



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Another gift from above



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

**LEFT:** Water rushed over the sidewalk at the west end of the lake at Villa High Park this morning. The lake was out of its banks and the road at the east end of the park was impassable because of the water. **ABOVE:** Prairie Dog Creek had water in it along South Franklin Avenue today. City officials said it's not an unusual occurrence after heavy rain and storm water draining off from town also helped contribute. The flow started at the west edge of Colby and follows the creek out of town on the other side. Water levels were supposed to be back at more normal levels today.

## Colby school board terminates teacher's contract at meeting

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

The Colby School District is short one teacher after its Monday meeting.

The school board passed a resolution stating the contract of Colby High School special education teacher Randy Koons should be terminated.

Board member Stan Molstad read the resolution, which said Koons allegedly gave students access to teacher's manuals to finish assignments, gave grades that were not earned, and provided inaccurate information to the administration during an investigation into the incidents.

The resolution passed with a 7-0 vote and Koons was suspended without pay.

The rest of the board's meeting was normal business, including the approval of the budget. The board also approved the 2005-2006 school budget after a public hearing on the issue.

The budget for the year was set at \$12,129,462. The 2004-2005 budget was \$11,148,545, a difference of \$980,917.

The board also took a tour of the intermediate and primary buildings at Colby Grade School.

Superintendent Kirk Nielsen pointed out a few things on the tour including handicapped access

ramps in the auditorium and newly painted playground equipment. In the primary building, he showed the board doors purchased with money from the Thomas County attorney's special fund.

At the intermediate building, he showed a walkway outside that needs a new roof because part of it collapsed several years ago after a heavy snow.

Board member Gerry Fulwider asked why it would be necessary to do it.

Nielsen said it would keep students from dragging snow in as well as helping add some protection from the elements for them and cutting down on ice.

Nielsen also pointed out some bad concrete in the parking area between the two buildings and said they have concrete at the grade school playground that is in similar shape. He wanted if fixing playground or parking concrete could be something the board would want to talk about in the near future.

They also took a brief tour of the Thomas County Academy classrooms.

In other business the board approved:

- A two-year agreement with the district's teachers. It passed 6-1, with Molstad voting against.
- The hiring of: Rebecca Butts, grade school special education

paraprofessional; Kelly DeJansen-Draper, middle school media clerk; Melanie Hart, high school Career Center paraprofessional; Dana Inloe, accompanist; Marilyn Linman, grade school special education paraprofessional and librarian assistant; Allison Ruda, grade school special education paraprofessional; Henrietta Vollmer, high school food service and Sherry White, Thomas County Academy paraprofessional.

• Supplemental contracts for Nancy Rundel, high school debate coach; Roni Dietz, high school junior class sponsor; Greg Koenig, high school senior class sponsor; Ron Turvey, high school Technol-

ogy Student Association co-sponsor; Kelly DeJansen-Draper, middle school Kids In Charge co-sponsor; Beau Sheets, high school boys basketball C-team head coach; Jack Elliot, high school girls basketball assistant coach; Kevin Cox, eighth grade boys basketball head coach; T.J. Scholz, seventh grade girls basketball assistant coach and eighth grade boys assistant coach; Sarah Moore, seventh grade volleyball assistant coach and Courtney Mosser, eighth grade volleyball assistant coach.

• The board also went into executive session four times, twice to discuss negotiations and twice on personnel issues.

## Town hall forum starts next step

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

Attendance was small, but organizers of a new type of town hall forum held Monday in the Colby Community Building's Little Theater was considered a success, said Cassandra Britt, one of the coordinators and executive director of the Thomas County Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

The event, which brought together 20 different agencies to help adults and children with solutions to a variety of problems, was sponsored by the Thomas County Interagency Coalition.

The Monday forum was only one part of the overall drive to assist those needing help get the information.

As a follow-up, Britt said, the Colby Free Press will be inserting a special section on Wednesday, Sept. 7 throughout the city in the Country Advocate and again on Friday, Sept. 9 for those in the Colby-area newspaper coverage. The hope, she said, is that those who went to the town



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Joni Pearce with Heartland Rural Counseling looked at some of the other information available at the forum. Pearce is a marriage and family counselor.

hall event will be able to review the information through the special section and for those unable to attend, they will be privy to the same information at the forum.

"One of the most effective ways of raising awareness about a local issue or solution is to hold a briefing," Britt said, which was accomplished by the forum on Monday. The next step is to reinforce the information — which is why there will be a special section to follow.

The coalition wants to get this information out to those who need

it and the best way to do that is by reaching as many people as possible, she said.

"The goal is for everyone to know just what type of help is available and how to access it," she said. Once the special section is distributed, organizers will be ready to answer any questions or help direct those needing assistance to those agencies that can best meet their needs.

More information and contact names will appear closer to the special section dates.

## Sheriff's office seizes drugs

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

One of the Thomas County Sheriff's Office's K-9 officers made drug seizure Monday, but he didn't need his four-legged partner to make the arrest.

Sheriff Mike Baughn said Deputy Cory Wang made a stop that lead to the seizure of marijuana and the arrest of two men.

At 4:29 p.m. he pulled over Ty

Huynh Phong, 21, of Lilburn, Ga. and Tan Minh Vu of Linwood, N.J. because they kept changing lanes.

Baughn said in a release the traffic stop was made at eastbound mile post 51 on I-70. He said Wang asked if he could search the car and after receiving permission, he did search the vehicle and found 115 pounds of British Columbia-grown marijuana. It has an estimated street value of \$450,000.

The two were arrested for possession of marijuana and intent to sell. They are both being held in the Thomas County Jail, pending formal charges. Baughn said the marijuana will be held during the investigation. He said an item like marijuana is held until they get a court destruction order. Then it is transported to a central location and destroyed. In the past, it's been the Department of Corrections facility in Stockton.

## Principals report schools doing well

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

The new school year isn't even a week old and students and faculty are already in the swing of things the Colby School Board found out at its Monday meeting.

The school principals gave their first reports of the year to the board.

Colby High School principal Rocky Robbins said it's been a busy few weeks between the All-School Reunion and the beginning of school. He said many people from the reunion toured the building.

"Hopefully they liked what they saw," he said.

The first few days they did team-building exercises and the staff will be dealing with the issue of bullying.

Robbins said STUCO is also trying to get students more involved.

"Overall I think we're off to a pretty good start," he said.

Board member Stan Molstad asked why members of the Colby Police Department were so visible during the first two days of school. He said the didn't think it set a very good tone for the beginning of a new year.

Robbins said they had asked the police to be there because they thought there was going to be only one way in and out of the parking lot due to road construction. The police were asked to monitor driving and did catch a few drivers misbehaving.

He said the drivers weren't cited but their information was taken down.

Colby Middle School principal Robb Ross said his students and faculty have had a good beginning to

the year. His staff will also be working on the issue of bullying throughout the school year.

Colby Grade School principal Terrel Harrison said students have started a new math curriculum called Everyday Math.

They've sent out letters to parents about it and will be holding parent meetings about it at a later date.

Testing to assess student reading levels has also begun. Her faculty is also addressing bullying this year.

"We're off to a great start," she said. Curriculum director Diana Wieland also gave her report. She said before school started last week each faculty and staff at each building got together and developed action plans to deal with bullying. Wieland said the plans will be implemented at each school.

