

Weather Corner



Cooler nights will continue

The forecast
Tonight...Mostly clear with a low around 45. South wind between 7 and 9 mph.
Friday...Mostly sunny with a high in the low 80s. South wind around 7 mph.
Friday night...Clear with a low in the high 40s. South southeast wind around 6 mph.
Saturday...Partly cloudy with a high near 84. South southwest wind between 3 and 7 mph.
Saturday night...Mostly clear with a low around 50.
Sunday...Mostly sunny with a high around 85.
Sunday night...Mostly clear with a low around 53.
Monday...Mostly sunny with a high in the mid 80s.

Temperatures
Wednesday's high, 63
Low this morning, 30
Records for this date, 95 in 1931, 25 in 1895
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00
September's precipitation, 0.04
Soil temperature, 69
A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

Briefly

Who do con artists target?

The Colby Senior Progress Center is hosting Bonnie Lynch, Kansas Office of the Securities Commission in Topeka, Wednesday, at 11:30 a.m. to talk about protecting "nest eggs" from con artists.

Colby's 'fly-in' Saturday

The Colby Municipal Airport is sponsoring its sixth annual open house, Saturday beginning at 6:30 a.m. at the airport.

Childbirth classes begin next week

Colby Childbirth Education will hold a four-week series of childbirth education classes. The series will begin on Thursday, Oct. 6, from 7 to 10 p.m. and will continue on Oct. 13, 20, and 27 in the health science building at Colby College.

School calendar correction

Colby Public Schools would like parents and guardians to note that there will be classes held for students on Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2006 until 12:30 p.m. Buses will run their normal routes upon the early dismissal.

Potato bar slated Oct. 12

The Senior Progress Center is planning its annual potato bar fundraising event, Wednesday, Oct. 12, from 5 to 8 p.m. at the center, 165 Fike Park, Colby.

Single group slates Friday dance

Dances are once again being held for single people in Colby with the next event planned Friday, said Carolyn Miller, one of the organizers.

Grade school plans book fair

The Colby Grade School Parent-Teacher Organization will

host a scholastic book fair on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in Room 202. Hours for the fair on Tuesday and Thursday will be from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. and on Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Book fair next week at Sacred Heart

A Scholastic Book Fair is planned during the parent-teacher conferences at Sacred Heart School on Tuesday, Oct. 4, from 5:30 to 9 p.m. and Thursday, Oct. 6, from 2 to 9 p.m.

Carwash for hurricane relief Saturday

Sacred Heart CYO youth group will be holding a car wash Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Dillon's parking lot.

Free Depression screening Monday

Heartland Rural Counseling Services will be offering free depression screenings for the 2005 National Depression Screening Day.

Oakley school district's count lower; budget same

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

Numbers speak loudly, especially when it comes to students and tax dollars.

Oakley's school district has fewer students this year, but budget figures are not much different due to state-wide weighting factors.

The state's official date to count school students was Sept. 20. With 404 students in the Oakley school system, Superintendent Bill Steiner

The numbers . . .

Enrollment figures were provided by the Logan County School district for grades K-12. Kindergarten - 24; 1st - 32; 2nd - 18; 3rd - 21; 4th - 27; 5th - 23; 6th - 27; 7th - 36; 8th - 44; 9th - 27; 10th - 41; 11th - 36 and 12th - 48.

said taxpayers will be paying a proposed budget of \$3,283,850 this school year.

That's up from last year's budget of \$3,202,813.

"We have two less students this year than last year," Steiner said.

"When calculating total dollars you

need to factor in the low correlation weighting, at-risk weighting, vocational education weighting, special education weighting and transportation weighting. Factoring all those things we will be up about \$80,000.00. That \$80,000.00 is due to the increase in funding for at-risk and special education."

education. That's up from last year's \$54,082 in at-risk money and special education's \$386,686. Last year's low enrollment and correlation weighting was figured at \$885,397, to this year's \$781,595, Steiner said.

A complete break down of how tax dollars fund the Oakley school district is on file at the district office located at 208 E. Second Street.

It is available for review during regular business hours.

Sheridan County authorities look for two men today

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

An early morning assault and robbery in Sheridan County has authorities hunting for two men.

"At approximately 5:15 to 5:20

a.m. today an aggravated assault and robbery occurred approximately 14 miles north of Hoxie," said Sheriff Jim Johnson this morning.

"The victim had stopped to help

what he thought was a stranded motorist."

Johnson said the victim, whose identity and age were not released, was taken to the Sheridan County Health Complex where he was

treated and released. According to Johnson, the suspects were driving what the victim believes to be a late 1970s gold colored Nova.

"One (suspect) was described as a white male, approximately 30

years of age, with shoulder length hair and had a mustache and goatee," Johnson said.

He said the second suspect was possibly a Hispanic male, but had no further description.

Johnson said the Kansas Highway Patrol and authorities in surrounding counties were notified of the incident and to be on the lookout for the two individuals who were last seen heading north on K23.

Former doctor, administrator are 'no shows' at hearing

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

Sheridan County Health Complex trustees ruled in the complex's favor after a former doctor and administrator didn't show up for due process hearing Monday night.

Trustees Richard Krannawitter, Ross Carder, Allen Neal, Mary Karnes, Randy Farber, Craig Cooper and Charles Schwarz, believe they gave Dr. Margarita Hammeke and her husband, Paul Hammeke, more than enough opportunity to appear for a hearing to discuss their May 31 firings.

The doctor and administrator were hired to work at Sheridan County Health Complex in late April and fired in late May. No reason is being given for either of their termination.

"It's best not to say anything," Krannawitter said.

"There's no reason I can offer," said ReChelle Kennedy, chief financial officer and person who served as interim administrator after Paul Hammeke was fired.

The board's attorney, Steve A. Schwarm, Topeka, reiterated local comments.

"Based on the possibility of pending litigation," Schwarm said, "the board is not in a position to make any public statement relating to the termination of Mr. or Dr. Hammeke."

The hearing was conducted by telephone conference and lasted less than one hour. Also present were Joe Stratton, administrator who began on Sept. 15, and Kennedy.

During the hearing, Schwarm reviewed the more than 25 unsuccessful attempts to contact the Hammekes about the due process proceedings. Attempts by phone, mail, fax and email took place between May 31 and Sept. 26. During that same timeframe, the board granted the Hammekes two extensions, neither of which were attended.

"Last night at the board meeting," Schwarm said Tuesday afternoon, "I did advise the board that not only did the Hammekes not appear, nor did anyone appear for them, they did not send any documentation for the board to ask, 'Please consider this in our absence.' What I was trying to do was provide the Hammekes any opportunity to be fair to them with the board."

Schwarm said he was notified by email on Monday that the Hammekes have new legal counsel and that neither Paul Hammeke nor Dr. Margarita Hammeke would be present last night. He said when he asked Paul Hammeke to provide information about the new attorney, he did not respond to the request.

Kennedy said Schwarm ask that

the record show the final extension of the due process hearing was at 6 p.m. on Sept. 26.

The trustees want the \$10,000 sign on bonus given to the doctor returned.

Kennedy said Krannawitter ask Schwarm what process was needed to issue notice to Dr. Hammeke she is to return the sign on bonus. It cost Sheridan County taxpayers nearly \$35,000 to bring the doctor to the complex. Besides the sign on bonus, the doctor received \$5,000 in moving expenses. The remaining \$20,000 was for recruitment fees. The cost of bringing the administrator to Hoxie was encapsulated in the doctor's costs. The board instructed Schwarm to look at the contract and respond to Krannawitter's question about the return of the sign on bonus, Kennedy said.

It cost taxpayers even more

money when the couple was fired.

Of Dr. Hammeke's contracted salary of \$162,000, she was given a severance package of \$40,500 plus health insurance. Paul Hammeke's severance package of \$17,500 came out of his \$70,000 salary.

While complex officials have a phone number for the Hammekes, they do not know where they live. While it is believed the couple has returned to Texas due to the area code on their phone number, a mailing address for them is not known. Krannawitter ask Schwarm if there was a way to find a mailing address for the Hammekes for tax purposes to which Schwarm responded "No".

A motion was made at 6:35 p.m. to enter into executive session for 5 minutes for attorney and client privilege. Those present included

Schwarm by phone, the board, Stratton, and Kennedy. The regular meeting reconvened at 6:39 p.m.

After returning to open session, Cooper made a motion to state that the Hammekes' May 31 termination letters stand as issued to and the hearing be deemed in favor of the complex. The motion passed unanimously.

Faced with a Drinking Problem? Perhaps Alcoholics Anonymous Can Help Meetings are Open to the Public City Hall Basement Mondays & Thursdays - 8:30 p.m.

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