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COLBY FREE PRESS

Candidates all to speak at forum here

By Kevin Bottrell

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Colby citizens will get a chance to meet the three candidates for mayor at a public forum at 7 p.m. next Thursday in the basement of the Pioneer Memorial Library, sponsored by the library and the Colby Free Press.

Library Director Melany Wilks said all three candidates who have filed for the April 5 election – Ed Collins, Dave Voss and Gary Adrian – have agreed to come to

the forum. It will last for about an hour. Light refreshments will be served.

Wilks said she hasn't worked out a final format, but she is considering having all three candidates answer two questions, and the asking each candidate two more personalized questions, with about two minutes for each answer. Each candidate will be allowed a brief introduction and a two-minute closing statement.

Wilks said the candidates will

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Paper gets three Kansas Press nods

The Colby Free Press earned one second- and two third-place awards from the Kansas Press Association in the group's annual news and advertising contests.

The contest was for stories, photos and advertising run in 2010. Awards will be presented during the association convention in April in Junction City.

The Free Press received a second-place award for a special section, "Dealing with Decline," pro-

duced by the combined staffs of the Nor'West Newspapers group. The special dealt with the causes and effects of the population decline in northwestern Kansas.

Publisher Steve Haynes edited the stories and managing editor Kevin Bottrell designed and assembled the section. The judge said the staffs did a good job reporting on the numbers.

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Leadership by example



Golden Plains student council president Avery Spresser set a good example for the student body by donating blood at the council-sponsored Red Cross blood drive at the school last week. Fifteen students, staff and community members donated in this drive March 7.

Colby couple to be named Master Farmers

Mike and Jeanene Brown of Colby are one of six couples named Kansas Master Farmers and Master Farm Homemakers for 2010 in recognition of their leadership in agriculture, environmental stewardship and service to their communities.

The Browns began farming with Jeanene's parents in 1976 and take pride in carrying on the legacy of good land management and conservation through no-till production, terraces and waterways. They enrolled their farm in the Conservation Security Program in 2005, and the following year they were awarded the Kansas Bankers Association Soil Conservation Award for Thomas County.

In 2010, Mike and Jeanene formed Solomon Creek Farms General Partnership with their son Tanner. Together they own or manage more than 5,300 acres, with about 3,000 acres in wheat, corn and grain sorghum.

Mike graduated from Kansas State University in 1971 and has since held leadership positions in several agricultural organizations. His involvement with the Kansas Wheat Commission led him on trips to Cuba and Uruguay to promote sales of American wheat.

With a degree in nursing, Jeanene has developed nursing and health education classes at Citizens Medical Center, where she is education director. She is



Mike and Jeanene Brown, seen here accepting a soil conservation award in 2006, are on their way to Junction City, where they will be named as Kansas Master Farmers.

involved in health organizations, with leadership positions in the Kansas Hospital Association.

Their children are all K-State graduates. Chanda (Cody) Hooten is in Arkansas and has two children. Cassie is assistant director of the K-State Child Development Center. Tanner (Carla) farms with his parents.

The award program, sponsored by K-State Research and Extension and Kansas Farmer magazine, dates to 1927. The couples will be honored at a banquet Friday at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Junction City. Information about the Master Farmer program or the banquet is available by calling (785) 532-5820.

Other winners are Ronald and Elaine Dunbar of Richmond in Franklin County; Jarold and Linda Hayden of Concordia in Cloud County; Arnold and Alda Hildebrand of Stafford in Stafford County; David and Pamela Reising of Russell in Russell County; and John and Phyllis Wilkey of Sterling in Rice County.

House adopts Brownback's cuts

TOPEKA (AP) – A second attempt at cutting the 2011 state budget cleared the Kansas House on Wednesday, but it was a largely futile effort since the Senate appears to have no interest in considering a bill that doesn't include the 2012 budget.

Negotiations between the chambers broke down last week as they tried to work out differences between separate spending bills. The House and governor want enough cuts to save the state about \$35 million, but the Senate is less willing to make such deep cuts.

The House version approved Wednesday would give the state about \$35 million in reserves on June 30 and includes many of the cuts both sides agreed to, such as increasing special education spending to prevent a loss of federal funds, said House Appropriations Committee Chairman Marc Rhoades.

The bill also would ratify cuts and funding shifts imposed Friday by Republican Gov. Sam Brownback. His actions, which Democrats said were legally premature, would make use of

new federal dollars to replace a cut in public schools to get the state to the break-even point in June.

"This budget bill is the same bill that the governor put out," said Rhoades, a Newton Republican. "I can't predict what the Senate will do."

He added: "Our whole attempt was not to put one over on the Senate, or the House for that matter."

But the bill likely won't be debated in the Senate, which means a budget decision is unlikely before lawmakers recess in early April for three weeks.

Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairwoman Carolyn McGinn said the Senate won't ratify the governor's actions until it works the 2012 spending bill. Senators are nearing completion of the bill, but it's unclear if the full Senate will debate the package before the April break.

"We feel like we're running out of time and that's why we've included it in the 2012 bill," said McGinn, a Sedgwick Democrat.

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Briefly

Bluegrass benefit is Saturday

A benefit dance and concert for the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass Festival from 7 to 11 p.m. Saturday at City Limits will feature Marshal Bailey and the Silver Bullets. Cost is \$10 for adults, free for children under 12. Tickets are available at the Dillon's branch of Farmers and Merchants Bank or the Colby Convention and Visitor's Bureau. For information, call 460-7643.

Brewster church to serve beef

The Brewster Community Church will have a canned-beef dinner from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday. Donations will go to the Water for Life Project, which provides clean water wells in third-world countries. For information, call (785) 694-2720 or 694-3353.

Red Cross looking for blood

The American Red Cross will hold blood drives

from noon to 6 p.m. Tuesday and 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Colby Community Building. Vegetable soup will be served both days. For information, contact coordinator Bev Vaughn at 462-3861.

Second-grade musical Tuesday

The Colby Grade School second-grade musical, postponed from March 8 due to weather, will be performed at 2:30 and 7 p.m. Tuesday. For information, call music teacher Jennifer Koel at 460-5100.

Churches offer Lenten series

Soup and Scripture, sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, will be held at noon each Wednesday through Easter at Smoffee's in downtown Colby. Speaker for next week on "Who is This Jesus?" will be W.G. Romine II, pastor of Redeeming Love Ministries of Colby. Cost is \$5, including tax. For information, call Jarrod Spencer at

(785) 443-2403 or your pastor.

School to hold open house

Heartland Christian School will have a preschool and kindergarten open house from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Friday, March 25. All parents of children who will be kindergartners next year – or age 3 or 4 and ready for preschool – are invited, along with their children. Hands-on activities in the classroom will be followed by a parent information meeting in the Heartland library. For information, call the school at 460-6419.

Group plans candidate forum

The Colby Community College Faculty Alliance will hold a candidate forum for Board of Trustees candidates at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 29, in the Cultural Arts Center on campus. Questions for the candidates may be e-mailed to bob.selby@colbycc.edu or deb.bickner@colbycc.edu.

Seniors will have potato bar

The Senior Progress Center will have a potato bar, bake sale and coin raffle fund raiser from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 31. For information, call Kaila DeBoer at 460-2901.

School plans scrapbooking day

Heartland Christian School is planning a free scrapbooking day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, April 2, in the school commons. Supplies won't be available, so buy them ahead of time. For information, or to reserve a table, call Lucy Wood at 460-2721.



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