



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

Not one, but two Colbyites carry Olympic Torch

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

The odds certainly wouldn't seem to be in favor of a small town like Colby. But while most people never get to see the Olympic Flame, one Colby resident has already carried it and another is waiting in the wings to do so, too.

Jack Stroud carried the Olympic Torch through Wichita on Jan. 11 and Sharon Vap will be a support runner in Denver on Jan. 30.

Destination for the torch is Salt Lake City, site of the 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

Both said they were surprised to be nominated and couldn't believe that two people from Colby would make the cut.

"Isn't this amazing," said Vap. She said she didn't have any idea she had even been nominated until she got a letter telling her where to report from the Salt Lake Olympic Committee.

Stroud, who has worked for the Union Pacific Railroad for 13 years, was nominated by other employees and recommended by the supervising office in Denver.

Stroud, who worked in Wyoming until 1994, when he was transferred to Oakley, said he wasn't sure why he was chosen, but he had been nominated based on a perfect safety record, including 13 years without a single safety violation.

He said he was told the distance was 2/10 of a mile, but he was so excited "that it didn't even feel that far."

Torch bearers, like Stroud, wear a white suit with blue lettering, which they get to keep.

Vap and other support runners also



ABOVE LEFT: Sharon Vap (right) showed off the suit she will wear as a support runner for the Olympic Torch in Denver on Wednesday to Laura Cook at the high school. Vap, a paraprofessional, was nominated by her nephew in Salina and Colby High School students.



ABOVE RIGHT: Jack Stroud, right, got a light for the Olympic Torch he carried in Wichita on Jan. 11. Stroud was one of two people from Colby who were chosen for the honor of escorting the Torch on its journey to Salt Lake City.

get to keep their suits, which are blue with white lettering and logos.

Stroud and his wife, Yvonne, have three daughters, Dominique, 18, Jackie 14 and Jaimie, 13 and stay busy with their family.

Vap will run as a support runner on Jan. 30 in Denver. She was nominated by her nephew, Jamie Samson, Salina, along with students from Colby High School.

The nomination was kept secret from Vap as a surprise, and it worked.

"I just can't believe it."

Vap said she didn't know exactly how far she would run, but she would start at the corner of Martin Luther King Drive and Milwaukee Boulevard.

"They told us friends and family can cheer us on between Milwaukee and Adams Boulevards on Martin Luther King Drive," she said.

Vap is a special education paraprofessional at Colby High School. She said she was honored by the "once-in-

a-lifetime" opportunity and a little awed that two people would be nominated from Colby.

She and husband Jim, a mechanic for Tri-County Implement in Oakley have four grown children. Jim Jr. and wife Jennifer, Colby, Pattie, Kansas City, Kan., Jason and wife Joey, Laramie, Wyo. and Joshua, Holdrege, Neb.

They also have four grandchildren, Morgan and Alex live in Colby and Kaitlyn and Jayden live in Laramie.

Torchbearers and support runners

were nominated through Chevrolet, Coca-Cola and the Salt Lake Olympic Committee.

Chevrolet offered the opportunity to send in nominations by promoting the program at 4,300 dealerships and on its website.

A selection committee chose Chevy's entries.

Coca-Cola's program was available at participating retailers and also at its website.

With the nominations in hand, Coca-

Cola held a lottery to select its quarter-share of the torchbearer roster.

The Salt Lake Olympic Committee nomination form was available on the web only.

All nomination forms were completed online, with the nomination period running from March 1 to May 15.

The committee had 96 local task forces around the country, who reviewed a total of 210,000 short essays (50-100 words) submitted by friends, family members and co-workers.

Refunds, cash, property being held for many Thomas Countians

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

There's a lot of unclaimed property in the state of Kansas and 638 people and/or businesses in Thomas County are included in the list.

"The Office of the Kansas State Treasurer is holding more than \$100 million in stocks, bonds, safe deposit box contents, insurance refunds, abandoned checking and savings accounts as well as other cash and property," said Tim Shallenburger, treasurer.

The treasurer's office said that it's hoping that maybe someone in Thomas County might recognize the name of a friend, relative or co-worker and call their office.

"Each year we make every effort to locate the rightful owners of this unclaimed property and return it to the rightful owners or their heirs," he said. "Last year we returned more than \$8 million."

For information on claiming property, Shallenburger said people can call toll-free 1-800-432-0386 or the treasurer's office at (785) 296-3171.

"We want to reunite owners of abandoned property with their assets and by providing the list below, will hopefully do just that," he said.

There is also a website to access the office, which is <http://www.kansascash.com>.

The following Thomas County residents have unclaimed property refunds.

• Colby names include Glenda Albright, John Anderson, Mabel Anderson, Pedro Arellano, Robert Arnold, Alexander Ashbaugh, Clay Ashton, Donna Aver, Bert Baker, Charles Ballentine, Janet Balloun, James Bath, Mike Beckman, Arthur Beedy, Cody Beeson, William

Bentley, Linda Berry, Randall Berry, Walter Blakely, Sally Bloom, Raymond Bogardt, James Bohle, Beth Ann Boline, Leonard Boline, Leon Bradshaw, Clem Bremenkamp, John Bremenkamp, Marianne Bressler, Mike Brier, Bradeley Brisenede, Stephen Bronnenberg, Leola Brown, Herbert Brumfield, Gregory Burger, Fred Burmaster, Ora Burton, Albert Cain, Marshall Cantrell, Robert Cardwell, Russell Carpenter, Rick Carter, Jeffrey Case, Oscar Castillo, Raymond Castillo, Robert Cates, Edward Cersovsky, Sher Cersovsky, Penny Cranston, Mick Chestnut, Pamela Chestnut, Loyal Clark, Jeffery Clark, Shawn Eugene Clark, Steve Coffman, Coffman Standard, Colby Medical and Surgical Center, Colby Radiator Service, Colby Supermarket, Dale Conrad, Janet Conrad, Charles Cook, D. Cook, Charles Cooper, Duane Corger, Dennis Cork, Ron Cowherd, Shirley Cranston, Robert Crawford, Daniel Crawford, Vicky Crawford, A. Creighton, Barbara Cruver, Diane Custine, James Damon, John Davis, Fred Deal, Eunice Deal, Ray Deaton, Dennis Dechert, Eunice Dechert, Richard Dempeldif, Shirley Dick, Michael Dickens, William Dill, Mike Disberger, Glen Doherty, Gary Dolan, Michael Donelan, Larry Donley, L.W. Drebert Estate, Marlene Duke, Roger Dumler, Raumont Dumler, Terry Dunn, Edwin Dunn, Sharon Dunn, Ronald Dyer, Staley Edmundson, Brent Eillts, T.J. Eillts, Anna Ekberg, Ray Emel, Jose Esquivel, Frank Fakey, Farmers Merchant Bank, Jim Felder, Reginald Ferguson, Kathryn Ferguson, Robert Field, Cleona Flynn, Ken Foelgner, Ronald Foss, Larry Franks, Richard Freese, Harry Gallegos, John Garcia, Hilda Garcia, Joe Louis Garcia, Isdara Garcia, Gary Garza, Kenneth Gatlin, Robert Gear-

hart, Wilma Mae Gearhart, Garland Gfeller, Vera Gibson, John Gibson, Reva Gilbert, Dee Glazier, Dena Glover, Richard Golden, Golden Belt Swine Inc., J.H. Gordon, John Gorman, Lloyd Grady, R. Gramer, S.T. Gramer, Elizabeth Greenspan, Frederick Griffin, John Griffin, Dennis Grund, Loren Guill, HL&Co., Jacob Haines, Larry Halfield, Cleo Hamel, Chris Hamill, Eli Hamilton, Les Haremza, Ronald Haremza, Harkins, Dale Harkins, Sara Harkins, Leon Roulier, Carol Harper, Herbert Harrah, W.S. Harrison, Philip Hassler, Larry Heier, Mary Helm, Caroline Henry, Harold Herbel, Joe Hernandez, Ralph Herwig, James Herwig, Hi Plains Coop Assoc., Dean Higgins, Clinton Hill, Harold Hills, Dr. V. Hildyard, Vernard Hinton Jr., James Holmes, Toshiyuki Hori, Tony Horinek, Anita Horinek, Jon Horton, William Howard, Glenn Howard, Linda Huelsman, Marvin Huelsmann, Lonnie Hutchison, I-70 Gulf Service, Bill Jackson, David Jackson, Beverly Jamison, Tony Jeffries, Lewis Jennings, Don Jensen, Terry Lee John, Jim Johnson, Lureta Johnson, Curtis Johnson, Martin Johnson, Albert Jones, James Jones, Jay Jones, Jacqueline Jones, Diane Jones, Connie Jones, Russ Kahle, Kansas Press Women, Marie Kendall, A.A. Kendall, Kents Standard, Ruth Kersembrock, Marilyn Kersembrock, Clarence Kimsey, Andrea King, Sherry Kiser, Pamela Knudson, J.M. Koggie, Robert Kohrs, Keith Krannawitter, John Kriss, Phyllis Kriss, USD 480 Liberal, William Lambdin, Steven Lampe, Steven Lange, Kay Lange, Marion

See "UNCLAIMED," Page 3

Tax chairman's plan emerges as the top budget option

TOPEKA (AP) — A proposal to raise tobacco and alcohol taxes has emerged quickly as the top option for addressing the state's budget problems.

At the request of its chairman, David Corbin, the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee agreed Wednesday to sponsor the legislation to raise about \$87 million during the fiscal year that begins July 1.

The plan drew support from Senate President Dave Kerr, R-Hutchinson, and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Steve Morris, R-Hugoton. They had drafted their own plan to cut spending and tap into rainy day funds to avoid tax increases.

Corbin outlined the tax committee plan even as the Ways and Means Committee continued hearings on the Kerr-Morris plan to cut spending.

"I think you'll find there's quite a bit of interest in sin taxes," Kerr said. "I think you'll find there are a lot of people who like budget cuts in the abstract but don't like them in the specific."

Enron chief Kenneth L. Lay resigns

HOUSTON (AP) — Dogged by the downfall of one of the nation's biggest businesses, Kenneth L. Lay stepped down as chairman and chief executive of Enron Corp. after nurturing the company into an energy giant and then watching it tumble into bankruptcy.

Lay's resignation on Wednesday came one day before two congressional committee hearings were to begin looking into Enron's stunning collapse. Congress is trying to sort out conflicting accounts of document shredding at the Houston-based company's outside auditing firm,

The tax committee's bill is designed to prevent spending cuts, particularly in education. Corbin, R-Towanda, scheduled a hearing on the legislation for Monday and said his committee could vote the same day.

One opponent of higher taxes said the proposal has a fighting chance.

"If the Senate supports any tax increase, it will be a bill very similar to this," said Sen. Stan Clark, R-Oakley.

The bill would increase the cigarette tax by 35 cents a pack, to 59 cents, and double the tax on the wholesale distribution of all other tobacco products to 20 percent. It would increase all taxes on alcoholic beverages. The cost of an \$8.59 12-pack of Budweiser would increase about 15 cents.

The plan is less ambitious than Gov. Bill Graves' proposal to increase cigarette, sales and motor fuels taxes and vehicle registration fees by \$228 million. That plan would raise the cigarette tax 65 cents but would not increase taxes on other tobacco products or alcohol.

"It's an indication of legislators'

willingness to consider options," Graves said. "It's just one more idea for folks to consider, which is what this process should be about."

Kerr said the tax committee's bill has a reasonable chance of passing because senators see a need to compromise with Graves. He said most opposition in his chamber was to raising general taxes, such as sales, income or property.

Both Morris and Kerr said they would vote for the tax committee's bill.

"I was hoping this kind of a package would make it through the process," Morris said.

Democrats, who hold 10 of the 40 Senate seats, said they want a guarantee that the money raised by the tax increases would be spent on education.

"All of these tax increases, I could support," said Sen. Greta Goodwin, D-Winfield, a tax committee member.

The Kerr-Morris budget plan would cut the current \$4.5 billion budget by about \$85 million, then freeze spending for fiscal 2003. The result would be a state budget slightly smaller than the current one.

because the funds had been invested largely in Enron stock, which became nearly worthless. Other investors and creditors also have lost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Lay has been widely criticized because he urged Enron employees to buy the company's stock a month after he was warned that the energy-trading giant faced potential accounting scandals.

Enron allegedly kept billions of dollars in debt off its books, and the company acknowledged that it overstated profits for four years.

Briefly

Weather: Might climb to 70

Colby's temperature could reach 70 on Saturday, advises the National Weather Service in its forecast this morning. Tonight, clear, lows around 20 and southwest winds 10-15 mph. Friday, sunny, highs in the middle 60s and southwest winds 10-20 mph. Friday night, clear, lows in the middle 20s. Saturday, partly sunny, highs near 70. Sunday, partly cloudy, lows in the lower 30s and highs in the lower 60s. Colby's high Wednesday was 37 and the overnight low this morning was 9. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 32. Precipitation remains at 0.10 inches for the month. The records for January 24: 68 in 1981 and —26 in

1894. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Assistance put on hold

Rosalie Seemann will not be at the Meadowlark Manor from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday to assist with Food Sales and Homestead Refunds, because of illness. Her visit will be rescheduled.

Girl Scout cookies on sale

Girls Scouts have started taking orders for Girl Scout

cookies and will continue through Feb. 1. Delivery dates are Feb. 19 to March 8. Money will be collected upon delivery. To order cookies, contact any Girl Scout, or Shannon Koon, cookie chairman, 462-6662.

Dismissal procedures noted

With colder temperatures now occurring and snow possible, it could become necessary to dismiss school early or cancel it due to inclement weather, Colby Public School officials are reminding parents to listen for media announcements. In the case of early dismissals, said Kirk Nielsen, superintendent, every effort will be made to make

radio and television stations in the area aware of the situation. "We will do our best to have the announcement made at least one hour prior to the scheduled dismissal time," he said. When school is canceled, a media announcement will run no later than 7 a.m. on local radio and television networks.

Recycling center takes phone books

The Thomas County Recycling Center is taking old telephone books at its collection site, 720 E. College Dr. in Colby. Those wanting to drop off the books should use the magazine bins, coordinators said.

