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District prepares for first day

By Kevin Bottrell
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The Colby School District is ramping up preparation for the first day of school on Thursday, naming crossing guards to protect new drop-off zones and crossings around the middle and grade schools.

Superintendent Terrell Harrison told the Colby School Board on Monday that she and the staff have been training new staff members and preparing the new crossings and drop-off zones.

To cover the new crossings, she asked the board to approve giving two crossing guards, Samantha Miller and Cheryl Kogler, the authority to stop traffic. Harrison said the district only needed to authorize these two, since the other crossings will be at intersections with stop lights.

The board took a tour of school facilities and got reports from each of the administrators.

High school Principal Don

Krebs said he did not have the exact enrollment numbers with him, however every class but one has more than 70 students. There are 13 new students at the high school so far this year. Krebs said he had expected 15, but most families fell through for two exchange students and they will not be able to come to Colby. The high school has lost nine students since spring, he said.

Krebs said the turnout was good for freshman orientation on Aug. 11.

“We had one mother who said this was her third freshman orientation and this was the best one she’s been to,” he said. “We took this as a compliment.”

Grade school Principal Lance Krannawitter said his school has been getting new students almost daily. As of Monday, enrollment was 339. Krannawitter said there were 348 students at this time last year, but that was down to 333 by the end of the year. He said the

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Court officer hangs up hat after 30 years

By Vera Sloan
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Jim Robinson, who has been with the court services office in Thomas County since 1972, is closing up his briefcase and will retire to Baldwin City, south of Lawrence, in September.

He said he came to Colby as a juvenile officer, and three years later became the parole and probation officer for this district with the Kansas Department of Corrections.

In 1979, Judge Keith Willoughby named him chief court service officer, a spot he holds today.

Robinson said he has seen a great deal of changes from when he started 30 years ago.

He said the probation offices now gets half of all felony cases. He said the Kansas Juvenile Authority has taken care of 95 percent of the juvenile cases in the past 10 years, but the other 5 per-

cent of the cases comes to the office in Thomas County.

As chief of court services, he has a staff of two probation officers in Goodland and one here. They handle Thomas, Sherman, Sheridan, Wallace, Logan, Cheyenne and Rawlins counties for the 15th Judicial District.

He said his office handles misdemeanors, assault and battery, drunk driving, worthless checks and theft, and can go anywhere in the 50 states to bring law breakers back. He said they usually do a pre-sentence investigation to determine a defendant’s prior criminal history.

“This is a busy office, and being on an Interstate highway has increased the numbers of criminal cases,” Robinson said.

After retirement, he said, he would like to do some yard work, and then look for a part time job

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Block party draws big crowd

Hundreds of new and returning Colby Community College students turned out for the Campus Block Party on Wednesday. Area businesses set up tables and gave out freebies and information. Mary Schmidt and Joyce Hansen (above) provided information on scholarships, including the Dane Hansen scholarship. Student organizations also set up tables at the party. Demetria Stephens (right) of Jennings and Amy Hockersmith of Gove signed up several new members for the art club. Other clubs and area organizations put on demonstrations. Janna Colson (below) and Paul Vandegriffe, both first-degree black belts, demonstrated Tae Kwon Do while giving out free passes.



Congressional candidate stops in Colby for donuts, health-care discussion

By Kevin Bottrell
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A small-town donut shop may not be a place you’d expect to see a candidate for Congress, but visitors to Daylight Donuts on Tuesday morning found candidate Jim Barnett inside, eager to shake their hand

and talk about health care.

Barnett, an internal medicine doctor from Emporia, is running for Jerry Moran’s open congressional seat. Moran is vacating the seat this year to run for the Senate.

Barnett is a former of the Emporia School Board member and state senator who ran an unsuccessful race for governor

in 2006. He won the Republican nomination but lost to Democrat Kathleen Sebelius by 18 percent of the vote.

Barnett said he is in the middle of an eight-city tour, talking to seniors in cities such as Concordia, Garden City and Hays about their health-care coverage. He said most seniors he has spoken with are happy with their coverage through Medicare

and don’t want to lose it. Many are worried that the current health-care debate in Washington will result cuts.

“What they say is: ‘Don’t change what I have,’” he said.

Barnett said he worries that government-run health care would take away people’s choices. These choices, he said, are best made at the local level by the

people directly involved in health care, such as doctors and patients. Barnett said he’s also concerned that government-run health care would dramatically increase the budget deficit.

“We expect people to live within their means,” he said. “Shouldn’t we expect

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Briefly

Seminars focus on special needs

Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas is offering a free seminar on “Special Needs Trusts,” focusing on how to provide for a person with special needs, at 3 p.m. or 6 p.m. Thursday in room 106 at the Colby Community College Student Union. The speaker will be Randy Clinkscales, an elder law and special needs attorney from Hays. Seating is limited. For information, call Raenette Martin with Developmental Services at (785) 462-3400.

Soccer signup ends Thursday

The deadline for Colby American Youth Soccer Association registration is Thursday. The program, for kids age 5 to 18, costs \$40. Adult volunteers are needed to coach and referee. Games will start on Sept. 12 and the season will run for seven weeks. For information or to register, call Emily Griffin at 460-0647.

Yearbooks available at school

Colby High School yearbooks for 2008-2009 will be available in the journalism room Thursday. Extra yearbooks may be purchased for \$50. For information, call sponsor Donna Henry at 460-5300.

Music Boosters plan picnic

The Colby Music Boosters will hold their annual potluck picnic at 5 p.m. Saturday at Fike Park. Anyone with a music student or an interest in music is welcome; bring a side dish to share, table service and lawn chairs. The group promotes and keeps the public informed about music programs in Colby schools. Drinks will be provided. For information, call Becky Schiferl at 460-0121.

Gem Lions’ hog roast next week

The Gem Lions Club will hold its annual hog roast from 5 to 8 p.m. next Wednesday at the Gem Com-

munity Building. Entertainment will feature the Jeff Wagoner Family, the Bugbee Sisters and other area entertainers. Donations will be accepted for the meal, with the proceeds used for community projects. The Lions also will be accepting used eyeglasses and hearing aids. For information, call Ken Poland at 462-7809.

School calendars offered for \$5

Colby Public Schools pocket calendars will be available at the Colby High School volleyball and football scrimmage on Friday, Aug. 28. The calendars, which cost \$5, are a fund raiser for the Colby Music Boosters. For information, call Kris Lemman at 460-6586, Elaine Bremenkamp at 462-7860 or any Colby music teacher.

Western artist’s work at museum

The work of nationally known artist Keith Avery

is on display at the Prairie Museum though the end of August. Avery’s realistic items include detailed paintings and drawings of horses and cowboy life. The exhibition is open during regular hours. Call (785) 460-4590 for information.

City picking up grass clippings

City crews continue to pick up grass clippings. Clippings must be at curbside by 8 a.m. on your regular trash day in a separate tipper can from household trash. Put clippings in the tipper loose, not in plastic bags. For questions, call the Public Works office at 460-4420.



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