



COLBY FREE PRESS

College proposes \$20 million facility

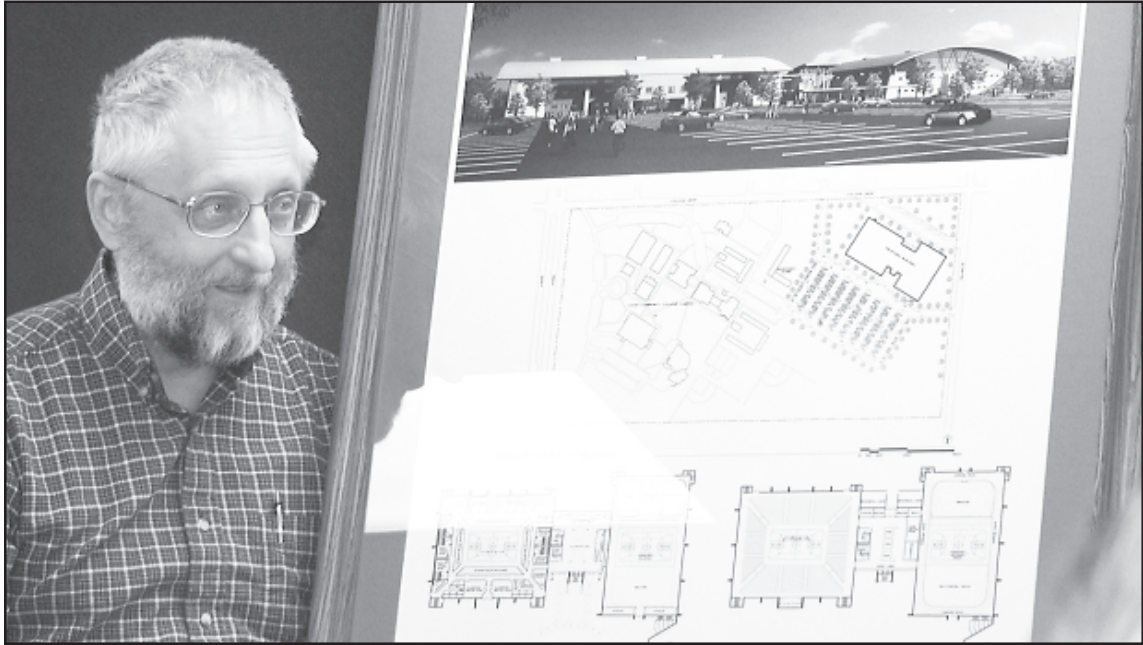
By **Patty Decker**
Free Press Editor

The future of a proposed \$20 million complex at Colby Community College unveiled at Monday's board meeting will be in the hands of Thomas County voters.

The proposed facility includes a 2,400-seat gymnasium, practice gym with seating for about 400 people, wrestling practice room, eight locker rooms, elevated walking track, free weights, machine weights, cardiovascular center, coaches' offices, all-purpose classroom, large concession area and vestibule. The location of the complex is at the corner of College Drive and Franklin Avenue and includes parking for 450 vehicles including buses.

The 115,000 square foot facility was the result of four months of study and analysis incorporating the best designs for community and college use, said college president Dr. Lynn Kreider.

"I solicited the help of Lou Hines (Western Sprinkler), Mike Woofter, (Woofter Construction); Mike



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Colby College trustee Kenton Krehbiel unveiled the proposed design for the college's wellness/activities complex Monday. The estimated cost for the complex and a 260-bed dorm is \$20 million.

Tubbs (Tubbs and Sons) and Kenton Krehbiel to serve on a committee," he said. "Those four people spent a lot of time considering the

needs of all constituencies including community members and students."

Both Kreider and Kenton Kreh-

biel, board trustee, displayed the architect's drawings to more than 25 people attending the meeting, which included city and county of-

"This is a wonderful chance to take Colby Community College and the city to the next level."

Kenton Krehbiel,
Colby College trustee

ficials and the majority of the college's coaches.

The college board unanimously voted in favor of the project and asking for voter approval for financing.

A bond issue goes to the taxpayers April 3 for \$15 million in general obligation bonds over a 20-year period. The other \$5 million will be raised in donations and grants and used for new student living centers.

For taxpayers, if approved, the estimated tax increase is \$165 a year for a home valued at \$120,000; \$45 a year increase on a quarter of dryland farmland with market value of \$110,000 and a \$91 increase on an irrigated quarter of farmland with market value of \$224,000, said

Lynn Kreider, college president.

"This is a wonderful chance to take Colby Community College and the city to the next level," said Krehbiel.

Drawings of the center are at First National Bank, Sunflower Bank, Bankwest, Peoples State Bank, Farmers and Merchants Bank, The Bank, Farm Credit of Western Kansas, Pioneer Memorial Library, Farmers and Merchants Bank & Trust in Brewster, Colby City Hall, the Colby Chamber of Commerce and Thomas Hall on the college campus.

The college's current indoor swimming pool will remain intact and plans are to enhance it in the future.

County pleased with snow work

By **Tisha Cox**
Colby Free Press

Nothing but complaints have been heard in Colby since the New Year's Day weekend snowstorm. But the Thomas County road department hasn't received as many complaints about the way it handled the storm.

"I think we heard more positive comments than bad ones," Clair Schrock, county road department supervisor, told the Thomas County commissioners at their meeting Monday.

Schrock's department racked up almost \$8,000 for bills and overtime from the snowstorm and several days following. He said that isn't the total, which could be as high as \$50,000 for the period between Dec. 29 to Friday.

That total amount will include equipment costs and overtime.

"It's an accumulation of everything," Schrock said.

One area cost more than the rest.

"Overtime was the biggest expense for the county," said commissioner Byron Sowers. "A job well done for the county road department."

Sowers was one of many farmers who helped townships removed snow from county roads. He worked for North Randall Township.

Schrock mentioned the county townships need to keep track of their storm expenses so they can be reimbursed. Schrock said he would call the township trustees to remind them. The cost for the townships is yet unknown.

Schrock said there were many car slideoffs on county roads, and people got stuck. He only knew of one accident.

Sheriff Mike Baughn said that accident happened at 8 a.m. Jan. 8, on County Road 36 between Rexford and Menlo. Brandy Ginther, 17, of Menlo, lost control of her 1999 Plymouth Neon because of icy road conditions. The car rolled into the west ditch.

The storm dumped up to 19 inches across the county.

President George W. Bush declared 44 western Kansas counties a federal disaster area Jan. 8.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius on Jan. 8 requested disaster relief to pay for damages to power lines, transformers and debris removal. Thomas County qualified for assistance from FEMA for debris removal and emergency protective measures.

In other commissioner news ... Commissioner Paul Steele said he would like to find the costs of holding a dental screening for school-age children in the county.

He explained in June, former Thomas County Health Department administrator Juanita Gatz met with representatives from the Kansas Health Foundation. Gatz found money is available from the foundation to help defray the costs of a program for children's dental service.

Merely an idea right now, Steele wants health department administrator Lisa Molstad to research its feasibility. Steele would like to involve Colby Community College,

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FILE PHOTO

The Colby High School cheerleaders worked to fire up the crowd during a past Orange and Black Classic basketball tournament. Tournament brackets can be found on pages 4 and 5.

Colby courts tournament teams

By **John Van Nostrand**
Free Press Publisher

There is probably a silver lining for everybody during Colby's 22nd annual Paul Wintz Orange and Black Classic basketball tournament.

Starting at 3 p.m. Thursday, eight boys and eight girls high school basketball teams will play to the championship game Saturday. But it is not just free throws and fouls during the three days.

"There is something for everybody," said Colby High School Athletic Director Larry Gabel.

If a school does not win the tournament, it still has a chance to win sportsmanship awards.

Players have chances to win three-point shoot outs, be named to all-academic teams, all-tournament teams and be named MVP. Schools' cheerleaders and dance teams also compete.

"It's amazing what all is offered," Gabel said.

"This will be Gabel's first Orange and Black, as this is his first year in Colby schools.

There is more to the Orange and Black than basketballs too. Organized by Colby High's Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, Sherdeill Breathett will speak at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at the Colby Community Building.

Breathett played football for the University of Oklahoma in the early 1980s.

He is the chaplain for Wichita State University women's basketball team and still keeps in touch with Sooner football.

Gabel said it is also amazing that enough teams were found to play this year.

"Most of it was done before I showed up.

Coach Bissitt found the one team

needed for the girls' bracket."

Gabel said he made several telephone calls and posts on Internet web sites in search of a team. Gable said Colby High girls coach Derek Bissitt found Kansas City Christian School who said they would play.

"I called Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado and Oklahoma," Gabel said.

"All of the ones I talked to they said it just didn't work out this year."

Gable said the timing of the Orange and Black is a challenge.

It's common for high school basketball teams to either start or be in conference play in January.

"Many schools are committed to the league they play in," he said.

But there are incentives to play in the Orange and Black.

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Council hears snowstorm report

By **Patty Decker**
Free Press Editor

Costs in the aftermath of the Dec. 29 snowstorm highlighted Tuesday's Colby City Council meeting and rumblings from the public about the condition of streets did not materialize.

"The city did the best it could in snow removal," Carolyn Armstrong, Colby city manager told the council.

"It was costly and the lumpy, bumpy streets will probably be here until April."

In her report, Armstrong said the city has one salt truck, three dump trucks, two graders, three front-end

loaders, six street employees and two mechanics.

Overtime hours for city employees totaled 630 hours or \$16,000 from Dec. 29 through Jan. 7.

Private contractors added another \$17,000 and rental of a loader from Martin Tractor Company in Colby to assist at the municipal airport increased the cost another \$5,600. Martin's loader cost \$2,850 every 40 hours.

Almost \$40,000 was spent in snow removal for that 10-day period, she said, and that doesn't include fuel or equipment costs.

"It would be difficult to calculate the dollar amount on the equipment's wear and tear at this time," Armstrong said today.

"However, in fuel, the city used 1,000 gallons of diesel and un-leaded totaling \$2,200 for snow removal.

Some employees were working

18 to 20 hours a day," she said.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has agreed to pay costs for a 48-hour period, which Armstrong said translates to \$21,000.

In addition, the federal money could even extend to another two days, but that has not yet been approved.

In choosing the time frame used for FEMA reimbursement, the plan was to go with the two days following the storm, Dec. 30-31.

"FEMA will not pay regular time, but will pay overtime costs," Armstrong said, "and both of those days were strictly overtime hours. A snowstorm of that magnitude happens about once every 10 years and the city is just not equipped to handle this," she said.

Armstrong said there is no line

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First-time donor



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Judy Wohlford, left, of American Red Cross Blood Services, checked Jen Horinek's arm for a vein during a blood drive Tuesday at the Colby Community Building. It was Horinek's first time to donate blood, and it was a family affair because her sister, Natalie Horinek, donated blood for the third time and grandmother Mildred Green was a volunteer.