



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## City council approves budget increase for 2002

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

The Colby City Council approved a budget increase of over \$820,000 on Tuesday night after a short public hearing.

During the hearing Les Haremza, a local farmer, asked, "Why can't we let people pay for things they use, like the pool and baseball games?"

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said city operations like the pool and parks don't pay for themselves, but are funded by all the citizens. She compared the situations to school taxes, where the community as a whole supports the

school system, whether they have children in school or not.

"That's the way city government has been historically funded," she said.

"It's the way all government is funded," added councilman John Bremenkamp. "We can't pick and choose what we want to support."

Larry Bell, another local taxpayer, asked how Oakley could afford a new slide on their pool. Councilman Ken Bieber replied, "Look at their mill levy."

Armstrong also said that most of the increase was in the utilities budget, funded through elec-

tric, sewer and water bills instead of taxes.

The approved 2002 budget, available from City Hall, 585 N. Franklin, is \$10,586,511.70, compared to an approved budget last year of \$9,765,800.33 an increase of \$820,711.37.

Armstrong said the difference between the approved budget and the figure of \$8,946,419 published in the city's hearing notice. "We can't spend all we budget," she said, or they wouldn't have anything to start the fiscal year with.

After the council approved the budget, Armstrong said, "This has been one of the most difficult budgets I've had to work in 20 years." The council also approved a new capital

outlay plan for the next five years. The plan is required if they want to keep a capital outlay reserve, although the city is not locked into any item on the plan, according to Armstrong.

In other business, the council:

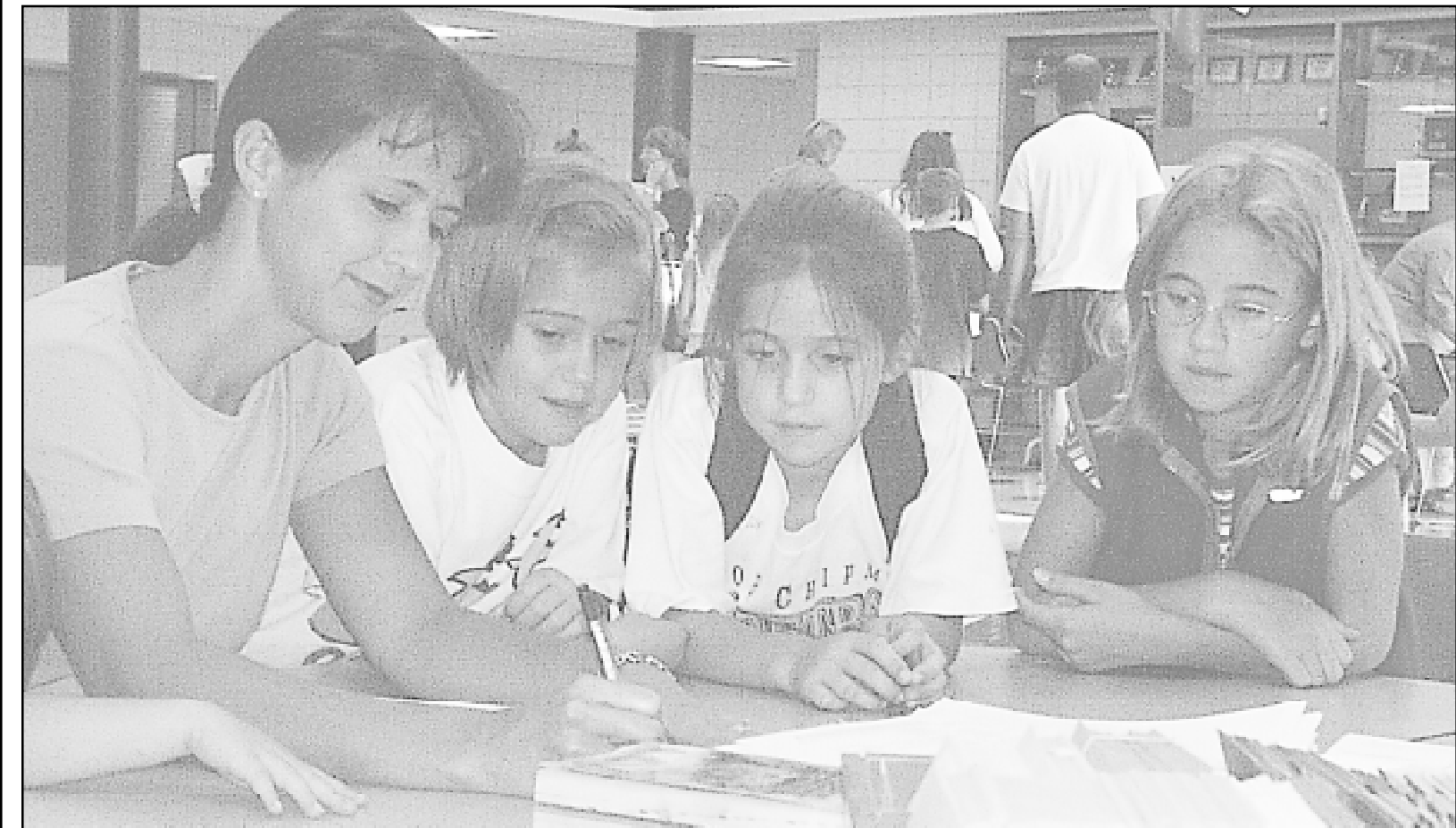
- Approved a contract with Jim's Electric, Colby to replace runway lighting at the airport at a cost of \$180,553.
- Denied a change order to add runway intensity lighting to the airport project.
- Approved a request by Tuffy and Linda Taylor to change White Avenue to Taylor Avenue and Harry Lazarus Avenue to Southwind Avenue.

- Approved the replacement of a picket fence at 285 S. Chickamauga by Patrick and Mary Jane Stubblefield, subject to approval by Armstrong and Greg Swob, city building official.

- Held a public hearing on a franchise agreement with S & T Communications for a telecommunications system. After the final reading of the ordinance and the hearing, the council approved a franchise agreement with the company.

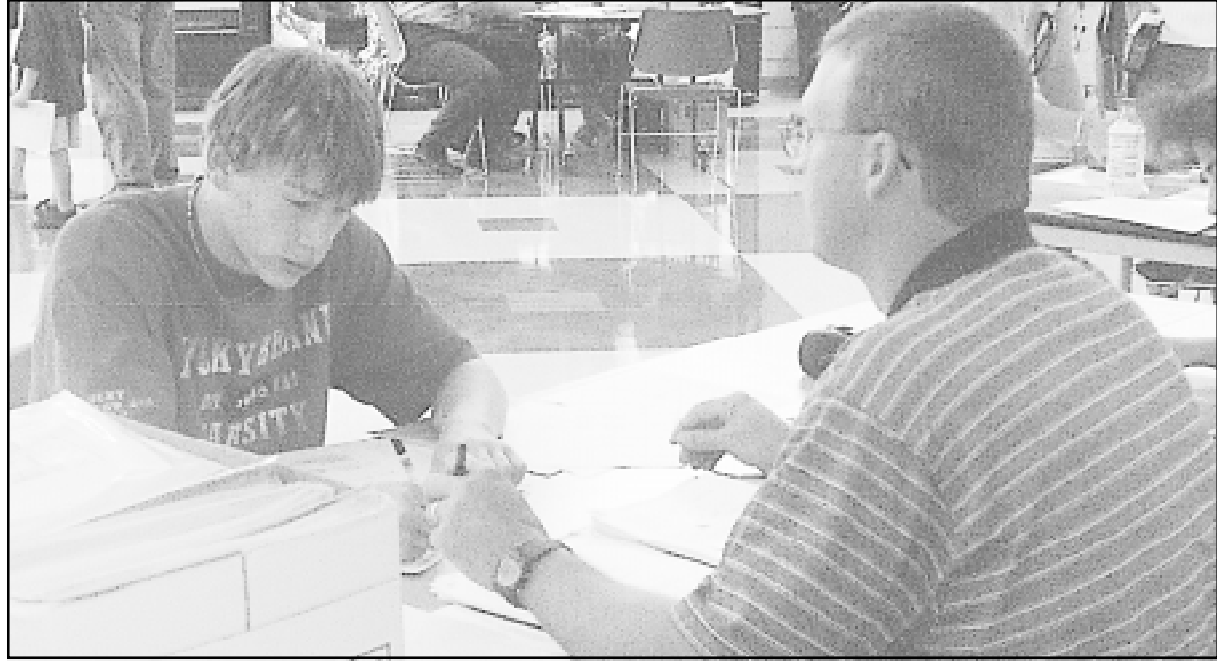
- Decided on a tentative settlement with Access Industries and Architectural Services Inc. on the City Hall elevator.

### Back to school paperwork



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

**ABOVE:** Krysti Terrell was one of many parents enrolling children planning to attend Colby Public Schools this fall. Seated next to their mother is Bailey, 6; Shelby, 8; and Emily, 10. **AT RIGHT:** Aaron Dempewolf, a junior at Colby High School this fall, talked with Bryan Bullington, principal. Throughout the day, returning students at all grade levels enrolled for classes scheduled to begin on Wednesday, Aug. 22. Officials are also reminding new students that enrollment for them will be Friday at their respective buildings.



## Two Colby people arrested in grain elevator burglaries

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Two Colby people were arrested late last week in connection with a series of break-ins at grain elevators around the area, according to the Thomas County Sheriff's office.

Shawn Cundiff, 24, is being charged with felony burglary and conspiracy, along with other charges to include criminal damage to property and theft. He is currently in the Sheridan County jail awaiting a first appearance there and will then be transported to Thomas County to face similar charges.

Also charged with the break-ins is Amanda Doggett, 19, who had her first appearance in the Thomas County District Court on Tuesday. She too is being charged with felony burglary and conspiracy, along with criminal damage to property, theft, and traffic warrants out of Hays. Following her first appearance, Doggett was granted a supervised bond, but returned to the Thomas County jail, with her release contingent on the traffic warrants out of Hays.

Both Cundiff and Doggett are alleged to have broken into the Rexford Grain Company on Main St. in Rexford and a branch of the Hi-Plains Coop in Gem during the early morning hours of Monday, July 9.

Cundiff is also being charged for allegedly burglarizing an elevator in Studley, which is east of Hoxie on Saturday, June 9, and could face charges in Logan County for similar break-ins at elevators in Winona and Page City. At the Studley location, officials said, a considerable amount of money was taken. In not only the Thomas County incidents, but the other burglaries as well, entry into the buildings had similarities. In each situation, screens were

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C.D. Hopper, investigator

cut and windows were broken out.

At the Rexford location specifically, said C.D. Hopper, investigator with the Thomas County Sheriff's office, officials couldn't determine if any theft had been committed. However, the cabinets and desk drawers were opened and a locked briefcase was slashed.

In Gem, \$20 in currency was taken from a cash drawer, he said.

When law enforcement officials started the investigation on the burglary cases here, Hopper said he called other agencies in the area to see if they had similar crimes.

With their assistance, Hopper said, suspects were identified based on vehicle information and other physical evidence at the various locations.

"This was a case of eliminating county lines and working together to solve a crime," said Thomas County Sheriff Tom Jones. "We had a little evidence here and there, but not every piece fit together until we all worked as a team."

"Every now and then things happen the way they should, and in this case, perseverance and working together paid off," Hopper said.

### Fight to keep B-1B bombers in Kansas may be lost cause

DERBY (AP)—The fight to keep the B-1B bombers at Wichita's McConnell Air Force Base may be a lost cause, U.S. Rep. Todd Tiahrt says.

The Republican congressman vowed to keep up the effort, saying the tactic right now is to stall the Defense Department plan to shift the bombers to bases in Texas and South Dakota.

"We think we've slowed them down" by requesting extensive economic data before the department makes a final decision, Tiahrt said Tuesday night during a town meeting at the Derby Recreation Center.

"I don't know if we can keep the B1s," he said. "I really don't know."

The Pentagon wants to cut the nation's B-1B force by a third and use the savings to upgrade the planes it keeps. This would require taking the nine-bomber fleet out of the Kansas Air National Guard's 184th Bomb Wing at McConnell.

## Education savings plan popular with parents

TOPEKA (AP) — With more than \$67 million in assets and 15,000 participants, the Learning Quest Education Savings Program is showing signs of popularity after only one year.

But legislators were told Tuesday that changes in the law governing the state program could make it even more popular with Kansans and investors nationwide.

The program, administered by American Century Investments, is open to any U.S. citizen and is designed to help parents who wish to set aside money for their children's college education.

Funds may be used to cover room and board, tuition, fees, books and equipment. Similar to a 401k plan, participants make an initial investment of \$500 or \$25 in monthly tax-sheltered contributions, up to \$2,000 for single tax filers, \$4,000 for married filing joint returns.

State Treasurer Tim Shallenburger asked members of the Legislative Education Planning Committee to consider eliminating the waiting period required on the use of the funds, which would likely increase participation from people outside Kansas. Currently, participants have to wait two

years to use the funds.

"The waiting period is a straw against us," Shallenburger said.

He said the plan has received a perfect rating for resident participation, but an 80 percent rating by Savingforcollege.com, an online company that analyzes education investment programs. Other changes include establishing protection for the accounts from creditors in bankruptcy proceedings.

Shallenburger said the money set aside for a child's education should not be dragged into such affairs.

Success of the plan has drawn the

support of investment company Charles Schwab, which is recommending it to customers wanting to invest for college. In the coming weeks, radio and television ads will air on state networks, while advertisements will be placed in newspapers to promote the savings program.

"We've got a long way to go and a long time to get there," Shallenburger said. However, in the past month, more than 1,000 new accounts have been established with \$10 million in assets.

Investors can choose three risk options for the fund ranging from conservative to aggressive growth.

### Briefly

#### Weather: Cooler

Tonight forecasters are calling for a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms under otherwise partly cloudy skies. Lows expected in the 60s and winds from the southwest at 10 to 20 mph. On Thursday, highs will be around 80 with again a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms and north winds at 10 to 20 mph. Thursday night, lows expected in the 50s with a chance of thunderstorms. Friday, temperatures will remain cooler with highs 75 to 80 and dry. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

#### Retirement coffee planned

A retirement coffee is planned from 3 to 5 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 28, for Darrell Witzel, who is retiring from the City of Colby.

Witzel has been a refuse collector having started working for the city in March of 1969, city officials said. The coffee is open to everyone.

#### Youth group to sell peaches

Colby's Sacred Heart CYO will be selling Colorado freestone peaches at various locations in Thomas County beginning Friday, Aug. 10. Organizers said these peaches are "extremely delicious" and are being sold for \$22 for 22 lbs. or smaller quantities are available. The peaches will go on sale at the Relay for Life at Dennen Field, Friday, Aug. 11, from 7 to 10 p.m.; at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range, Colby, beginning at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 11; and also at locations in Selden, Brewster and Rexford from 8 a.m. to noon, and Levant from 8 to 10 a.m., also on Saturday. For questions or details, call Paul or Marilyn Bailey, 462-7356.

#### Watermelon feed set

The Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce is holding a free watermelon feed as part of the Crazy Daze promotion from 4-8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9 on Franklin Avenue. Local merchants will be conducting a sidewalk sale, also. For more information, or to reserve booth space, call the chamber at 462-3401.

#### Final enrollment next week

Sacred Heart School is having its final enrollment on Tuesday, Aug. 14, said Dave Evert, principal. Times for enrollment and the walk-through will be from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. For information, call the school office at 462-2813.

#### Childhood testing offered

Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center, Oakley

is offering early childhood intervention testing, including eyesight, hearing and learning disability testing. All test are free. For more information or an appointment, call 785-672-3125.

#### Fundraiser/giveaway postponed

The Adaline Delzeit fundraiser, sponsored by the Colby Jaycees, is being rescheduled to Sunday, Jan., 27, 2002. The drawing for the 2000 Grand Prix, and \$1,500 cash, which served as the fundraising tool, will be given away on that date in January.

Originally, the drawing was planned for Saturday (Aug. 4) during the Thomas County Fair races; however, due to low volume in ticket donations, the organization opted to hold the giveaway for a later date.

For information or tickets, call Lori Haberer, at 462-6555

