



# COLBY FREE PRESS

12 pages

## Finding solutions



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Teacher Ray Higley, seated helped Kimberly Gordon, Mark Bartlett, Chris Haeffner and Amy Dickman, from left to right, with some problems during Colby Middle School's ugly day at Fike Park on Wednesday.

The students practiced their communication and problem solving skills by working out puzzles together. These types of problem-solving events are part of the school's improvement plan.

## Thomas Countians urged to take part in a history project

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

There's something new in the works in order to document today's thoughts for tomorrow's history, and people in Thomas County are encouraged to take part, said Karen Larmer, one of the local coordinators.

The initiative is being sponsored by the Kansas Association for Family and Community Education in an effort to record life in the state's cities and towns.

"This is by no means a new idea," said Jason West of Perry, who is the project consultant. "It was first done in China during the 1930s and more recently by the city of Ithaca, New York."

What's really exciting about the event, Larmer said, is that for one day on Thursday, Oct. 11, people of all ages will be able to write letters describing their day and thoughts about the past and future in Thomas County.

Although, the rules for the writing event have changed somewhat following the attack on Sept. 11, Larmer added.

While people can still write events and thoughts for Thursday, Oct. 11, they can also think about how they are feeling and possible changes that have occurred in their personal lives following the attack.

When the "Day In My Community," writing event was first initiated, West said, the attack on New York City and Washington had not happened. Consequently, the entry format changed somewhat.

The association is asking, though, that entries be written on 8 1/2" x 11" sheets using a pen with black ink, a typewriter or computer printer. The letters can be as long or as short as the person would like.

In addition, the state agency spearheading the project, asks that only one side of the sheet of paper be used so that letters may be legible when preserved on archival-type paper.

"These letters will be collected throughout the 105 counties," West said, "and once the letters are collected they will be organized and donated to the association."

In Thomas County, a set will also be copied for preservation at the Prairie Museum of Art and History, Larmer said.

"This event will allow for all of us to come together as communities through our individual and unique perspectives," West said.

Although anonymous letters can be submitted, their use will be limited, he said. "We are hoping that many Thomas Countians will take pen or computer and join other fellow Kansas in recording their life experiences, ideas and descriptions of Thursday, Oct. 11," Larmer said.

Letter entries can be taken to the Pioneer Memorial Library, Thomas County Extension Office, Prairie Museum of Art and History or mailed to General Delivery — A Day In My Community — Colby, Kan., 67701.

For information or questions, call Larmer at 462-3610.



## Thumbs up!



- ✓ Dr. William Inkret — on your many years of service to the area.
  - ✓ Kready Bunch — we're all looking forward to the performance.
  - ✓ Bob & Linda Mader — for keeping up the family tradition.
  - ✓ Judy Kleinsorge, Sue Taylor, Derek Bissitt, Pat Turrell — for the big part you played in Colby's selection as one of the sites for Chautauqua 2004.
  - ✓ Rosalie Seemann — you'll do well as our representative.
  - ✓ Bruce Frahm — on the statewide honor.
  - ✓ Thomas County 4-H'ers — next week is your special week.
  - ✓ To all our firefighters — Fire Prevention Week next week is a good time to reflect on the role you play in our communities.
- (Call TD at 462-3963 to submit names or organizations you feel deserve a Thumbs Up!)

## Republicans criticize own remap plan

TOPEKA (AP) — Three prominent Republicans are criticizing a congressional redistricting plan drafted by members of their party because of its treatment of the Lawrence and Junction City areas.

The proposal would put Junction City and neighboring Fort Riley into different districts and do the same for the University of Kansas and much of Lawrence.

The Special Committee on Redistricting has endorsed the plan, but Republican members drafted it and made sure it would be forwarded to the

Legislature. The House-Senate committee has 23 GOP members and 11 Democrats.

House Speaker Kent Glasscock, R-Manhattan, said he opposes the plan because of how it splits the two communities. Leaders in his hometown have said Geary, Riley and Pottawatomie counties should remain together. In the Senate, Majority Leader Lana Oleen, also R-Manhattan, and Redistricting Chairman David Adkins, R-Leawood, take the same position.

Oleen said of Republicans on the committee: "I'm giving them the ben-

efit of the doubt that they didn't understand the implications of splitting an Army base from its Army town. We just don't do that."

Defenders of the plan say it keeps the cores of each of the state's four congressional districts intact and swaps as little territory as possible.

The 1st District covers western and central Kansas, about two-thirds of the state, and is represented by Republican Jerry Moran. Under the plan, it would pick up most of Nemaha County, a small part of Kingman County, North Newton in Harvey County and Junction

City.

The 2nd District of eastern Kansas, represented by Republican Jim Ryan, would lose Junction City and most of Nemaha County but pick up much of Lawrence.

The 3rd District is represented by Democrat Dennis Moore and would keep Johnson, Miami and Wyandotte counties. It currently includes most of Douglas County, including Lawrence.

Under the plan, only a thin, 7.5-mile finger of land between the Kansas River and Kansas Highway 10 would remain in the 3rd District.

## Odds are against Oz

OLATHE (AP) — After almost 10 years of planning for a Wizard of Oz-related theme park in northeast Kansas, the project may be coming to an end, although developers still held out hope for it.

"It would appear to me it means the project is dead," Johnson County Commission Chairman Doug Wood said Thursday after the commission voted 3-1 against a feasibility study costing \$168,300 and refusing further review of the plan. "I never want to say never, but it would certainly appear to me that this is dead."

"We're finished with this project," said Commissioner Annabeth Surbaugh. "We need to move on and look at other opportunities for this property."

Los Angeles-based Oz Entertainment Co. needs approval from the county in order to proceed with its plans for the \$861 million Wonderful World of Oz on the old Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant property near DeSoto.

Despite Thursday's vote, Oz offi-

cialists weren't ready to concede defeat.

"We've been given hurdles before and we've overcome them," spokeswoman Kristin McCallum said. "We're weighing the options. ... We really have to weigh out everything and evaluate what the next steps will be."

Under the proposal, Oz would have cleaned up the former ammunition plant property in exchange for 9,065 acres. Oz would have turned over 2,828 acres to public agencies after the cleanup and the rest would have been developed into a small community, with the Oz theme park as its centerpiece. Oz had brokered the deal with the federal government, but it needed local approval.

The company first proposed a western Wyandotte County location for its theme park, but the project stalled and the new Kansas Speedway, which just opened this year, beat it to developing the land Oz coveted near Interstate 70.

Oz moved its project to western Johnson County in 1998, agreeing to acquire the defunct ammunition plant property from the federal government.

## New addition almost done



MAXINE NELSON/Colby Free Press

The new addition to the men's dormitory at Colby Community College is nearly finished. The college board decided to enlarge the commons area by about 800 square feet, and adding approximately 100 square feet to the living area of Carl Adams, athletic director and living center

coordinator. Glen Strait, architect, suggested the small dome-like structure, also known as a cupola, to give character to that part of campus, and also to allow daylight into the commons area, said Dr. Mikel Ary, college president.

## Briefly

### Weather: Just plain nice

With winter out of the way...for now, the National Weather Service is calling for some pretty nice weather for the Colby area through the early part of next week. Tonight will bring clear skies, lows in the mid-30s and southwest winds of around 10 mph. Saturday, sunny, south winds up to 15 mph and highs in the upper 60s to near 70. Saturday night, clear, lows around 40. Sunday, partly sunny, highs in the lower 70s, and Monday — Columbus Day — partly cloudy, lows in the upper 30s and highs near 70. Thursday's high in Colby was 60 and the overnight low this morning was 35. There was 0.03 inches of precipitation overnight. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 64 degrees. The records for Oct. 10: 96 in 1900 and 23 in 1932.

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

### Monday's a holiday — for some

Monday is Columbus Day and that means some of the places you generally frequent won't be in operation. Those include the post office and banks. You may want to call ahead before setting out for other destinations. The Free Press will be open and the paper will be delivered.

### Commissioners to meet Monday

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m.

Monday in the commissioners room of the courthouse. Dennis Chandler, extension agent is on the agenda at 9 a.m. with an update. Maybelle Moore, assistant register of deeds will present information on a state health plan seminar at 10 a.m. The commissioners will have a special ceremony for the raising of the 4-H flag in honor of 4-H week at 8 a.m. and signing of a 4-H proclamation at 3:45 p.m.

### Singles dance tonight

The Colby Singles Club will hold its regular dance tonight from 8 p.m. to midnight. Jim Christensen of Kearney, Neb., will be providing entertainment. All single people and alumni are invited. For questions or details, call Don Birzer, 462-2127.

### Walk-a-thon set for Saturday

Colby Jaycees are sponsoring a walk-a-thon to benefit the Kansas Jaycees Cerebral Palsy Ranch at Fike Park on Saturday, Oct. 6 with registration beginning at 1:30 p.m. The walk will begin at the large gazebo in Fike Park at 2 p.m. For information, call Lewis at 462-3627 or 462-0808.

### Airport open house Saturday

The Colby Municipal Airport has planned its second annual open house from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 6, and everyone is invited to attend. The day will begin with an early bird breakfast at 6:30 a.m., however, breakfast will continue at 7 a.m. for \$3.

