



# COLBY FREE PRESS

10 pages

## Advance voting already underway in county

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Voting for the Tuesday, April 5 general election is already under way.

"People can walk in and vote (by advanced ballot) any time," said Barb Hopper who works in the Thomas County Clerk's office. She added registered voters can mark an advanced ballot during regular courthouse hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Voters have until noon Monday, April 4 to cast these ballots.

Hopper said people can also vote by mail but they must first fill out an application and return it to the courthouse.

However, voters must already be registered to take advantage of advanced balloting and the registration books are closed for the current election.

Polls on election day will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Here is a look at the upcoming election: Four seats are up for the Colby City Council. In Wards I and IV, respectively, incumbents Phil DeYoung and Mark Beringer have no opposition. Harold Sulzman, who had originally said he would be seeking the Ward IV seat has since withdrawn as a candidate.

John Bremenkamp's Ward II seat is up for grabs and Joshua Faber and Mitch Beims are running for that position. Bremenkamp is not seeking another term.

In Ward III councilman Eugene Wieland isn't running for re-election and Tim Hutfles has filed for the seat. Three members of the Colby Community College board of trustees are up for re-election — Kenton Krehbiel, Curt Stephens and Cleona Flipse. Richard Epp and Cindy Black are also in the race.

On the Colby School Board, incumbents Gerry Fulwider and Tracy Rogers are on the ballot,

along with Janice Frahm. Board member John Cranston decided against seeking another term.

Brewster school board also has a contested race. Incumbents Leisha Carpenter, Tony Horinek and Carrie Starns are facing competition from Rod Gilley, Michael Schultz and Leon Schroeder.

The Brewster city council members Ed Hutton, Dwayne Randolph and Rex Jamison are all running for re-election uncontested.

In Rexford, Golden Plains school board members Teri Brantley and Lane Purcell are on the ballot and Dennis Allison is running for the open board position. Rexford incumbent mayor Warren Dible is seeking re-election and has no opposition. Five Rexford city council members are also running for re-election unopposed. They are Dennis Allison, Vernon Vance, Michael Johnson, Nancy Dahl and Dwight Williams.

## Insurgents target Iraq forces

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — Insurgents kept up their campaign Thursday against Iraqi security forces and U.S. troops, targeting Americans with roadside bombs in the north and attacking Iraq's nascent army in the capital.

Two separate explosives planted in the streets of the northern city of Mosul detonated near U.S. patrols, according to witnesses, who said they didn't believe there were any casualties. One blast near a Mosul school caused panicked children to

pile out of the building, said Khairy Ilham, a shopkeeper who witnessed the blast. The U.S. military wasn't immediately available for comment.

In Baghdad, gunmen opened fire on a two-ton army truck transporting Iraqi soldiers in an eastern neighborhood. The truck overturned, injuring 12 troop members, police Maj. Mousa Hussein said.

As Iraq's post-election political process unfurls, the top U.N. envoy in Iraq, Ashraf Qazi, sat down with

a group of leading Sunni religious leaders. In the meeting with the Association of Muslim Scholars, Qazi "stressed the importance of ensuring that all components of Iraqi society are adequately represented in the constitutional making process.

Shiite Muslim and ethnic Kurdish parties, expected to announce within days the top leadership of their promised coalition government, say they're considering involving the Sunnis beyond the writing of Iraq's constitution.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Colby Community College Trustee Kenton Krehbiel talked about one of many issues during the meeting this. Trustee Curt Stephens, seated next to Krehbiel, who was seriously injured in an accident last summer, said he was glad to be back in attendance. This was the second meeting since his accident that Stephens was present.

## Colby College Fired employee takes case to board

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees voted to terminate the employment contracts on two people at their meeting this week.

Chuck Heinrich, a maintenance employee, and Dale Wilcox, a computer systems engineer, were both advised that their contracts with the college were terminated.

Hoping to sway the trustees prior to the vote, Wilcox asked to speak in open session and tell his side.

Don Kready, chairman of the board, while agreeing to let Wilcox talk, did caution him that no names of co-workers or negativity would be acceptable.

"This is not a hearing," Kready said, "and you are limited to five minutes."

Initially, Wilcox said that when he was asked to resign by Dr. Mikel Ary, president, on Monday, March 7, he agreed.

He told the trustees that after thinking about it that day, he decided to rescind his resignation, opting for a public forum to fight for his job. Wilcox said he was hired in June of 2003 with general responsibilities of providing technical guidance and expertise in micro-computer hardware, software

and the entire campus computer network, along with installing new hardware, software and other related tasks.

"When I was asked to resign," he said, "I didn't know why and no reason was given. I was told that either I resigned or I would be fired."

Wilcox, in a letter to the trustees, said that many issues arose in the past 18 months that he believes could have been avoided.

Some of those issues, he offered, included the virus attack at the college, which resulted in total shut down of the system on campus. In his opinion, the shut down could have been avoided and gave his reasoning. He also talked about the continuing problem with spam and his proposals to filter that out and other suggestions he made relating to improving the network or prolonged problems with the installation of a 704 computer lab.

He had other issues outlined that were either concerns he had expressed regarding the computer network or thoughts on what might have been the problem leading to his termination.

Wilcox said that the college's computer network was having problems long before he came in 2003 and while he felt it was his job to address those plaguing prob-

lems, he struggled with getting cooperation or having a teamwork effort.

"I have nothing to hide," he told the trustees. "I did know there were some problems through the grapevine, but there wasn't any conflict resolution sessions or opportunities to improve or change what I was doing."

Wilcox told the board he was sorry that it had to come to this by meeting with them.

"I felt I had to say something because without knowing why I am being terminated, it's impugned my integrity and professionalism," he said.

After listening to Wilcox, the trustees unanimously agreed to terminate his contract and provide him with a 10-day written notification. Trustee member Cleona Flipse did abstain from the vote saying she believed there was a small conflict of interest issue since Wilcox had approached her about the issue.

After the meeting, Wilcox said for all intents and purposes he and his family were "homeless," and that he was surprised the board didn't consider his plight.

"I was depending on fairness from the board," he added. "This is wrong — the whole hiring and firing is wrong."

## From troop to troop



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Members of Colby Girl Scout Troop 162 Jessica Kennedy, Ana Valdez, Audra Fleming, Kelsey Voss, Amanda Barnum and Tera Raymond filled out customs forms today to ship Girl Scout cookies to area service members stationed in Kuwait and Iraq. The scouts took part in the "Troop-to-Troop Drive." Not pictured are Megan Dougherty and Anna Taylor.

### Colby Edson Brewster



## Warming trend approaching

**Tonight...**Mostly cloudy. Isolated snow showers. Lows in the upper 20s. North winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 20 percent.  
**Friday...**Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.  
**Friday night...**Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow showers. Lows in the mid 20s. East winds 10 to 15 mph.  
**Saturday...**Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow showers in the morning. Then partly cloudy in the afternoon. Highs in the upper 40s to near 50.  
**Saturday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows near 30.  
**Sunday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s.  
**Monday...**Look for the lower 70s.

#### The numbers

Wednesday's high, 39  
Low this morning, 31  
Year ago today, 82 and 37  
Records for this date, 85 in 1907 and -2 in 1974  
Precipitation past 48 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.01  
Precipitation for month to date: 0.74  
Snowfall for month to date: 1 inch  
Soil temperature, 38

## Briefly

### Spaghetti fund raiser scheduled

The Colby Community Building will be the site of a spaghetti fund raiser on Sunday, April 3 for Kristin Rathbun, the daughter of Fred and Marvia Miller of Colby, who is battling cancer. The spaghetti lunch will begin at 11:30 a.m. and will include salad, bread and dessert in addition to spaghetti. A free will offering will be appreciated.

### Heartland School endowment banquet set

Heartland Christian School is holding its "Partners for the Future Endowment Banquet" at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 1 in the Student Union at Colby Community College. The deadline for purchasing tickets is Tuesday, March 29. Tickets may be purchased from any Heartland Christian School family or by calling the school office at 460-6419.

### Landfill closed Easter Sunday

The Thomas County landfill will be closed on Easter Sunday. It will be open regular hours, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and will re-open on Monday, March 28 for business.

### Sacred Heart School hosts open house

Sacred Heart Preschool and Kindergarten, 1150 W. 6th, Colby, will be hosting an open house for any interested families to view the school and

visit with teachers on Friday, April 1, from noon until 3 p.m. For questions, call 460-2813.

### 'Free income tax help available

For those retired and over 60 or with people with low-income, a special free service is available for filling out 1040s or uncomplicated income tax paperwork. Anyone who would like assistance on their 2004 Income Tax is asked to bring all W-2 information and other related documents to Pioneer Memorial Library, 375 W. 4th, Colby from 1 to 3 p.m. on Wednesdays only, said Alvin Volk, assisting with preparations. This service will be provided every Wednesday through April 15. For questions or other general information, call Volk at 460-2645.

### Park permits now available

The 2005 park permits are now available in the Thomas County clerk's office. The price schedule for an annual vehicle permit from January to March is \$34.50; April to September, \$44.50; and October through November, \$34.50. The permit cost for a second vehicle is \$19.50 from January to March; \$24.50 from April to September and \$17.25 from October to December. Senior citizens or disabled on first vehicles is \$17.25 from January to March; \$22.25, April to September and \$17.25 from October to December. Second vehicles for disabled or seniors would be \$9.75 from January to March; \$12.25 from April to September; and \$9.75 from October to December. For questions, call the clerk's office at 460-4500.

