



College may utilize community service

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The Colby Community College board of trustees gave Barry Kaaz, dean of external affairs, permission to proceed with a program that would use people sentenced to community service through the court system to augment labor on campus.

Kaaz said at Monday's board meeting that he met with Judge Schiffner, Judge Ress and Sheriff Rod Taylor to discuss this proposal. He said that Tasha Cooper, a recent custodial hire, would be organizing and monitoring this project because she has some valuable experience as a

correctional officer in Oklahoma for two or three years.

"Basically, we would have these people on campus from 7 to 11 (a.m.) each day and there'd be a variety of things that they could do, not just campus pickup and clean up," Kaaz said. "We could do weeding and we could get a little more labor involved on our landscaping here on campus."

While talking with Taylor, Kaaz said they discussed the possibility of using people in the county jail, but he wants to start by using community service personnel and then if that works out, possibly using prisoners from the jail to clean out the pool and other things from 8 p.m. to

midnight.

"I think this has a lot of positives; Judge Schiffner was very much in favor of it," Kaaz said. "It gives the judges an option as opposed to jail time or the community service and it also gives these people a way of giving back to their community and provides us with some desperately needed labor."

Kaaz then said that he would like the board's approval to move forward with the organization of this proposal.

John Gatz, legal counsel for the college, said he thought it was a good idea, but he suggested that the college be certain its liability insurance carrier understands what the situation is and make sure that

the community service personnel would be covered if they are harmed or anybody else is. Kaaz said he make sure to get that taken care of.

Kenton Kriebel, chairperson, then asked if these workers would have any contact with students, faculty or staff. Kaaz said that is not the plan since the workers would be mainly working outside.

Kaaz then mentioned that Dr. Stephen Vacik, college president, has had some experience in this type of program at East Mississippi Community College in Mayhew where Vacik was vice president.

"It did a couple things; not only did it help us with some labor issues just like

we have on this campus, but it also gave some of those folks some work experience, it gave them some responsibility," Vacik said of the program. "And a number of those folks eventually even came into either our adult education program or even took some of our regular classes."

"You may feel differently than I do, but having worked with education in prisons, I really have a heart for giving people a second chance if there is opportunity to do that and I think this can be a real benefit for us," Vacik continued. "It shows in our community as well that we're trying to reinvest in people and let them have the

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Court hears rape, profiling appeals

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A panel of three Kansas Court of Appeals judges met in Colby on Tuesday to hear oral arguments from several cases originating in Finney, Grant, Haskell and Ford counties.

Judge Stephen Hill, Senior Judge Joseph Pierron Jr., and retired judge John Bukaty convened at the Thomas County Courthouse on Tuesday. The attorneys in each case prepare briefs, which are submitted ahead of time, and the court staff prepares a memorandum of law, which details the statutes involved. Each attorney has 15 minutes to present their arguments, during which the judges often ask questions.

The judges return to Topeka after completing the docket, where they will discuss the case and issue a ruling.

Several classes from Colby High School, Goodland High School and Colby Community College attended the hearings.

The first case on the docket was State of Kansas v. Robert Lane Yost.

Heather Cessna, Yost's attorney gave a brief history of the incident. During a night of drinking, a group of people went into a bar, leaving one woman to sleep off

her intoxication in a car. When they exited the bar they found Yost on top of the woman. A fight ensued and when cops arrived, Yost threatened them as well before being taken into custody.

Yost was convicted of attempted rape, aggravated burglary, battery on a law enforcement officer, battery, three counts of obstruction, and three counts of criminal threat. He is appealing the case based on ineffective assistance of counsel and improper jury instructions and whether the cumulative errors denied Yost a fair trial.

Yost's defense at trial hinged on proving that he was so intoxicated that he could not form the intent to commit those crimes. He had testimony to the effect that he had been drinking but his trial attorney, Douglas Spencer, failed to fully investigate a report of Yost's blood alcohol level and did not enter the report into evidence. The jury asked for the information during deliberation, but the judge denied it since the report hadn't been entered.

Spencer filed the appeal against himself, acknowledging that he had made the mistake.

Hill said that for this argument to work, the appellate attorney would have to convince the court that the outcome of the trial would

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Gadhafi reportedly killed by rebel forces

SIRTE, Libya (AP) - Moammar Gadhafi, who ruled Libya with a dictatorial grip for 42 years until he was ousted by his own people in an uprising that turned into a bloody civil war, was killed Thursday when revolutionary forces overwhelmed his hometown, Sirte, the last major bastion of resistance two months after his regime fell.

The 69-year-old Gadhafi is the first leader to be killed in the Arab Spring wave of popular uprisings that swept the Middle East, demanding the end of autocratic rulers and the establishment of greater democracy.

"We have been waiting for this

moment for a long time. Moammar Gadhafi has been killed," Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril told a news conference in the capital Tripoli.

Initial reports from fighters said Gadhafi had been barricaded in with his heavily armed loyalists in the last few buildings they held in his Mediterranean coastal hometown of Sirte, furiously battling with revolutionary fighters closing in on them Thursday. At one point, a convoy tried to flee the area and was blasted by NATO airstrikes, but Jibril specified Gadhafi was not killed by the strike. Most accounts agreed Gadhafi was shot to death by fighters.

Equipment on display for trail area

The Walking Trail Committee had a good turnout Tuesday when it put on display possible exercise equipment for the trail. Gordon Block (above) with Sterling West brought a trailer with several pieces of exercise equipment. Denise Kirk with Grounds for Play (right) showed off pictures of her company's equipment, which includes musical instruments, hollows logs and boulders to climb on. The committee had each person fill out a survey with which equipment they liked.



Former runaway to speak about New Life for Girls program

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"You know you're from Colby - if" - is a phrase that's been circulating Facebook pages for several months. See if you can finish the sentence with "if you remember New Life For Girls."

New Life For Girls was a program for young troubled teenage girls back in the 1970s where they could live in a home atmosphere with a Christian influence to escape dire circumstances that came from both physical and emotional abuse. Some were runaways; many faced what they saw as hopeless situations in their home surroundings. Many were facing a gutter-bound future.

County began with Sondra and the late Bill Barnett of Rexford as directors. It was a means to help these young victims of dire circumstances to gain a new outlook on life through a Christian lifestyle that introduced them to a faith in God and gave them a sense of self worth.

Cheri Thrift, Baltimore, Md., came to the northwest Kansas facility in 1977 as a 17-year-old runaway. After spending four months in the Barnett's care, she transferred to a sister facility in Pennsylvania to complete her rehabilitation. It took nearly a year to finish the program she had started.

"I was a runaway teenager who had experienced a really tough life growing up," she said. "My brother had been killed so I began living on the streets of Baltimore. I was spotted by a pastor who saw through

this angry young girl and who believed I was meant to have a better life."

A changed Cheri (Thrift) Meadowlark will return to Colby on Sunday to share a bit of the past 34 years of her life with the public. She will speak at the College Drive Assembly of God church at 10:15 a.m. Sunday, the Brewster Community church at 6:30 p.m., the Victory House for Girls in Brewster at 6 p.m. Monday, and the Assembly of God church again at 7 p.m. Tuesday.

"I thought there was no way I was going to Kansas," she said. "I didn't know it was a Christian place, but when I was told I could ride horses, I was ready to go - I didn't want to end up like my brother."

She said she returned to Colby to serve as a member of the staff at New Life For Girls, whose name later changed to Light-

house Life for Girls.

Meadowlark said she eventually enrolled as a music major at Colby Community College, but became impatient and discouraged with having to learn music theory and history, so instead of staying in school she followed her passion for singing. She joined singing groups and went by bus from engagement to engagement to fulfill her joy of singing.

After more struggles, she said made the decision to leave that lifestyle behind and try her hand at going to school. The decision was a good one. She earned a degree in psychology and currently serves as a staff member of the Social Science department with the University of Phoenix. She is a published author, entrepreneur, transformational trainer and coach. She is president of Bridge Building Youth and

Family Services which provides services for at risk youth and their families.

Meadowlark works with Youth With A Mission, and has also taken young people who have left the gang lifestyle to Africa to help develop their leadership skills.

She uses animal-assisted and equine-assisted therapy, low ropes courses and experiential exercises with children and adults who have a history of domestic violence and sexual abuse to help them find their voice, the strength to leave their past abuse behind and to step into the kind of a future they desire and deserve.

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