



Old bond debt done; new eagle flies

By Sam Dieter
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Colby High School students and staff celebrated paying off the bonds used to build the school Wednesday morning with the help of a new addition to the grounds.

An iron statue of an eagle, about 20 feet tall, now stands at the front entrance. School district officials dedicated the statue, then took a tour of the building to see other improvements.

"It's a bit of an intimidation factor to see this at other schools," said Jeff Wallingford, high school principal, referring to similar items elsewhere.

Students took a break from classes that morning to get their floats ready for the homecoming parade. As they were at work in the parking lot, a group of perhaps 50 people followed the administrators to the entrance on the east side of the school.

"You'd be amazed how many visiting teams, visiting spectators come here, and they come in the front entrance," said Activities Director Larry Gabel.

The Booster Club had an awning set up over the entrance and a sign marking the gym on the side of the school. Eight members, including Mayor Gary Adrian; Tracy Rogers, vice president of the Colby School Board; and Lana Johnson, got certificates of appreciation.

Johnson said she plans to get

another iron eagle, 6 feet by 10 feet, to hang on the wall by the gym. She said later she goes to Colorado and sells ironwork. A man she knows there happened to have made a statue of an eagle, so she bought it for the high school. While she planned for how to mount it, she said, it sat on her trailer for about six months.

In the cafeteria, Superintendent Terrel Harrison told the group about the history of the high school. She said people decided Colby needed a new one about 25 years ago. A bond issue went to the voters, but failed. A newer, downsized plan for a high school passed the second time.

The school was to cost \$6,552,000. One group raised about \$185,000 to expand the auditorium, one of the areas that had been downsized.

Harrison asked counselor and career director Joni Clark-Leiker explain how she organized the transfer of everything to the new high school. She said she, the staff, students and families moved everything in two days, on Feb 29 and March 1, 1996. Clark-Leiker, who said she is from a military family, said she had a box with the tools needed for the move, including tape and snacks.

Joey Nickols, the high school band teacher, was a student when the move was made, and got the chance to talk about his experiences.

"This town, I think, had a dry spell of boxes because of that," he said.

Another teacher, Nancy Rundedel, spoke, along with district Business Manager Jo DeYoung and her husband Phil, the district technology director.

Bill Miller, a school board member at the time, took the floor for a short time with two fellow board members, Sheila Frahm and Judy Shull. Miller showed a flier used to advertise the bond issue the first time.

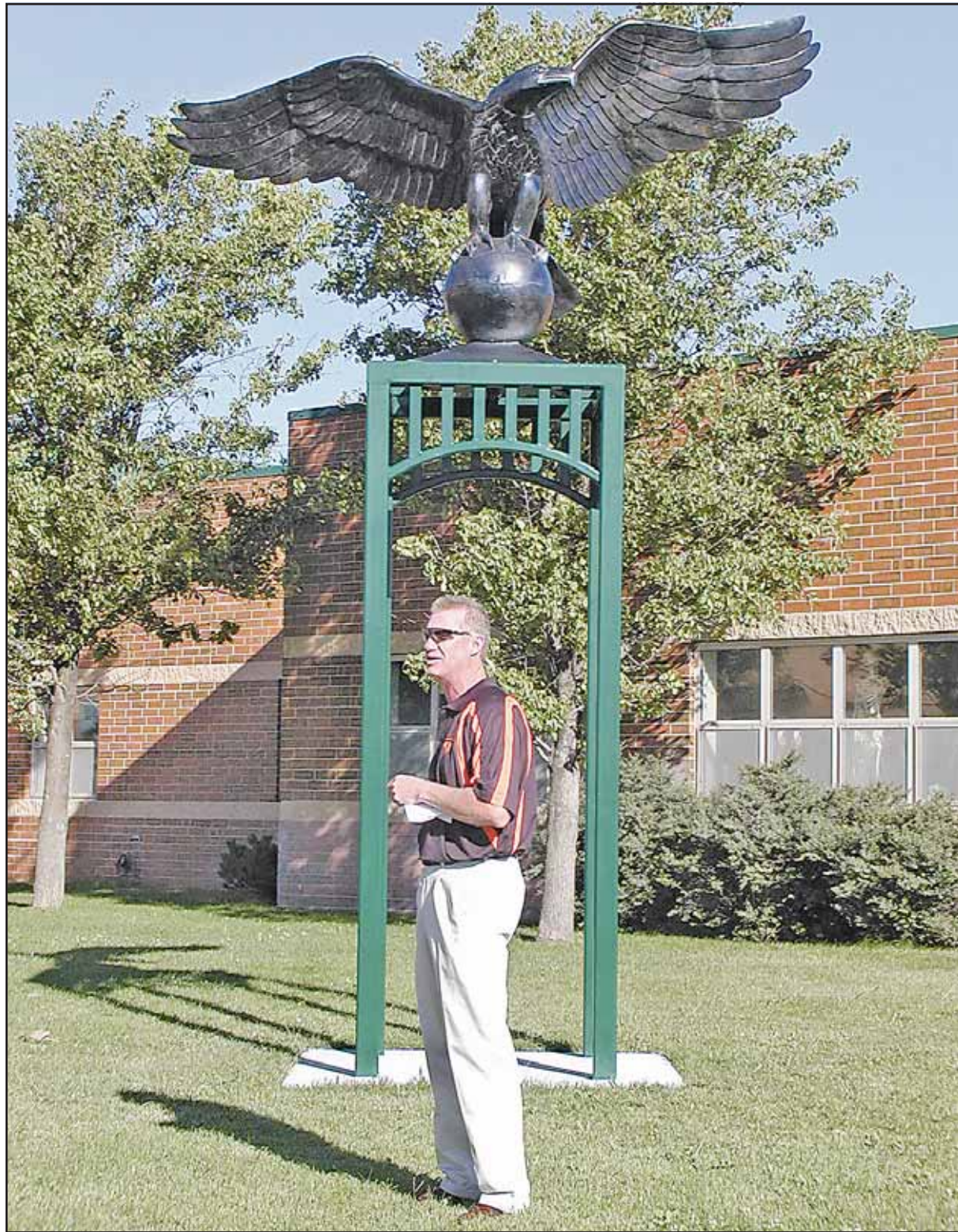
"We downsized the school, and we made this flier bigger," he said, showing the crowd the flier the district used the second time.

It was bright yellow and had fewer, bigger words.

Finally, Janice Frahm, current school board president, showed the group an original bond with "Paid in Full" written prominently across the front in red. She said the town should be proud of the school and challenged the students to be the sort of person who would organize such a project.

Wallingford introduced the students, National Honor Society and student council members, who were sitting in the audience dressed like teachers as part of the school's spirit week. They showed some of the adults around as others ate snacks that had been set up in the cafeteria and socialized.

The sign was donated by Johnson, the Colby High School class of 1992, F&M Bank, in memory of Teryn Haremza, Road Runner Manufacturing, the Wiedeman Beautification Fund and Woofter Construction and Irrigation.



HEATHER ALWIN and SAM DIETER Colby Free Press
Colby High School Principal Jeff Wallingford (above), stood in front of the iron eagle that now sits in front of the school Wednesday as he spoke during the official dedication for the statue. Janice Frahm, the president of the school board used the dedication as a chance to show off the bond on the high school (left), which was recently paid off. Members of the Booster Club at the dedication (far left) were given a certificate of appreciation for an awning over the entrance to the school gym.

Purple Heart carrier goes through Colby

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A Missouri woman on her way to Nevada to give a World War II soldier's medal to his daughter stopped briefly in Colby last week to tell her story.

When she was cleaning out her house, Donna Gregory of St. Louis said, she found a box of old papers belonging to a man she had never met, John F. Eddington a soldier who had been killed in Italy on June 27, 1944, just months after his daughter Peggy was born. The papers included family photos and everyday documents, from his high school diploma to the show bill for a play he was in. The

box also held a Purple Heart medal, given to soldiers who are wounded in action, Gregory said, and lots of letters.

"One of the letters that I had was written to his daughter when she was 3 weeks old," she added.

Gregory said she found the box 14 years ago. Last Tuesday, she was sitting in the dining room at El Dos de Oros in Colby with members of the

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AUTUMN ARASMITH
Donna Gregory got ready to ride to Carson City Wednesday morning to give a World War II soldier's Purple Heart, letters and papers to his daughter. Patriot Guard riders took her to give the items to Peggy Eddington-Smith, whose father John was killed in Italy in 1944.

