



Faster and faster and faster



Workers from the Kansas Department of Transportation changed a speed limit sign on I-70 to the new 75 mph limit set by the Kansas Legislature. The Legislature made the change to encourage truck traffic to go through Kansas rather than detour to other states. The five-mph increase doesn't become official until Friday.

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

School board votes
for earlier graduation

By Kevin Bottrell
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At a meeting Monday, the Colby School Board decided not to hold graduation ceremonies after the end of school next year.

Graduation had originally been scheduled for May 20 with the senior's last day of school as May 16. Superintendent Terrel Harrison said this causes problems with scheduling at the Colby Community Building. The high school shares costs with Colby Community College for using the build-

ing, and it would cost a lot more to hold graduation two different weekends.

The board voted to moved graduation to May 13, with the senior's last day as May 9. Harrison said the seniors are always ready to graduate by then anyway.

In other business, the board:

- Approved several changes to the student handbook, the first to mention a new law put in place this year by the Kansas Legislature. The School Sports Head Injury Prevention Act requires the school to have a "Concussion and Head Injury Information Release

Form" for any athlete or cheerleader before they can participate. The act also requires that any athlete who suffers a concussion or head injury be barred from practicing or competing until a doctor authorizes them to return.

The board also changed the rules for the selection of valedictorians and salutatorians.

Colby High School Principal Gabel said the district had 13 valedictorians and two salutatorians this year, more than 10 percent of the graduating class, and almost

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Foundation
trying to raise
\$1 million

By Christina Beringer
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As part of its 10-year anniversary, the Thomas County Community Foundation is looking to raise \$1 million in endowments by Nov. 11.

"Simply put, it is time," said Foundation Director Melinda Olson. "I can't stress enough how great of a community we have here in Colby and throughout Thomas County.

"There are so many organizations striving to make it the best place to live and raise a family, but as we all know, government funding is becoming more and more sparse and our list of wants and needs are only getting longer. In order to meet the expectations of our public, the need to increase our giving capacity only grows stronger."

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Traffic duty



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

The traffic light at Fourth Street and Range Avenue went out Tuesday, requiring traffic direction from the Colby police.

Colby High senior becomes a student ambassador to Europe

By Vera Sloan

One thing Colby High School Senior Lacey O'Neal would like to know is who in the world nominated her for the People to People Student Ambassadors Program.

"I'd like to thank them for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity I got to experience," she said.

O'Neal, the daughter of L.J. and Karen O'Neal received a letter in the mail in October, saying she had been accepted to the student ambassador program, but had no idea how or why she was nominated. She had never heard of it before, but it caught her interest, so she and her mom drove to Dodge City – the center for western Kansas where nominees could get their information – to see what it was all about.

She had to go through an interview process first, so an interview date of Nov. 17 was set and O'Neal returned to Dodge City.

"The interview went very well," she said, "and before I left, I was told that it was a 'go!' I would be leaving in June for a goodwill tour of Switzerland, Austria, Italy and France with 40 other teenagers, most of whom were from Kan-



COURTESY PHOTO

Colby student Lacey O'Neal stood in front of a group of houses on her trip to Europe. O'Neal visited four countries with the People to People Ambassadors Program.

sas."

The People to People Ambassadors Program was founded in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who believed that direct interaction between ordinary citizens around the world could promote cultural understanding and world peace. The program is

still going strong on seven continents, and every U.S. President since Eisenhower has supported it.

O'Neal said high school students generally have a longer trip than middle school students. She left June 4 and arrived back home June 22.

Students preparing for the trip are required to study online information about the countries they will be visiting and must pass tests about each one covering everything from the country's culture, to its food, history and people. O'Neal said the online videos were good, so the tests were easy.

"Austria was the best," she said, "because the country was so well kept and well laid out. It was clean and green."

In Austria, she and a student from Wichita were allowed to stay with a family in their home for two days, where one of the daughters had been a foreign exchange student to Iowa.

"She could speak pretty good English, so she was our translator, and that was really good," O'Neal said. "The most difficult thing on the entire trip was the language barrier."

In Friesach, Austria, the official ambassador program town in that country, the group was treated to a night in a medieval castle.

"The people there were rebuilding a castle," O'Neal said. "They had been at it 30 years, and estimated it would take another 40 years to complete it.

"We got to help build it and used ancient tools, like hammers and chisels to cut stones for the castle. It took us three hours to cut two stones."

O'Neal has a good record of each day of her journey that took her to the four countries. One of the requirements for the trip was

that each student had to keep a journal of each day's activities. She said she would write each night about her experiences and what she saw.

One very vivid memory from her journal was her first time ever to eat escargot – snails.

"I watched in disgust as others slurped down the disgusting green goop," she wrote, "or sucked it up and chewed – and chewed and chewed! We all gave each other advice on how to eat it – just chew fast and swallow, most said. Mom and Dad will never believe I did this."

She said one thing she especially noticed was that most of the countries were trying to "go green." They had bicycle lanes everywhere, and it was evident they favored the "green concept."

Switzerland was an especially good experience, where she learned to make apple strudel. Strudel was the very best thing to eat, she said, because it had lots of butter. She brought the recipe home with her.

However, her favorite food for the entire trip was the croissants.

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Briefly

Kiwanis to shoot off fireworks

The Colby Kiwanis Club will begin its Fourth of July fireworks display after dark – about 10:15 p.m. – Monday from the arena at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Parking will be available in the lot east of the arena. The club is still accepting donations to help pay fireworks display. Kiwanis member Rick Dickman said contributions are appreciated, since costs go up each year. To donate, send a check to Kiwanis Club, Box 501, Colby, Kan., 67701.

Lions plan hot dog feed

The Colby High Plains Lions Club will hold its annual Fourth of July hot dog and watermelon feed at 6 p.m. Monday at the 4-H Building on the Thomas County Fairgrounds. There will be a jewelry raffle, bingo and the Colby Free Press Cointest. For information, call (785) 586-2384.

Christian school to sell fireworks

Heartland Christian School will sell fireworks from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. through Monday in the Colby Livestock Auction parking lot on Country Club Drive. Proceeds will go to the school. For information, call Ronda Myers at 462-7727 or 443-1384.

Trash crews to take Fourth off

The Colby Sanitation Department crew will take the day off for the Fourth of July. Monday's residential route will be picked up on Tuesday, July 5. Have tipper cans to the curb by 8 a.m. For information, call the Public Works Department at (785) 460-4420.

Trumpet soloist here Sunday

Trumpet soloist Scott Brookins of Colorado Springs will perform jazz, inspirational, and praise and worship music at 10:45 a.m. on Sunday at the

Colby Wesleyan Church, 320 W. Pine. Brookins has performed on television and radio, and with entertainers including Glen Campbell, the Platters, Mary Wells and George Shearing. For information, call 462-8391.

Picnic in the Park on Wednesday

Picnic in the Park begins at noon on Wednesdays at Fike Park. The entertainment for Wednesday will be the Wagoner Family. The event is sponsored by the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Colby Free Press. For information, call 460-3401.

Learn to ride a motorcycle

Colby Community College is offering a Basic Motorcycle Rider Course beginning with a classroom session from 5:45 to 9:30 p.m. next Thursday in Thomas Hall Room 410. Riding skills will be taught

from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, July 16-17, at the Colby Airport. The instructor is Mike Harlan, Motorcycle Training Specialist Inc., Wichita. Cost is \$265. To enroll, call Penny Cline at 460-5404 or email penny.cline@colbycc.edu.

Hospital holds childbirth classes

Citizens Medical Center will hold a four-week series of childbirth education classes from 7 to 10 p.m. beginning next Thursday through Thursday, July 28, at the hospital. Expectant mothers who are due to deliver before November and labor support partners are encouraged to attend. For information or to register, contact Jeanene Brown at 460-4850.

