



COLBY FREE PRESS

Colby leads the way to Broadway

By Jan Katz Ackerman

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From the Oasis on the Plains to the glitz and glamour of Hollywood and the big stages on Broadway, perseverance has helped three 1981 Colby High School graduates make it big in the performing arts industry.

Kathy "Kat" Likkel, Sue Anschutz and Rob Young have used their experiences at Colby High to take them into the world of television and Broadway show production.

"Right now, my husband, John Hoberg, and I are co-executive producers for the TV show 'My Name is Earl,'" Likkel said. "John and I just recently signed a deal with 20th Century Fox to continue work on 'Earl' and also begin trying to develop a show of our own for them.

"That's basically every writer's dream."

Likkel and Young met while collecting bugs for biology class at Colby High School. After graduation, they both went to Emporia State University.

"I found (Kat) very funny and bright," Young said. "We were in creative writing class together and I remember being so enamored with her short stories."

Young said Likkel's introduction to authors like John Steinbeck, Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams, as well as participating in theatre programs, is what helped him become a stage manager.

After Emporia State University, Young did a theatre internship in Florida and wound up in Chicago before making the move to Broadway. Young's resume includes being stage manager for "Phantom of the Opera", "Kiss of Spider Woman" starring Chita Rivera, "The Graduate" starring Kathleen Turner, and "Gypsy" starring Bernadette Peters.

He is currently stage manager for "Jersey Boys", which won a Tony in 2007 for best musical. He suggests anyone wanting to follow in his footsteps be diversified.

"Get the broadest education you possibly can," Young said.

"Be the broadest person you can be. Read lots of different newspapers, read lots of different writers and be inquisitive, go to a liberal arts college and make as many contacts as you can and never lose those contacts."

Son of Don and the late Goldie Young, Young said today's technology with cell phones and computers makes that easier.

"Things Kat, Sue and I didn't have," Young said.

Likkel moved to Colby during her sophomore year in high

school, having grown up in Battle Creek, Mich., the daughter of Roger Likkel and Helen Jacobsen, both who have moved from Colby.

Likkel said although she initially went to college to study acting, it was her love for writing that helped her become one. She said moving to Los Angeles placed her at the heart of the industry.

"You have to be patient," Likkel said. "More than anything, you have to work really hard to do it. Everyone hopes that they'll be the exception to the rule and hit it big right off, that someone will read their movie or their book or their television pilot and immediately buy it for a million and they'll be set. And, sure, that can happen, but very, very rarely."

Likkel said she has worked with writers who never have a "big break," but a lot of little ones that add up to a "great career."

Likkel and Young remain connected to Anschutz, daughter of Gerry and the late Richard Anschutz, of Colby.

It was Anschutz's love for music that helped her move into performing arts where she is a pianist and conductor. Her resume includes 35 Broadway musicals, including "Showboat", "Wicked", "Chicago", "Gypsy" and Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas."

"My favorite job to date was probably the revival of Leonard Bernstein's 'Wonderful Town,'" Anschutz said. "For all the shows, I play keyboards with the orchestra during various performances each week."

After Colby High School, Anschutz went on to study music and graduated from Fort Hays State University and Arizona State University.

She followed college with a three-year internship in the opera department at the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

Like Likkel and Young, Anschutz said doing what someone loves is key to being successful.

"And be open to whatever opportunities come along," Anschutz said.

"Be passionate about learning, and be willing to be frustrated. Be open to other ways of doing things, other ways of thinking and other ways of living."

An avid traveler, Anschutz's journeys have taken her to Mongolia by the way of the Trans-Siberian Railway, to Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Japan and most of western Europe and Scandinavia.

"Travel as far away as you can, as often as you can," Anschutz said. "Assume that whatever you'll be doing in 20 years you can't even imagine right now."

It's almost here!



FILE PHOTO

The Colby Bluegrass Committee is gearing up for the 13th annual "Pickin' on the Plains" Bluegrass and Folk Festival which runs from Friday through Sunday, said Susan McLemore, one of the organizers. "The festivities actually begin at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, with a free potluck and jam session at the Thomas County 4-H Fairgrounds, which is open to the public," she said. "Please bring a covered dish and table service; drinks will be provided." McLemore is encouraging all musicians who play a stringed instrument to bring it along to the potluck. All activities take place at the Thomas County Fair Grounds, just behind the Thomas County Office Complex at 350 South Range (Highway 25). More details will appear in Wednesday's edition of the Colby Free Press.

Area wheat harvest off to good start

By Carolyn Plotts

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County-wide, harvest is about half-way complete. Grain elevator operators from Norcatour to Logan all said they are at least 50 percent done.

Rod Johnson at Almena Agri-Service said about three hard days of cutting would get the bulk of what remains to be cut.

He estimated that farmers in his area were about 65 to 70 percent complete. He said, "We're having some nice wheat come in. Good

test weights, too." One of the office clerks said no one is talking about yields. She said, "We don't usually get that information until they settle up."

High Plains Co-op in Lenora may hold the record for the highest test weight.

Peggy Ninemire at the elevator said a sample came in that weighed 67.8 pounds per bushel. "We've had some awesome wheat," said Ms. Ninemire. She said weights are averaging 58 to 65 pounds.

Chyanne Hilburn at Rangeland Co-op in Logan said she thinks harvest is over half done in that

area. See said test weights have been averaging between 59 and 62 pounds.

Vernie Morris, manager at Logan Grain Company said, "By the weekend, things ought to be pretty well wound up."

"We're on the downhill side, now."

Morris said moisture content is averaging 9 to 12 percent and weights have been running between 58 and 63 pounds.

As far as yields go, he said nobody has said anything about bushels per acre.

Ag Valley Co-op's office man-

ager, Megan Tegtmeier, said she thinks harvest is about 50 percent complete. She said she has heard yield reports from 35 to 65 bushels per acre.

She said test weights have been running between 58 to 60 pounds and it's so dry that they don't have to worry about moisture.

Lacy Roe at Norcatour Grain said test weights there have been good — 59 to 63 pounds. Miss Roe said, "Harvest is over half done and wheat has been dry." Office manager Lori Roe said, "Nobody's talking about yields. I haven't heard a thing."

Kansas launches statewide diabetes program

WICHITA (AP)- A new statewide program to fight diabetes will depend in large part on convincing Kansans to take better care of themselves.

State health officials unveiled the Kansas Diabetes Plan on Friday, an effort to reduce diabetes or stop its onset in the next five years.

About 151,000 Kansas adults have been diagnosed with diabetes and another 65,000 Kansans likely have the disease and don't know it, according to the Kansas Diabetes Prevention and Control

Program. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Kansas Diabetes Advisory Council, made up of more than 40 agencies across the state, took several years to craft the five-year plan.

Its goals include increasing awareness of how to prevent and control diabetes; improving organizations' ability to address diabetes control and prevention; increasing Kansas health care workers' knowledge of standards of care and influencing public policy to support the fight against

diabetes. The plan unveiled Friday will coordinate evaluation efforts and track successes.

One of the keys is convincing people to eat better and be more active, said Rod Bremby, secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

As part of the plan, the University of Kansas School of Medicine will add 20 positions related to diabetes research during the next 10 years, said physician David Robbins, medical director with the university.

The plan also includes efforts

to promote diabetes education and awareness in minority communities.

About 37 percent of African-Americans in Kansas are obese, compared with 24 percent of Hispanics and 23 percent of white people, according to a 2007 report from the Kansas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.

Faith- and community-based organizations must be used to reach minority groups, said Kate Watson, director of the state diabetes prevention and control program.

Briefly

Council meets Tuesday

The Colby City Council will meet at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, in council chambers at City Hall. Agenda items include updates on clean up efforts at 1025 E. Fourth St. and mitigation issues on a pond located near the municipal airport. Other business items will be approval of an agreement with Citizens Medical Center on placement of paging system on the water tower; statement of enforcing officer on property violations at 110 Thompson; establishing a public hearing date; and authorization to accept sealed bids on a grader. All meetings are open to the public. For questions, call 460-4410.

College board to meet

Colby Community College will hold a board meeting at 5 p.m., Thursday, in the board room at Thomas

Hall. Agenda items include election of officers and various other representatives; resignations; personnel matters; lease agreements and other reports and discussions. All meetings are open to public.

Queen contestants sought

The Thomas County Rodeo Queen and Princess Pageant is looking for contestants for the 2008 contest. Girls ages 8-11 are eligible for the junior princess; those 12-15 for the princess and young women, 16-23 for the queen contest, said Marie Skolout, coordinator. "Contestants will be judged in horsemanship, interview, speech and modeling," she said. "A trophy saddle is awarded to the queen along with other great prizes for the princess and junior princess." This year's contest will be held Wednesday, July 23 with entries due by Saturday. For entry forms or questions, call Skolout at (785) 586-2228.

Pets ready for adoption

Colby Animal Clinic has animals ready for adoption. The goal is to find homes for animals rather than to euthanize them. For questions or minimal adoption costs, call 460-8621.

Massage program offered

Colby Community College is offering a Therapeutic Massage Program. This is a new program at the college, said Carol Johnson, program director. The course includes 30 credit hours and an eight-week externship. "Students who complete the program," she said, "will earn a certificate in therapeutic massage and will be eligible for the national certification exam. Students interested in this program or have questions, are encouraged to call Nikol Nolan, Colby College Admissions office, to make a registration

appointment or call (785) 460-5496 or e-mail: Nikol.nolan@colbycc.edu

Scholarship deadline near

The Colby Recreation and the Colby Police Departments are sponsoring the First Annual Iron Athlete Scholarship Competition, said Stacy Lee, recreation director. This event is open to the public but scholarship prizes of \$1,250, \$750, and \$500 will only be awarded to 2008 Thomas County seniors. The competition will be held at 9 a.m., Saturday, July 26 and will start at the gazebo in Fike Park. The race will begin with a bike ride of 30 miles for males and 28 miles for females, then to the pool for a 600 meter swim, and will end with a 5K run. There is no entry fee. Registration is due by Tuesday. All participants will receive t-shirts if pre-registered. For questions or to register, call 460-4440.