



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

Property discussion gets hot

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

The possibility of selling some school district property south of the elementary school was finally laid to rest by the Colby School Board at their Monday meeting.

The board has been discussing the sale of partial lots bordering the south side of the playground, along with a lot north of the Colby Medical and Surgical Clinic on Range and a lot between Grant and Garfield Streets, just south of the elementary school.

Board member Bill Miller raised some new objections as discussion opened. "I talked to Greg Swob (city building official) and he said we needed a 32-foot setback for a new building," he said. "That means giving up this 32 feet is like giving up 64 feet."

The comments prompted a sharp exchange between Miller and board member Gary Walker.

"God forbid you give anything back to the patrons," said Walker.

Both Miller and board member Gerry Fulwider said they didn't follow Walker's logic, to which he responded, "I'm not surprised."

Superintendent Kirk Nielsen said he saw Miller's logic in not wanting to sell and reduce the value of the lots.

"What about Hildyard's (Dr. Victor Hildyard)?" asked board member Wilburn Holloway, referring to the lot north of the clinic.

"I have never wanted to sell that property," said Nielsen.

Nielsen said he was not opposed to the sale of other lots in previous meetings, but had objected to the sale of the lot north of the clinic because of bus traffic.

"I have a little problem with a couple of the bids," said board president Stan Molstad.

Marvena Chance, one of the property owners affected, asked to address the board. "I don't feel like you are being fair to us," she said. "We didn't open this can of worms and we did everything we were supposed to do."

Molstad agreed, "That's the way it was handled, you're right."

Holloway said, "Let's just drop it, we've spent too much time."

The board agreed to drop the matter by consensus.

In other business, the board:

- Approved the letting of bids for new Excursion or Suburban type vehicles, to be bought at the end of the year.

- Approved the sale of a 1981 Chevy and 1985 International bus, along with a 1971 MCI and a "1949-50" International cub tractor.

- Approved the use of district vehicles for driver's education. Wade said it saved about \$3,000 last year and the kids liked driving the Suburbans.

- Approved Nielsen's request to establish a committee to study the district's health care insurance costs.

- Accepted the resignations of Mary Schackelton, accompanist; Josh McCraghen, high school special education paraprofessional; and Dalene Gilbert, custodian.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Colby High School journalism teacher, Donna Henry, gave Kali Strickler, senior, a hug during the awards ceremony after recognizing her for her hard work as business editor of the school newspaper.

Thousands of dollars awarded to students during ceremony

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

More than 150 Colby High School students were honored during the annual awards ceremony held Tuesday night in the school's auditorium.

Awards ranged from perfect attendance and academic letter winners to thousands of dollars given in scholarships and grants, according to Joni Clark-Leiker, high school counselor.

The following students, in alphabetical order, were this year's recipients:

- Candace Albers received the Colby College Trojan grant; CCVEP (Combined Cooperative Vocational Education Program) and OJT (On-the-job Training) — A's all year; and perfect attendance.

- Courtney Albers received an academic letter from Colby High School and recognition for all A's in Spanish II.

- Melissa Alderson received the Vernon Englehart Memorial Scholarship from Northwest Kansas Technical College in Goodland and a Hays City silver award from Fort Hays State University.

- Ashley Amos received an academic letter.

- Kristin Arensdorf was honored for outstanding achievement in math assessment.

- Lacey Atkins was recognized as a Kansas Honor Scholar from Kansas University and for receiving all A's in CCVEP and OJT.

- Zach Baird received an academic letter and recognition for being named an excellent student in Spanish I.

- Lynn Bandy received an art scholarship from Colby Community College.

- Rocky Baalman was named the

English II Student of the Year at the high school.

- Corene Barnett received an instrumental/vocal music scholarship and Thomas County Tuition Grant for Colby College.

- Ross Barnett was awarded a Thomas County Tuition Grant from Colby College.

- Christopher Barnum was recognized for perfect attendance.

- Sarah Berens received a Thomas County Tuition Grant and vocal music scholarship from Colby College and recognition for her participation in forensics.

- Collin Bielser received an academic letter and recognition for participating in scholar's bowl.

- Carrie Bixenman was awarded an academic letter; certificate for all A's in CCVEP and OJT; and a bronze academic award from Fort Hays State University.

- Casey Boeger received an academic letter and recognition as an excellent student in Spanish I.

- Jessie Brenn was recognized for being selected a Girls' State representative.

- Shalin Brogan received an academic letter; recognition as an outstanding student in Spanish I; and honored for being in the top 10 percent of the Future Careers class.

- Zach Brown received an academic letter; scholarship and athletic award from the U.S. Army; Garden City Community College athletic scholarship that will pay books and tuition; Beta Sigma Phi Scholarship; Thomas County Tuition Grant from Colby Community College; and perfect attendance.

- Leah Burgess received a athletic scholarship from the U.S. Army Reserve and vocal music scholarship

from Colby College.

- Gina Carmen was recognized for perfect attendance.

- Shane Carter was recognized for outstanding achievement on the writing and reading assessment tests and honored as the outstanding freshman band student at Colby High School.

- Maureen Cassidy was honored for outstanding achievement on the reading assessment test; awarded a Hays City silver award from Fort Hays State University; and recognized for her participation this year in forensics.

- Shana Chandler received an academic letter; Thomas County Tuition Grant from Colby College; National English Merit Award and the National History and Government Award all from the U.S. Achievement Academy.

- James Coplin was recognized as the outstanding forensic student at Colby High School this year, receiving also a forensic letter.

- Jessica Coplin received a forensic letter from Colby High School.

- Jessica Cox received a silver academic award from Fort Hays State; Thomas County Tuition Grant from Colby College; and two scholarships from Central Missouri State University to include a Department of Graphics Achievement Scholarship and High School Recognition Award Scholarship; and the honor of being Miss TSA (Technology Student Association).

- Joe Cox was recognized as an excellent Spanish II student and received an academic letter.

- Josh Cox was recognized for his participation this year in forensics at the high school.

Editor's note: More students and awards will appear in Thursday's edition.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

ABOVE: Colby High School seniors Matt Murray and Katie Rupp were among many students receiving academic letters. BELOW: Kathy Elliott was among many parents, relatives and friends who attended the ceremony. Jack (not pictured) and Kathy Elliott's son, Clayton, received 17 awards, scholarships and honors. Pictured behind Elliott is Joey Dinkel, senior, who was also honored during the event.



State regulators to investigate Western Resource restructuring

TOPEKA (AP) — State regulators have announced that they will investigate a planned corporate restructuring of Western Resources Inc. to determine whether the changes would hurt electric service.

The Kansas Corporation Commission issued its nine-page order Tuesday, the day before Western stockholders were eligible for rights to shares in

a subsidiary, Westar Industries Inc.

Western provides electricity to about 636,000 customers in eastern Kansas through its KPL and KGE subsidiaries, but it also has other interests in unregulated industries, most notably monitored security services. Those non-regulated interests are held by Westar.

Western's goal is to separate its utility operations from Westar, making

them separate companies. In November, Western announced plans to sell KPL and KGE to Public Service Company of New Mexico, known as PNM.

"The commission has some concerns and questions," KCC spokeswoman Rosemary Foreman said.

Critics, led by the Citizens' Utility Ratepayers Board, contend that Western has transferred \$2 billion worth of

equity from the utilities to Westar and assigned debt from unregulated activities to the utilities.

CURB, the state's consumer advocacy agency, argues those activities weakened the utilities' financial condition as the KCC is reviewing a proposed \$151 million rate increase.

Western says the claims are not true and that its utilities have incurred \$1.3

billion in debts from operations and the construction of new generators.

The commission's order cited documents, statements from Western officials and events over the past 13 months. The order said: "The actions, events and relationships described above may affect the utilities' ability to provide efficient and sufficient service at just and reasonable rates."

Western spokesman Kim Groninger said the company would not comment in detail about the order until its officials had a chance to review it. Western planned to go ahead with its offering of rights to Westar stock.

However, she also said: "The rights offering will not affect our ability to provide safe and reliable electric service."

Briefly

Weather: Pretty nice

The forecast for the Colby region through Friday is about what one would expect for the month of May. Tonight, partly cloudy, a 30 percent chance for thunderstorms, low 50-55 and northwest winds 5-15 mph. Thursday, partly cloudy, a 20 percent chance for thunderstorms, high in the middle 80s and light winds. Thursday night, partly cloudy, a 30 percent chance for thunderstorms and a low of 50-55. And Friday, thunderstorms remain in the forecast with the high in the middle 70s. Tuesday's high in Colby was 79 and the overnight low this morning was 49. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 65 degrees. The records for May 9: 98 in 1911 and 30 in 1909. (The daily

temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Fair board to meet

The Thomas County Free Fair Board will meet at 8 p.m. Thursday in the 4-H Building to make plans for the coming fair. The meeting is open to the public.

Rec equipment needed

Donations are being accepted to replace equipment for the Hoisington Summer Recreation program lost in the April 21 tornado. Equipment may be dropped off at the Church of Christ, 510 E. Fourth, and monetary donations

should be given to the Sports Shoppe. Equipment needs include: a chalk machine; three sets of bases with metal tie-downs; catchers' equipment and bats; soccer nets and goals. The city of Colby has provided two green bins for drop-off at the church building. For more information call the church office at 462-6322 or Toni McAdams at 462-6248.

Reception for principal next week

The Colby Parent-Teacher Organization is sponsoring a reception for Colby Elementary School Principal Becky Holtwick, who is leaving the district at the end of this school year. Everyone is invited to attend the event from 7 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, May 22, in the cafeteria at the grade school. If

unable to attend, cards can be sent to Holtwick at Colby Elementary School, said Lisa Wilson, co-coordinator.

Food drive planned Saturday

Letter carriers at Colby Post Office will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Thomas County Genesis program on Saturday, May 12. Postal officials ask that people leave items by their mailbox or on their porch.

Booster club fund-raiser continues

The Colby Booster Club still has state championship wrestling t-shirts for sale, said Tami Brown, president. For those wanting to purchase a T-shirt, call her at 462-7903.

