



COLBY FREE PRESS

City Council to consider buying truck

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

The Colby City Council will consider approving a utility truck for the water department when it meets at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, in council chambers, 585 N. Franklin Ave.

The new truck bids from Tubbs & Sons Ford and Taylor Motors were opened late last week, said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong, along with two other bids from Butch's Body Shop and Van's Body and Frame, but for the utility box only.

The council is expected to review the bids and make a decision based on its vehicle committee's recommendation.

In addition, the council will also consider a request from the Thomas County Economic Development

Alliance to use city sales tax funds to complete a labor study for Colby. If the council approves the expenditure, the cost would be \$7,500.

Other agenda items include approving a quit claim deed to WWW, Inc., which owns Oasis Travel Center, involving the entrance to Horton Avenue from U.S. Highway 25.

Armstrong said that when the entrance to Oasis Travel Center was moved north to line up with Taylor Avenue, Mike Woofert, one of the owners, agreed to exchange property with the city for the required right-of-way.

"We discovered that nothing was filed on the transfer," she said. Consequently, in order to correct the problem, council is requested to approve the quit claim deed.

The council will also consider accepting an EPA grant for the water treatment plant.

For questions or to receive an agenda, call 460-4410 or stop by Colby City Hall, 585 N. Franklin Ave.



Armstrong

Judges help with immigration cases

WICHITA (AP) — Federal judges in Wichita have had to help out in New Mexico, which doesn't have enough judges to hear all of its illegal immigrations cases.

J. Thomas Marten and Monti Belot have been sitting in on federal cases in Las Cruces, N.M., to hear immigration cases, which two years ago, surpassed drugs and weapons charges as the most prosecuted crimes by the U.S. government. The judges estimate that immigration issues take up nearly half their criminal dockets.

Brent Anderson, who prosecutes immigration cases in Kansas, has also witnessed the flood of cases along the Rio Grande, while helping out at the U.S. attorney's office in El Paso, Texas.

"At the border you have to see it to believe it, and if you don't see it you don't believe it," Anderson said.

"But it's not just at the border anymore. It's now in the interior of the United States, and it's increasing."

Immigration cases have also

nearly doubled in Kansas the past three years, and continue climbing, Anderson said. He estimates half of all criminal cases in Wichita's federal courthouse include defendants who are illegal immigrants.

They're accused of illegally working in the U.S., or transporting illegal immigrants or coming back after being deported. They also face drug and weapons charges.

"That tells you there's something going on in our society," Anderson said. "And that is, law enforcement is spending half of its time investigating foreign nationals illegally in the United States. That means those resources aren't available for other things."

Chicago lawyer Taher Kameli said immigration cases probably will continue to increase in Kansas and states to the south.

A graduate of Washburn Law School, Kameli formerly worked for the Shawnee County district attorney's office in Topeka. Now, he travels across the country practicing what he calls immigration criminal defense.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Marcelo Zaponi Torres, left, and Filipe Rios Tavares, exchange students from Brazil attending Colby High School, worked on a problem during calculus class today. The two are enjoying learning about American culture, and a different school atmosphere.

Colby welcomes foreign students

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Colby High School has two new students from south of the border — way down south. Senior Filipe Rios Tavares and sophomore Marcelo Zaponi Torres are exchange students from Brazil.

Marcelo, 16, from Jose dos Campos (Jose doz Campos), said he chose to come to the United States because he likes American culture, and also wanted to improve his English.

Filipe, 17, who is from Fortaleza, also wanted to come to improve his language skills, and he said he also wanted to meet new people and see new places.

When deciding where to go for his exchange experience, he had three choices — Kansas, Ohio or Illinois.

Filipe had a more adventurous approach. He didn't have a preference for a destination, only somewhere in the United States.

"The people in the United States and Colby are very nice," Filipe said.

The two are staying with Connie and Bob Renner, but Filipe will soon be staying with a new host family.

School in the United States has been the biggest change for the two.

"The people in the United States and Colby are very nice."

Filipe Rios Tavares,
Colby High School exchange student

Filipe explained school gets out earlier in Brazil, giving students more free time in the afternoon. Students also stay in the same classroom all day long, and only have classes with students in their own grade.

Students at Colby High School change classes while the teachers stay in the same room. In Brazil, Marcelo said, the teachers are the only ones who change rooms.

"It's better the school day is longer," he said.

Many things are different, such as sports and food, but they are both enjoying the changes.

One notable difference between Brazil and the United States is sports. Not only the types, but the importance to the students and the community as a whole.

Filipe said it is good to see how important sports are, and how involved everyone gets.

Marcelo said Colby has more sports than his school in Brazil. The main sport there is soccer, known

there as football.

The sporting event people look forward to there is the World Cup.

"Everything stops in Brazil during the World Cup," Marcelo said.

People even countdown the days until the event until it arrives.

At home in Brazil, he watched a lot of sports on ESPN, and is a fan of the Red Socks, and Lakers.

Both boys have been to several Colby Eagles football games, and enjoy the sport.

Marcelo may go out for sports later in the year, but hasn't decided yet. So far, just watching American football has been good enough for Filipe.

"Football is an aggressive, dangerous sport," he said.

That is just another of the aspects of rural life they are enjoying. Just being here in a small community is a welcome change and challenge.

To experience life in a small town was also a desire of Marcelo's. His home city Jose doz Campos has a population of more than 1 million,

and is close to Sao Paulo, where he goes to school.

Filipe said it is an example of how smaller towns settled a long time ago have now grown closer because of population and expansion.

Marcelo said it is easier to perfect his English in a smaller town because people are friendly, and don't talk as fast.

Filipe also said the first few days of a mostly English-speaking population were a challenge. Portuguese is the language spoken in Brazil, and is a language that has no similarities with English, he said.

He said he can listen to someone speak Spanish and understand it, but English and Portuguese are about as far apart as two languages can get.

However, the language has gotten increasingly easier to understand.

Filipe studied English for two years before coming to the United States; Marcelo, a year and a half.

Though adjusting and relishing the chance to experience another culture, they are also looking to the future.

After high school, Marcelo would like to become an engineer. Filipe loves animals, especially horses, and wants to study to become a veterinarian.

Three-year-old assault case ends in plea agreement

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

A former Colby Community College basketball player will not stand trial in Thomas County District Court on charges of rape and aggravated sexual battery.

Andrais Thornton, 21, of Chicago, Ill., on Friday pleaded guilty to lesser charges associated with the alleged Nov. 16, 2003, assault of a then 19-year-old college student and cheerleader.

Thornton sat next to his attorney, Todd Stramel of Colby, as Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick talked about the plea agreement the state entered with Thornton.

Wyrick said a mediation process ended with Thornton agreeing to plead guilty to sexual battery, a Class A misdemeanor, instead of the felony charges. Both charges of rape and aggravated sexual battery were dismissed.

District Judge Glenn Schiffner asked Thornton to tell him in his own words what happened during the incident which brought him to court.

Parties on both sides put lives back together

A Thomas County District Court case may be closed for two people, but they now start to pick up the pieces of their lives.

Andrais Thornton of Chicago on Friday pleaded guilty to sexual battery of Audra Schilke Manley of Nebraska City, Neb. Both were Colby Community College students when an alleged Nov. 16, 2003, assault took place outside dormitories.

"Yes and no," Manley said about being both pleased and unhappy about the outcome of case.

Manley, now married and

mother of a six-day-old son, would not elaborate about Thornton's plea. She also did not talk about the formal apology Thornton read into the court record saying he was sorry for touching her.

"I hope you can forgive me and get one with your life," Thornton read.

Thornton must also try and get on with his life as a university student and basketball player back on track.

Although still formally enrolled as a student at Southeastern Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Mo., Thornton did not

take classes this semester to allow him time to prepare for his case in Colby.

Despite still being on the student roster at the university, Thornton's scholarship was pulled off the table when university officials learned he was scheduled for trial on rape charges. In May, Head Coach Scott Edgar, Assistant Coach Toby Lane and Sports Information Director Ron Hines were not willing to talk about Thornton's boot from the team and academic funding.

When contacted about the change in Thornton's case, Hines

said the university might reconsider its options, including the possibility of reinstating him.

"I'd have to talk with the coach, but I know that won't happen this year because we have a full team and there's no scholarship money available," Hines said. "That's not to say it won't happen in the future."

Believing the university may have acted prematurely and discriminated against him, Thornton has hired an attorney closer to home to represent him in a follow-up case.

Thornton to pay restitution for her psychological counseling, leaving Colby Community College without finishing the fall semester of 2003, and mileage to and from Colby for hearings. Stramel, who in May during a preliminary hearing, said the case against Thornton was "a bad case" to begin with, on Friday, argued Manley should not get all the restitution she requested.

Schiffner agreed with Wyrick's argument Manley should be compensated for the money she lost as a result of early withdrawal from classes, counseling and mileage. But he agreed with Stramel's argument Thornton should not have to pay for Manley's room and board since it was her decision to leave Colby before taking finals.

While Schiffner did not impose the \$2,500 fine against Thornton he could have, he did order him to pay restitution in the amount of \$2,738. Thornton is also required to submit blood and saliva samples to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, is not allowed to carry a firearm for five years and register as a sex offender.