gonzales (sopho-Colby wrestlers and their first more) 25-9 vs. Keith Shepard (senior) 27-6 from Independence.

vs. Brice Biehler (senior) 19-6 from on his third place finish from last Louisburg.

145: Taylor Finley (senior) 31-3 more) 27-7 from KC Ward.

152: Kyle Withington (senior) 27-11 vs. Joey Hambleton (sophomore) 31-6 from Labette County. 171: Tanner Kriss (freshman) 17-

15 vs. Dustin Bartlett (senior) 38-1 from Atchison. 275: Taylor Brown (sophomore)

14 from Chanute. Garcia will be attempting to repeat as a state champion, as well as 7:30 p.m. First round action begins keep his perfect record intact. at 10 a.m. Friday.

140: Cole Garcia (senior) 36-0 Finley will be looking to improve

Colby coach Mitch Beims was very appreciative of the crowd that followed the Eagles last week to

'We want an even bigger crowd this weekend in Salina. We need lots of black and orange in the stands at the Bi-Centennial Center. We are excited about 4A moving to Salina. Four mats will allow us to start later and finish much, much earlier on Friday." Beims expected Friday's wrestling to be finished by

City OKs vehicle

as a K-9 vehicle.

Colby Free Press

The Colby Police Department's K-9 officer and four-legged partner

Colby City Council approved a new vehicle Tuesday.

will get to cruise in style.

The council approved soliciting bids for a used or off-lease Chevy Tahoe or Ford Expedition to be used

New mayor Ken Bieber asked if such a vehicle was too big to haul a dog. Currently, a Ford Explorer is being used. Councilman Tim Hutfles said K-

9 officer Bobby Herren carries a lot of equipment and needs the extra "They need a vehicle that will suit

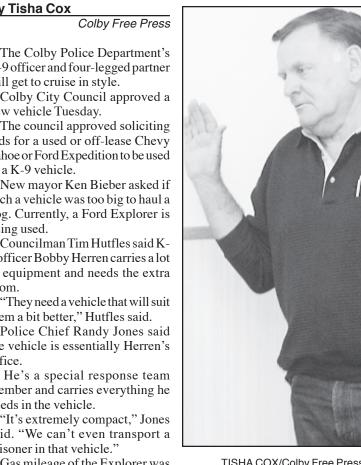
them a bit better," Hutfles said. Police Chief Randy Jones said the vehicle is essentially Herren's

He's a special response team member and carries everything he needs in the vehicle.

said. "We can't even transport a prisoner in that vehicle." Gas mileage of the Explorer was

discussed.

"The K-9 unit won't get good mileage," Jones said. He said, in the summer if the officer is working an accident the vehicle has to be left running for the air conditioner for



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press Colby City Councilman Ken

Bieber was sworn in as mayor during the council's meeting Tuesday. Bieber replaces Warren Hixson who resigned this month. Hixson is moving to Hutchinson.