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## School board votes down swim team

By Kevin Bottrell

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After a tense debate at Monday's meeting, the Colby School Board decided not to add a girls swim team at the high school.

The proposal on the table was to have the swim team members pay for all the costs of the sport through fund raisers, so there would be no cost to the district. The proposal was tabled at the August

meeting so that district staff could come up with an estimate of how much a team would cost.

Business Manager Jo DeYoung contacted schools in Paola, Great Bend, Newton and Ossawatome to see what their swim teams cost. Counting coaches, administrative costs, pool usage, transportation and lodging, she came up with an estimated cost of \$10,000 to \$12,000.

DeYoung said that wouldn't be the final cost. Those schools employ assistant coaches, which Colby might not need, and

she estimated a salary for those coaches based on existing salaries. She also estimated the time that Activities Director Larry Gabel would spend overseeing the team.

Board member Omar Weber said he had a problem with putting a sport at the mercy of donors.

"It's a great sport," he said, "but I think we should back away from this."

Weber said some of the decision comes down to public perception, and he has gotten negative feedback on the proposal.

Board members Angie Gaede and Susan McLemore said they had also heard comments against the proposal from school staff and the public.

Rogers, who first brought the proposal to the board's attention, said he thought the problem lies in public perception. People might not understand why the board was adding an activity at the time when so much else is being cut. However, he said, there is support for the idea of a self-funded team.

"I've had people tell me more sports

ought to be self-funded," he said.

Board member Brice Barton said the district could probably overcome the perception issue, but he agreed with Weber, saying he was nervous that someone outside the district could make a large donation and want control in return.

Weber asked what would happen to the team if the district is forced to make budget cuts again, something he sees as likely in the near future. If more sports

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## Loading and unloading



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

Grain elevators in Thomas County are starting to get busy as the fall corn harvest gets under way. Several trucks were lined up at the Hi-Plains Co-Op elevator in Colby on Wednesday, and many more can be seen rolling through town on their way to and from the fields.

## College pushing regional recruitment

By Kayla Cornett

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During their monthly meeting Monday, the college board heard a program report from Nikol Nolan, director of admissions, about what her department is doing, what they have done in the past and what they're changing.

Nolan, who used a PowerPoint presentation, started her report by defining re-

cruitment and going through some of the terminology related to recruitment, such as prospective student, inquiries, applicants and confirmed students. These terms create an enrollment "funnel" of prospective students to enrolled students. The funnel starts out wide and narrows throughout the process.

"Here at Colby Community College, our goal is to keep this as cylindrical as possible," Nolan said. "Because that means more prospects that we're actually filtering

into students."

Next, Nolan described how they recruit. There are three main ways. They attend College Planning Conferences that are held throughout the fall in Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska and Oklahoma, they make high school visits in the fall and the spring, and year-round, they have students that make campus visits. This year, they got 55.6 percent of all students that visited campus last year to become students. Last year they were at 58 percent, but they had 32 more

visits this year.

"In the end, what that says is that we convert the highest number of any college that's willing to share its numbers with us," Nolan said. "The next highest number I've ever seen is 48 percent from a counterpart."

Nolan then went through the rules that the Kansas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers created that

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## Execution renews death penalty debate

By Greg Bluestein

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Georgia's execution of Troy Davis for the murder of an off-duty police officer has done little to resolve the debate over his guilt that captured the attention of thousands worldwide, including a former president and the pope.

Davis remained defiant even after he was strapped to a gurney Wednesday night in the state's death chamber, declaring his innocence and urging the victim's family to continue searching for the truth.

"I ask my family and friends to continue to fight this fight," Davis said in his final statement.

Demonstrators wept during a candlelight vigil outside the prison. High-profile figures, including former President Jimmy Carter, said there was too much doubt surrounding Davis' conviction and that his execution called the entire death penalty system into question.

Relatives of the slain officer, Mark MacPhail, said the execution marked an end to years of le-

gal turmoil and rejected his claims of innocence.

"He's been telling himself that for 22 years. You know how it is, he can talk himself into anything," said the officer's mother, Anneliese MacPhail.

Davis had been convicted of MacPhail's 1989 killing. Prosecutors said Davis was pistol-whipping a homeless man after asking him for a beer when MacPhail, who was working as a security guard at the time, rushed over to help. Authorities said Davis had a smirk on his face when he shot the officer in a Burger King parking lot in Savannah.

Witnesses placed Davis at the crime scene and identified him as the shooter, but seven of nine key witnesses have recanted all or parts of their accounts. Some jurors have said they've changed their minds about his guilt. Others have claimed a man who was with Davis that night has told people he actually shot the officer, though state and federal judges have repeatedly ruled against him.

No gun was ever found, but prosecutors say shell casings were linked to an earlier shooting for which Davis was convicted.

## Relaxing study time



Colby Trojan basketball player Katarina Popovic made herself comfortable for an evening of studying at the college library on

Wednesday. The Croatia native was working on an anthropology essay.

CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press



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