



All in a day's work



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Kevin White, a kindergartner in Krysti Terrell's class at Colby Grade School, stowed his backpack Thursday morning, in preparation for the start of the new school year.

'Thanks' was theme of meeting

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Thank you's abounded at Thursday evening's Thomas County Fair Board meeting. Everyone from the board itself to the county extension agents to the rodeo royalty expressed their appreciation for all the hard work it took to put on the fair. Marie Skolout, director of the rodeo queen pageant, rodeo queen Robin Wilson, rodeo princess Candee VonLehe and junior princess Dana Wilson all thanked the board for its support of the pageant. All three said they had fun during the event, which was also a learning experience because they had to take part in events like public speaking, as well as dealing with meeting many new people.

Extension agents Joe Leibbrandt and Doug Musick gave a report on their part of fair activities. Leibbrandt said the 4-H livestock

sale went well, and moving the time back to 4 p.m. helped keep the sale from being interfered with by the start of the races.

He said the new sound system the board recently purchased also helped the auction run smoothly.

Board president Stan Strange said the fair went well, but there are a few issues the board will have to deal with before next year. One issue discussed was requiring documentation from 4-H club members saying they met meeting attendance requirements before being allowed to show at the fair.

The board approved July 1 as the deadline to receive proof that club members had attended the necessary number of meetings during the year.

Strange said there will be absolutely no exceptions to the rule, and either club leaders or club secretaries should have all the information

by that date.

Board member Nancy Rundel suggested there be non-disputable evidence, like the signatures of children witnessed by adults, but board members settled on the information from the clubs themselves.

Strange said the board is only enforcing rules already in place.

Another change for next year is open class exhibits will be moved to and shown in the 4-H Building instead of the solar building. The board approved the issue after board member Bill Shields suggested the exhibit move, which will help increase traffic at the 4-H Building and improve the appearance of the building during the fair, which isn't completely filled up with 4-H exhibits.

In other business, the board approved:

- The monthly financial report and bills.

Runaway teen located, arrested on drug charges

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

A search for a runaway teen ended with two teenagers being arrested on drug charges late Thursday evening.

Colby Police Department Detective Gary Shull said the Thomas County Sheriff's Office contacted police officers about 10:13 p.m. asking for help in finding Ismel Jose Lopez, the 17-year-old foster son of Marvin and Martin Urban, Colby.

"Officers and deputies went to 410 1/2 South Garfield where they found Lopez with Tamara Danielle Wright, 17, in a basement apartment," Shull said.

"Both Lopez and Wright were arrested, and charges of possession of marijuana, drug paraphernalia and alcohol have been recommended to the county attorney," Shull said.

Both teens were transported to the Greater Northwest Kansas Juvenile Detention Center in WaKeeney about 3:45 a.m. this morning.

Shull said on Aug. 12, Thomas County Sheriff deputies executed a search warrant at the same address

where Wright lives with a brother and half-brother, Jason Davis and Jeremy Wright.

The three are the children of Tammy Davis, formerly of Goodland, who is currently incarcerated in a Texas prison.

"One week ago we executed a search warrant at the same basement apartment looking for stolen property, which includes a firearm and drugs," Shull said.

"The search warrant was executed about 3 p.m. We didn't find the firearm, but found the holster and some drug paraphernalia and marijuana," he said.

No one was arrested in that incident, but Shull said the case has been forwarded the county attorney's office for review.

Thomas County Undersheriff Jason Moses this morning said earlier this week he arrested a Colby man and his mother.

Connie Schiltz, 41, Colby, on Friday, Aug. 5, tried to give her son chewing tobacco and a screwdriver while being detained in the Thomas County Jail.

"She tried to bring some tobacco,

which was hidden inside a radio, and a screwdriver, which was hidden inside a shirt, into the jail. The detention officer who received the property found the screwdriver," Moses said.

Schiltz was arrested for trafficking contraband inside a penal institution, a level six felony.

Eric Schiltz, 24, also of Colby, was arrested for conspiring to commit a felony, for having his mom try to bring the tobacco and screwdriver into the jail.

"I intend to seek prosecution of anyone who tries to bring contraband into the jail. The danger of the contraband to officers and inmates is why I pursue it so deeply and thoroughly," Moses said.

"If that screwdriver came in to get the tobacco out of a radio, that same screwdriver in the hands of another inmate could have meant it could have been used to injure another inmate of deputy," Moses said.

Law enforcement offices and departments in both Logan and Sheridan Counties, Hoxie and Oakley were without incident over night.

Meeting designed to shine light on Colby's positives

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

Colby will be the site of a town hall meeting from 5 to 7 p.m., Monday, at the Colby Community Building, 285 E. 5th St.

The forum, which is sponsored by the Thomas County Interagency Coalition, is partnering with many private, local, state and federal agencies to enlighten residents on what the community has to offer in providing services and solutions to families and young people.

"One of the most effective ways of raising awareness about a local community issue or solution is to hold a briefing," said Cassandra Britt, one of the coordinators of the event.

By bringing together the key stakeholders of a town, these forums ensure that the people and organizations are part of the solution, she said.

Another reason for the event is to let everyone know just what type of help is available and how to access it.

For example, Diane Stithem, with the Regional Prevention Center in Colby, offers an educational drug and alcohol program for the first-time offenders, known as *Prime For Life Under 21*.

The eight-hour program is for young people ages 13 to 20 who are

already engaged in high-risk drinking or drug use or who are in a group that is likely to begin high-risk behaviors.

Although youth can be referred to this program through the court system, prevention center, school counselors or teachers, she said, they can also be referred by their own parents.

"Last year there were 37 participants in the *Prime for Life Under 21* program," Stithem said. The number would include all nine counties covered in the prevention center area, which are Rawlins, Sheridan, Sherman, Wallace, Gove, Logan, Cheyenne, Decatur and Thomas.

Curriculum for the program is taught by prevention specialists and can be a powerful tool, she said, in helping a young person change their attitude and behavior toward alcohol and drugs.

Another example of the type of programs available in Thomas County is HeadStart, which is a comprehensive program serving low-income children and their families.

This program is designed to help families meet the financial challenges within their own community's setting. In addition, families can learn about early childhood education, health and nutrition, family involvement, and com-

munity partnerships to better serve every member of the family and each of their needs.

Specific to Thomas County, the Head Start program here currently serves 36 families within two classes. The first class is held in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Breakfast and/or lunch is provided with snacks.

The program uses "Letter People Curriculum," which exposes children to the alphabet while learning all the important preschool skills like counting, colors, shapes, and socialization.

So what is this town forum about? According to Britt and others, it's a way to showcase the vast array of services already available in Thomas County that can help families and the community to be safe, healthy and drug-free.

"Come one, come all to the first annual town hall meeting," Britt said.

Organizers are encouraging all to stop by and meet with experts ranging from those in childcare and prevention specialists to parents and policymakers. For questions about the forum, call the Regional Prevention Center at (785) 460-8177.

"Please meet, eat, greet and win door prizes from the people in your community that make good things happen," organizers said.

Budget on school board agenda

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A public hearing on the 2005-2006 Colby School district budget is on tap for Monday's school board meeting. The board will meet at 7 p.m. at the administration building, 600 W. Third.

The proposed budget is \$12,129,462, last year's budget was \$11,148,545.

District financial officer Jo DeYoung explained earlier this

month that it looks like the district will be spending a lot more money than last year, but that isn't necessarily the case. She said the way the budget is set up, money in some funds show up as spent twice but is only spent once. An example is if money was transferred from the general fund to another fund, it will show up as spent twice, which inflates the numbers.

Approval of the budget is also on the agenda.

The board will hear reports from superintendent Kirk Nielsen, principals Terrel Harrison, Robb Ross and Rocky Robbins and curriculum director Diana Wieland.

The board will also be taking a tour of district facilities.

Other agenda items are out-of-district student request; emergency substitute license requests; personnel issues, if necessary, and negotiations, also if necessary.

Meeting is open to the public.

Brewster is lone exception

Most school administrators get salary hikes

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

School administrator salaries have increased some this year compared to last year, according to figures released this week by district financial officer Jo DeYoung.

New Colby High School principal, Rocky Robbins' salary is \$64,000.

Earning the most money in the Colby School District is Kirk

Nielsen, superintendent, who will make \$86,256 this year. His salary went up \$2,103 over last year's \$84,153. Second highest in the district is Rob Ross' salary of \$67,456. He made \$65,811 last school year.

Next is district curriculum and instruction director Diana Wieland. She will get \$64,694 this year, an increase over last year's \$63,116.

New Colby High School principal, Rocky Robbins' salary is

\$64,000.

Colby Grade School principal Terrel Harrison will make \$61,047 this year, up over her salary of \$58,198 last school year.

Activities director and assistant high school principal Jeff Quenzer is making \$57,425 this year. Last year his salary was \$56,025.

School administrators at Brewster and Golden Plains wear two hats.

Brewster superintendent Sherri Edmundson is also the principal for her school. She receives \$39,517 for each position, making her total salary \$79,034, down from last year's \$79,137.

Golden Plains Superintendent Dr. Roger Baskerville is also the principal at Golden Plains Grade School in Selden and Golden Plains High School in Rexford. His total salary this year is \$75,000.

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