



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Book review begins



MAXINE NELSON/Colby Free Press

JoAnne Sunderman reviews the book, *My Last Summer as Roy Rogers*, at Pioneer Memorial Library. From left, Linda Goossen, Jim Smith and Dora George were among about 30 people who attended the presentation which is the first of a series to be held at noon on the first Wednesday of each month. Reviews start at 12:15 and end at 12:45 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend and bring their lunch. Lunch was served at this opening event.

## Street improvements

# Council looks at ways to tie state and city road projects

By **PATTY DECKER**

*Free Press Editor*

Major state highway projects and timelines were laid out at the Colby City Council meeting this week.

There are two big Kansas Department of Transportation projects pending, said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, and within some of those projects the city also has smaller repairs in the vicinity.

One of those is the replacement of the intersections at Fourth and Franklin and Fourth and Range and the city would be going back a half block each direction and replacing with concrete so that truck traffic won't rut the streets out. The second project is the replacement of a segment of Range from Fifth to the viaduct and the viaduct removal with another small city project from 7th Street to beginning of the viaduct.

Along with these projects, the state is also planning to begin work on the interstate between Colby and Levant in 2002. In that project, re-routing one directional traffic off Interstate at Colby will be considered.

The concern by the city is that the state transportation department wants to begin work on the interstate project and the Fourth and Franklin and Fourth and Range projects next year, which would cause a serious traffic flow and detour problems at the same time.

Then in the year 2003, the state would again disrupt the traffic flow by beginning work removing the viaduct

and subsequent work on the probable at-grade crossing, she said.

"We would rather see all these major projects done together so that only one year of detours and problems occurs, rather than two consecutive years," she said.

The preliminary design for the viaduct is expected in November and is expected to reflect an at-grade crossing.

"Once we receive the design from the state," she said, "it will be made available to the public."

One other project that continues to be pushed back is the stoplight project on Davis and Range Avenue by Wal-Mart, she said.

"The state bid the stoplight project in mid-May and rejected the bid. It was bid out again at the end of August and again rejected," she said. In both cases, the reason the bid was rejected was because there was only one bid and it was too high."

The state plans to bid again later this year in the hopes of getting more contractors looking at the stoplight project job.

In other council business:

- The council approved participating in the Kansas Learning Quest Education Savings Program. This program, Armstrong said, enables employees to make contributions for the education of a child or grandchild with tax deferral on the earnings until the money is withdrawn for educational expenses.

Councilman Herb Sunderman asked if it were possible for the contribution to be a payroll deduction before taxes. Armstrong said that was not possible under the program guidelines.

- A variable frequency drive for the power plant diesel well was approved at a cost of \$35,000.

Gerry Bieker, public works director, said the new equipment would allow the city to run the well at different speeds and would replace the water tower when it was down by maintaining pressure.

- The council approved the purchase of a new vehicle for the city manager. Armstrong's current vehicle, a 1994 Taurus was in the shop and again the vehicle committee noted there continues to be a malfunction in the timing. It was their recommendation to consider four vehicles to replace the Taurus. The council accepted the Mercury Grand Marquis bid of \$16,500 from Tubbs and Sons. Other bids included a 2000 Pontiac Grand Prix from Frontier Autoplex at \$14,499; a 2000 Mercury Sable at \$13,283; and a 2000 Pontiac Grand Am at \$11,395.

The vehicle committee recommended the Marquis based on the fact it was a heavier, bigger automobile and did not have front wheel drive. In addition, the committee reported that without front wheel drive there would be less maintenance and the car would be serviceable for more years than the other smaller cars submitted.

# Colby school board breaks with tradition to allow Sunday event

By **JAY KELLEY**

*Colby Free Press*

The Colby School Board broke with their tradition of not allowing Sunday activities by approving a cooperative performance between high school vocal students and the college choir and community orchestra at their Tuesday night meeting.

The concert, a performance of Vivaldi's Gloria, will be held Dec. 16 at 3:30 p.m. at the high school auditorium. Vocal instructor Chris Latta told the board that students who were unable to perform would be allowed to participate in practice and write a paper on the music for credit.

"If they have a valid reason, they will

still get credit," said Latta.

The board approved the request on a 7-0 vote.

In other business, the board:

- Heard a report on the Thomas County Learning Center in downtown Colby from superintendent Kirk Neilsen. The center is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Neilsen encouraged

board members to stop in.

- Approved a resolution to destroy old records. Board secretary Marilyn Reed told the board she wanted to destroy records more than six years old, although she would keep some capital outlay and other vital records. State law allows all records more than five years old to be destroyed.

# Food bank gets new freezer just in time for busy season

By **MAXINE NELSON**

*Colby Free Press*

A new freezer, which was purchased from cash donations, has given the Genesis-Thomas County Food Bank more space and the ability to accept more donations of food to help those in need.

Started in 1993, the food bank has helped many people who are barely making minimum wage, said Rosalie Seemann, board member, and requests for assistance have increased considerably.

"Because of budget constraints we have to scrutinize every application very closely. We can't always help everyone that does request, but we try," she said.

Requests for help vary and the organization, Seemann said, is willing to help those who are trying to help themselves.

One upcoming project that will require a lot of help in the way of

donations and volunteers is the Christmas basket program.

"Each year," she said, "the number of requests for baskets have grown and we need strong people to deliver them."

"Genesis accepts donations of food and money, but cannot accept food which has been opened, due to federal regulations," she said.

All the volunteers serve without compensation, and Genesis tries to have a volunteer in every community in the county. Anyone who would like to make a cash donation can send it to: P.O. Box 214, Colby, Kan., 67701. For those who have some extra vegetables in the garden are also urged to bring their produce to the site at Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range, Suite 8, on Wednesday mornings before distribution that day.

Hours of operation are on Wednesdays only from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.



MAXINE NELSON/Colby Free Press

Roberta Brewer puts some bread into the freezer at the Genesis Food Bank on Wednesday. The new freezer was made possible, she said, because of cash donations to the organization and will provide more space for food products.

- Accepted the resignations of Barbara Durham, food service and Fred Durham, custodian.

- Approved the hiring of Karla Sullivan, food service, Danny Buford, custodian and Rhonda Skibbe, Tamara Margheim and Robyn Rogers, all para-professionals.
- Approved supplemental contracts

for Don Balluch, Technology Student Association sponsor, Margaret Houtz, high school scholars bowl assistant, Linda Jones, high school forensics assistant, Judy Parker, junior class co-sponsor, Nancy Rundell, high school drama instructor and Rick Williams, high school baseball and football assistant coach.

# State revenue is millions ahead of earlier estimates

TOPEKA (AP) — State revenue collections exceeded estimates for the first two months of fiscal 2002 by \$8.6 million.

The Kansas Legislative Research Department released figures Wednesday showing the state collected \$573.4 million, or about 1.5 percent more than estimated. The figures were for July 1 through Aug. 31.

Officials said the state collected more than estimated in agency earnings, compensating use and estate taxes. However, individual income taxes, severance taxes and interest earnings fell short.

Total collections for the first two months of fiscal 2002 have surpassed the same period of the previous year by \$21.2 million, or about 3.7 percent.

Officials said the collections do not take in to account any of the \$49 million anticipated through increased collections in back taxes by the Department of Revenue. Those figures will be reflected by estimates later in the fiscal year.

Legislators authorized the department to hire more than 50 employees to increase collections in effort to shore up sagging state revenues. Revenue officials have told legislators they expect to have the employees trained and in place by Dec. 1.

The state's consensus estimating group made its estimates for revenue collections on April 4. The next revisions will be made in November.

State agencies are preparing their budgets for fiscal 2003 based on April's revenue estimates. Current projections show the state with little or no additional revenue for spending growth in fiscal 2003.

Agencies have been asked to submit budgets based on a set allocation. All but education, judiciary and the Legislature have been asked to submit budgets reflecting cuts of up to 4 percent.

Budget requests are due by Sept. 15, which will be used to draft the document Gov. Bill Graves presents to the legislature in January.

## Briefly

### Weather: Rain possible

Forecasters are calling for a 60 percent chance of thunderstorms tonight under otherwise mostly cloudy skies. Winds will be from the north at 20 to 30 mph and gusts to 40 mph with lows in the 60s. On Friday, windy and cooler with highs 65-70 and again north winds at 20 to 30 mph. There will be a 40 percent chance of thunderstorms throughout the day and into the evening with lows in the 50s. The weekend is looking dry and cooler. (*The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.*)

### Later mail delivery begins

Mail delivery to your home, both city and rural, will begin arriving a half-hour later starting Saturday, and from that day on, said Jim McDonald, Colby postmaster. He explained that carriers in the central part of the United States, from Canada to Texas, will begin reporting to work a half hour later starting Sept. 8 and that in effect will place

mail in your mailbox at home half-hour later than you generally expect it to arrive. Prior to the change, mail carriers started their day at 7 a.m.; effective Saturday they will start at 7:30 a.m.

### Singles dance Friday

The Colby Singles Group will hold its monthly dance beginning at 8 p.m., on Friday, Sept. 7, said Don Birzer, coordinator. This month's entertainment will feature Swingin' Country from Imperial, Neb. and is open to all single people and alumni. For questions or further details, call Birzer at 462-2127.

### Moran to appear on television

U.S. Congressman Jerry Moran will discuss current issues in Congress on Smoky Hills Public Television, Friday, Sept. 7, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., said Travis Murphy, public relations for Moran. In addition to issues, Moran plans to talk about his "Big Listening Tour," during which he

stopped in 66 counties that make up his district.

### Veterans benefits to be outlined

The American Legion is conducting its annual Kansas Veterans Affairs Tours and will stop in Colby at 6 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 9, at 1850 W. 4th. Officials said that all veterans and their families are invited to attend this meeting and learn more about the latest changes in veterans' benefits, filing claims, and enrolling in the health care system.

### Charity golf tournament nears

The Alcohol Drug Abuse Council, which serves nine northwest Kansas counties, has planned its first-ever golf tournament to raise money toward helping families and individuals with drug and alcohol abuse problems. The event, said Larry Washburn, president of the board, will be held Saturday, Sept. 15, at the Sugar Hills Country Club in Goodland. The cost is \$60 per person and the game is a four-person scramble. To reserve a spot, call Pat Willoughby, co-

organizer, at (785) 462-3556 or the main office at (785) 462-6111. People can also register the day of the scramble, which begins at 8 a.m. (MDT) and tee-off at 9 a.m. (MDT).

### Auditions set at college

Auditions for the upcoming performance "Heaven Can Wait" will be held next week at Colby Community College, said Debbie Schwanke, public information director. Actors are needed to fill a variety of parts in this play with auditions planned for Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 10 and 11, at 7 p.m. in the Cultural Arts Building on the campus. For questions, call Walter Yuhre, drama department, (785) 462-3968.

### 'Homes on the Range' tour set

The Prairie Museum of Art and History is sponsoring its backyard expeditions during the month of September. Everyone is invited to explore the "Homes on the Range" beginning Sunday afternoon, Sept. 9. Call 462-4590.

