



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## District's financial records in good shape, auditor says

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

The Colby School District Board of Education's financial records are in very good condition, said Brian Staats, of Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball, the accounting firm hired to audit the district's books.

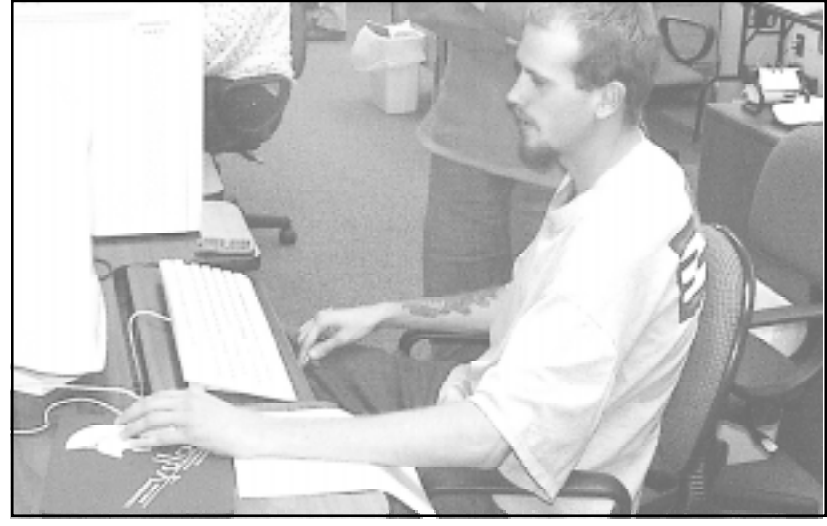
Staats said his company was hired to form an opinion on the financial statements of the district and they had "formed the highest opinion possible," meaning there were no illegal activities.

Staats told the board there were areas that could be improved, however. The middle school had an interest income line item, which is not allowed, he said.

"It's okay to make money, but you have to share it," he said. Staats recommended interest from district funds be placed in other line items.

Another area of improvement needed was in record keeping. The accounting firm found some uncleared checks more than a year old and the clerk and treasurer's figures differed by \$244.

"Neither is a material discrepancy," he said, adding that changes in accounting procedures would eliminate the problems. Staats also recommended that non-profit groups not affiliated with the district get their own tax identification numbers. Some support groups are using the district's number and that could lead to problems, Staats told the board.



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Tyson Owings got some help from paraprofessional Kim Boardman (not pictured) at the Thomas County Learning Center Monday night during a visit by the board of education. The learning center offers opportunities for non-traditional students to earn a high school diploma.

In other business, the board:

- Heard from the Thomas County Learning Center on non-traditional education and a curriculum presentation by elementary teachers Carol McGuire and Pat Turrell.

- Approved a request to attend a drug abuse seminar for high school principal Bryan Bullington and assistant principal Jeff Quenzer. Bullington told the board that illegal drug use is a concern of school administrators and they want to take a proactive stance.

- Also heard from Bullington on Quenzer's selection as Region Five

Assistant Principal of the Year. The region is north of I-70 and west of Hays.

- Approved Renee McDaniel as an emergency substitute; hired Larry Pearce as custodian; and approved supplemental contracts for Alec Bliss, eighth grade football assistant coach, Lamoureaux Fulwider, middle school Technology Student Association sponsor, Randy Koons, junior class co-sponsor, Marlena Navarrete, middle school 8th grade assistant volleyball coach and Troy Rall, middle school assistant wrestling coach.

## Overpass work takes shape

By MAXINE NELSON

Colby Free Press

Preparations for the removal of the railroad overpass on K-25 in Colby are beginning to take shape with the Thomas County Commissioners opening bids for detour work at their Monday meeting.

The bids were for culverts to be used on Veteran's Memorial Drive and Country Club Drive, the proposed detour, when the Kansas Department of Transportation removes the overpass, tentatively scheduled for 2003. The county's portion of the detour work is scheduled to commence in 2002.

Bid for 10 culverts and 20 end sections from DC Wholesale, Concordia, was bid at \$26,045.90. The bid from J&J Drainage Products of Hutchinson was for \$33,426.30.

There is a problem with the bids, however.

Chris Bieker, roads supervisor for the county, said the Kansas Department of Transportation had only authorized \$20,000. He told the commissioners he would talk with KDOT and see what they wanted to do.

The commissioners indicated they would make a decision at their Oct. 31 meeting.

The commissioners, also at their Monday meeting, declined to interfere in a township matter.

Steve Shull asked what could be done about getting the roads to his home maintained for the school bus.

He lives four miles north of Colby in Rohvol Township, on a private road off Country Club Drive. He questioned who should be maintaining the roads.

Commissioner Ron Evans told him they could not interfere in township business because "it is not the chain of command." He said it was a township matter.

Commissioner Glen Kersenbrock said he thought Country Club Drive was a township road which should be maintained by the township, and that the road to Shull's house was probably a private road which Shull would have to maintain.

He advised Shull to talk to the township trustees, and if that was not satisfactory, to see an attorney.

In other business:

- Bieker said he wants to take bids for a pickup and another mower which is part of his yearly purchase plan.

- The commissioners went into a 10-minute executive session, followed by a 5-minute session, to discuss person-

nel with Josh Buffington, Emergency Medical Services director, and Dr. Jeff Jennings. No action was taken.

- Lloyd Theimer asked if the county had any old tires he could get for a silo. Evans called the county landfill, and Larry Jumper, supervisor, said he had about 30 old tires to give away.

- The commissioners passed a resolution providing for fines for those found guilty of violating the resolution which prohibits the use of county roads by heavy trucks which have no point of origin or destination within the county.

The fines will include commercial trucks, commercial buses and other commercial vehicles — first infraction, \$104, second infraction, \$250, and third infraction, \$500. Court costs in the amount of \$54 will also be assessed.

The fines will be distributed as follows: Court costs of \$54 payable to the county general fund; fines \$1 to prosecuting attorney's training fund; \$7 to the law library fund; and, the balance of the fine shall go to the Thomas County general fund.

The next commissioners meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Oct. 31, the last business day of the month.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Shawn Fromholtz and his two children, Mason and Chann, pointed proudly at the American flag painted on the north side of their barn. The project took six hours to complete.

## Red, white, blue From the Fromholtz family to you

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

One Colby family is taking patriotism to new heights with the addition of an American flag on one of their barns.

The Shawn Fromholtz family, who live about one and half miles east of Red River Commodities on College Drive (County Road R), decided to show their support for the country following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks by painting Old Glory near the very top of the 30-foot structure. The flag, which faces north, measures 9 feet wide by 6 feet tall, said Shawn.

"We wanted to do something," he said, "and, at first, I thought about making a flag pole to fly a flag."

However, after talking it over with other family mem-

bers, it was decided to paint the flag on the barn.

"It was a good place for a flag," he said, "and something we thought a lot of people would be able to see."

The project took six hours and required the use of one of his tallest ladders and, in some cases, the hood of his pickup, he said.

For the past week or so, Shawn said he has been contemplating the thought of painting a British flag as well. "They (the British) have been behind the United States 100 percent and I think it's something we might do."

Mason, 8, and Chann, 9, two of Fromholtz' children, said they thought it was a great idea and provided moral support by picking out the stencils to make the 50 stars.

Shawn said he has lights attached to the barn so that the flag will be illuminated day and night.

## Attorney General candidate Adkins disputes recent accusations

LAWRENCE (AP) — Attorney General candidate David Adkins is challenging accusations that his support for a bill that reduced parole time for criminals helped lead to a quadruple homicide in Wichita last year.

The accusations come from State Rep. Tony Powell, R-Wichita, who is contemplating challenging Adkins in his run for attorney general.

"I hold people like Sen. Adkins responsible for what happened," Powell said. The bill, adopted by the Legislature in 2000, "arguably

led to the execution-style killings," Powell said. Adkins, a state senator from Leawood, called Powell's charge untrue and outrageous.

"This is more of a despicable reflection on (Powell's) character and doesn't take into account an understanding of the law or the facts of the case."

The legislation reduced the amount of time many criminals had to stay under parole supervision. The bill's supporters said it would free prison space to make room for more violent

offenders. The legislation also was adopted at a time that lawmakers were trying to avoid spending millions of dollars to build prisons.

Just months after the bill became law, five people were taken from a Wichita home, forced to withdraw money from automated teller machines and then taken to a soccer field, where all were shot in the head. Four died; one survived.

Brothers Reginald Carr Jr. and Jonathan Carr face charges in connection with the four

slayings and an additional homicide just days earlier in Wichita.

Reginald Carr, who had been released from prison, had benefited from the new law because it reduced his parole term from two years to one year. His parole term ended Dec. 1, two weeks before the Dec. 14-15 quadruple slayings.

Though the law reduced Carr's parole term, it was later discovered that he had been released from parole six months early because of a paperwork error. Carr had been mistakenly

awarded too many days for "good-time credit" by parole officials.

Adkins, who voted for the bill as a member of the House, said the legislation "had nothing to do with that crime."

He said Carr was free basically because of a parole officer's mistake. But Powell said that the "paperwork" mistake would not have been an issue without the new law that reduced Carr's parole term. "The law contributed to what happened," Powell said.

### Briefly

#### Weather: A little warmer

A bit of a warm up is scheduled for Wednesday here in the Colby area, then a return to more seasonal readings, says the National Weather Service. Tonight, clear skies, lows in the middle 30s and south winds 10-15 mph. Wednesday, sunny and warmer with highs near 80 and south winds 5-15 mph, turning to the southwest. Wednesday night, clear with lows in the upper 30s. Thursday through Saturday, highs generally in the upper 60s to around 70 and lows in the middle 30s. Monday's high in Colby was only 52 and the overnight low this morning provided a hard freeze as the mercury tumbled to 25, just 4 degrees off the record low for the date of 21 set in 1976. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 53 degrees. The records for Oct. 16: 94 in 1921 and 21 in 1976. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest

Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

#### Combined vocal concert tonight

There will be a combined vocal concert at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium at Colby High School tonight. Vocal members from Goodland High School will be singing with students from Colby High School. The event is free and open to everyone. Refreshments will follow in the commons area.

#### Pet wash Saturday at college

The Colby Community College veterinary technology students will hold a pet wash from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 20, at the ag/vet tech building on campus. To make an appointment, call 462-3984, ext. 260 and there is minimal fee.

#### City council meets tonight

The Colby City Council will meet today at 7:30 p.m. in council chambers to review a plan and profile of the bridge removal and at-grade crossings on North Range Avenue. Other items on the agenda include discussing a summary appraisal for a 50' x 50' tract of land and agreement with the state on a road project.

#### Genesis gears up for holiday project

Genesis-Thomas County, which is the area food bank, is again planning to help families during the holiday season, said Marcy Wasson, chairperson of the Christmas basket project. Families in need and who are interested in receiving food and services during this special time are asked to pick up forms at the Genesis-Thomas County office, 350 S. Range, Colby, or call, (785) 462-7930 for information

or questions. All applications must be returned to the office by Friday, Nov. 2.

#### Dedication is Wednesday

The Senior Progress Center of Thomas County, 165 Fike Park, is inviting everyone to its dedication ceremony and memorial service at 2 p.m., Wednesday, honoring Fred Rikoff and Clarence West, said Deb Koon, director.

#### Teddy bear collection underway

Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges, is collecting teddy bears and other stuffed animals for children who need a friend, said Sarah Heier, one of the collection organizers. For information or questions, call Heier at 462-3100.

