



COLBY FREE PRESS

Public hearings tonight

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

The Colby City Council will decide the fate of two houses during tonight's meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers.

The first public hearing involves Joan Griggs' residence at 775 S. Lincoln and the second is owned by Jay Epard at 440 W. Plum.

If the council decides that one or the other or both are dangerous, unsafe or unfit for human use or living, said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, the council can set a reasonable time in which the repair or removal can take place.

As for "reasonable time," Armstrong said this will be addressed by Dave Starkey, the city attorney.

"Under the building code," she said, "if you take out a permit to repair a structure, the person has 180 days to complete the work."

Other agenda items include awarding a bid for the storage building at the public works site and approving an agreement with Union Pacific Railroad for sanitary sewer line crossings north of the Sunflower Plant and at the east end of the trailer courts on Fourth St.

In addition, the council will also review the heavy commercial district regulations, which would be a new commercial district allowing businesses with minimal amount of manufacturing and finishing in a commercial zone.

The council will also hear about the updated utility billing software and one of the city wells.

Consent agenda items that could be approved are the homecoming parade route on Friday, Sept. 23, which would start at Fike Park going south on Franklin Avenue to Third Street, then west on Third Street to the Colby Middle School; appointment of Armstrong as voting delegate to represent the city in the conduct and management of the affairs of the League of Kansas Municipalities; and approval of request to hold Boy Scout activity at the municipal airport on Saturday, Oct. 1. All meetings are open to the public.

Hurricane relief



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Fred Haines of Roofmasters Roofing in Colby unloaded bottled water donated by Linda Vaughn of Colby Saturday at Dillons. Haines said he and his family decided to have a drive locally to get donations and supplies needed for relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf states last week. The truck was also at Wal-Mart on Sunday. He reported this morning the truck was filled and will be headed for Slidell, La. today or tomorrow, where the supplies will be distributed as part of Convoy of Hope. He thanked the community for donating money and supplies. Haines and his wife Susan, Jake and Ashlee Haines and Julie and Robb Ross also thanked Dillon's and Wal-Mart for their involvement.

Prehistoric site located at sewer plant

ELDORADO (AP)—Archeologists have found evidence of prehistoric farmers at the proposed site of a new wastewater treatment plant.

The State Historical Society has approved the plant site for construction, but the city will use a different

location for a wetland it had planned to build nearby.

American Indian sites had been found when the wastewater treatment plant was updated in 1983, so the city arranged for a study of the area where the expansion was

planned, museum officials said.

David Hughes, an associate professor of anthropology at Wichita State University who was hired to carry out a survey, found flint rock, pottery and tools at the proposed wetlands site.

The findings indicate that the inhabitants had changed from being nomadic foragers to being sedentary farmers.

"No one in the world began using pottery until after agriculture," Hughes said.

Energizing before kick off



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Troy Quenzer and Spencer Barnes enjoyed dinner at the Colby All Sports Booster Club tailgate party Friday at Dennen Field before the Colby High School Eagles home opener. Raenette Martin, club member, said the club runs the concession stand at all home football games.

Courthouse panels won't get repainted

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Panels on the upper stories of the Thomas County Courthouse won't be getting painted this year.

The commissioners decided not to do anything with a proposal from Commercial Sign in Colby to do the work at their meeting this morning.

Chairman Ron Evans told owner Bruce Bandy they would rather try to do something to fix leaking parts of the roof instead.

Bandy said he understood.

Evans also added they rather like the appearance of the panels as they are now.

"It looks a little rustic," he said. "We're more concerned about the leaking roof."

Bandy will be getting some concrete work done on the front of the

building to repair the sidewalk. It was included in the proposal earlier this summer for repairs on the clock tower.

The commissioners also briefly discussed what they might do about skyrocketing gas prices and how it could affect the county.

Evans told County Clerk Shelly Harms to write a memo to all county departments telling them to be "prudent" with the use of county vehicles.

"We obviously didn't budget for \$3-plus gas," Evans said.

Harms also asked about an upcoming geographic information systems training seminar. She asked who they should send Evans suggested someone from County Appraiser Mary Cech's office and the Thomas County Sheriff's Office.

Max Pickerill series starts soon

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

In one week, the Max Pickerill Lecture Series will begin its 2005-06 series featuring Raymond Doswell, curator from the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum in Kansas City.

Doswell's presentation is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 13, and is entitled, "Negro Leagues Baseball: Times, Teams and Talent," said Cathy Gordon, publicity coordinator for the lecture series.

"He will talk about the independent Negro Leagues of the 1920-40s that barnstormed around the country playing anyone who would take up their challenge," she said.

Leading up to the lecture, Thomas Frank, author, will be here to discuss his best-selling book, *What's the Matter with Kansas. How the Conservatives Won the Heart of America.*, Tuesday, Oct. 11.

Frank, a native Kansan, looks at the culture wars and the populist movement taking place in Kansas, Gordon said.

Other speakers planning to speak include Governor Kathleen Sebelius, Tuesday, Oct. 18, who will

principally focus on the challenges we face regarding healthcare, she said.

Jim Wallis, speaker, author, activist, and international commentator on ethics and public life and author of *God's Politics* will be the third lecturer on Thursday, April 16.

Wallis was a founder of Sojourners - Christians for justice and peace - more than 30 years ago and continues to serve as the editor of Sojourners magazine, covering faith, politics and culture, Gordon said.

The final presentation is slated for Tuesday, May 2, and will feature a bioethicist from Arizona State University named Dr. Jason Robert. He will be discussing stem cell research, what it is, and the ethical questions and legal ramifications surrounding this topic, Gordon said.

All of the lectures will take place at the Cultural Arts Center on the campus of Colby Community College with the exception of Gov. Sebelius' lecture which will be in the afternoon, the exact time will be announced at a later date.

All lectures are free of charge to the public. For information call Gordon, Colby College, (785) 462-7237 ext. 310.

Poem comes from boy's memory

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

A Colby High School sophomore has found something positive in the face of a tragedy. Chris Brittain wrote a poem last school year about the death of a friend that is now going to be published this year in the League of American Poets' *A Treasury of American Poetry II*.

Brittain said he got bored one day in seminar last year and wrote the poem, titled "When I Was Told" which is about his reaction to the death of his friend, Jesse Nation, who died after a trampoline accident.

He said he still felt "horrible" over the tragedy and writing the poem helped ease his grief over what happened.

"It was nice to write down my feelings on paper," Brittain said.

His mother, Beth Kraft, said it was good that his self-expression helped.



C. Brittain

Brittain said he hadn't written anything like that before and later decided to submit it to the poetry league's Web site.

They found out earlier this summer it had been accepted to the anthology.

He said it was "exciting and weird" to know it's going to be published.

Kraft said they don't know when the book will come out but she's just as excited as her son. She said she's very proud of him and amazed the poem is going to be published.

The fact something positive has come from the accident, she said, could lend hope to others, and help people who have gone through similar situations.

"I hope it touches somebody else's life like it touched his," Kraft said.

Brittain was with Nation when the accident occurred, and here is the poem written for his friend:

When I Was Told

My knees started shaking my breath became quick

I fell to the floor in disbelief thinking any second I'll be sick

A million questions raced through my head

Why? How? When? I couldn't believe it how you could be dead

In shock it had been years since I cried

Now tears formed a river a best friend had died

My rage building up burning me inside

I swept through anger filled days, just along for the ride

Still I hear what we said that Friday before weekend vacation

Rest In Peace Jesse James Dean Nation.

This isn't the first time Brittain has done something that could be considered extraordinary. Kraft said four years ago, a friend was driving Brittain and two younger siblings to school when the friend had a seizure.

Brittain, who was 11-years-old at the time, took the wheel, steering the car through busy morning traffic.

Eventually, he steered the car into the parking lot at the Deep Rock Cafe, putting the car in neutral and coasting to a stop.

"There wasn't a scratch on the car or anything," Kraft said.

"He pretty much saved their lives, all of them."

