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February 21, 2002

Volume 113, Number 37 Serving Thomas County since 1888

6 pages

Board okays bus repairs at meeting

Colby Free Press Colby School Board members approved the \$10,000 replacement of an engine in a 10-year-old school bus after a heated discussion on where the money was to come from at their Monday night meeting.

Superintendent Kirk Nielsen told board members the bus had been taken to Central Detroit Diesel, who wanted to overhaul the engine for \$10,000.

Board member Bill Miller objected to the request, saying a rebuilt engine would be the best way to go and wondering why the money needed to be taken from the district's emergency fund. "I guess your definition of an emergency and mine are different," he

Business manager Jo DeYoung explained that an emergency was defined as an unplanned, unbudgeted expense and this fit the description.

Miller then asked why they couldn't just take it out of the transportation

"(Transportation director Alan) Wade told us he had enough money to buy a new bus," Miller said. De Young then explained the difference between budget authority and actual money.

Although Wade has enough authority to buy a bus, he needs approval from the board by moving money into the transportation fund from the general

"If we don't spend that money there, we can use it elsewhere," she said, adding that unbudgeted expenses could leave the district short in June.

Miller then wanted to know why the district couldn't take money out of the emergency fund in June if there was a shortage.

"Because that wouldn't be unexpected and not an emergency," board secretary Marilyn Reed told him.

Miller also wanted a rebuilt engine installed if possible, citing better war-

ranty and reliability. The board approved a rebuilt engine.

Curriculum offers look into the past

Colby Free Press Colby School Board members took a break from money troubles at their meeting earlier this week to view curriculum presentations by history students in Derek Bissitt and Shelly Myers' classes.

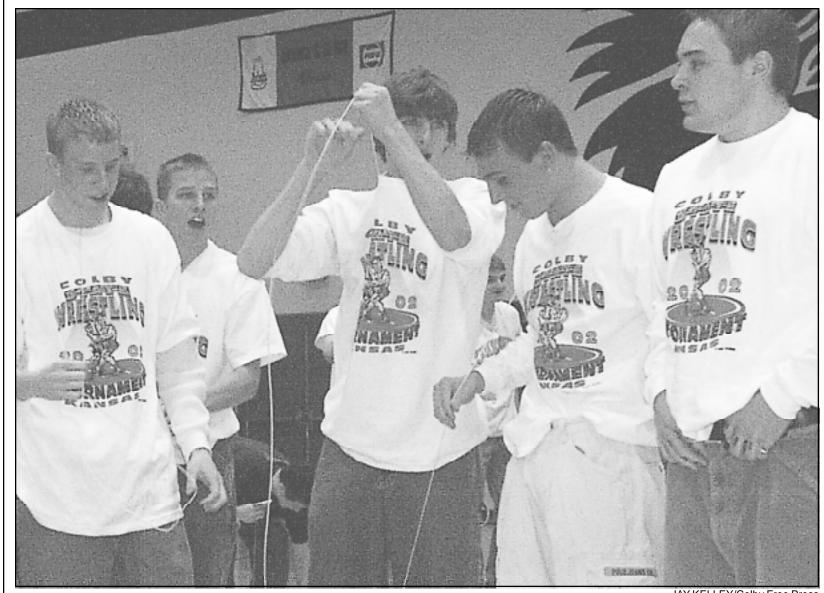
Members and visitors went to the high school to see students' work in the 1920s and 1930s. Presentations included videos of students' grandparents and other relatives who lived through the dust bowl days.

Some students also did artwork depicting scenes and events from that era and one group put out a "newspaper" with headlines from the time.

Bissitt said all the students involved said they learned a great deal about the important time in our history.

"A lot of them are impressed by how tough their grandparents are," he said. Also at the meeting, the board accepted the resignations of vocal music teacher Chris Latta, language arts teacher Margaret Houtz and lunch

Good luck at state!



JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Colby High School wrestlers enjoyed a skit during a pep rally to send Friday at 4 p.m. and will continue through Saturday. Pictured are, from gym. The wrestling team left at about 10 a.m. Tournament action starts Olsen and Brent Deibert.

The cookies are here

them off to the state tournament in Wichita today at the high school left to right, Schuyler Sharpe, Eric Luedke, Tanner McClure, Tucker

Good attendance at game, but no record breaker

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press Colby Community College basketball's challenge to set a new record for attendance at the Commu- the Community Building to about 2/3 nity Building fell short, but school of- capacity to watch Colby take on the ficials said they were pleased with the defending Jayhawk Conference attendance and the 77-68 Trojan win Champions. The record, set Feb. 19, over Butler County.

The Trojans did break one record.

win, the most since joining the Jayhawk Conference six years ago. The old record was 15, set last season.

A vocal crowd of about 1,000 filled 2000, is 1,711.

The crowd also watched the Lady The men's team recorded their 16th Trojans fall to the Butler County

women 71-53 and during half-time of were still very good and demonstrated the men percentam, who took sixth in the nation at the junior college finals in Rochester, Minn. Saturday, were introduced.

'We had a lot of people, but there were also a lot of other things going on fans had to travel. around town last night," said Debbie

the kind of support college officials like to see at home games.

Athletic Director Carl Adams agreed with Schwanke, adding that one challenge was the distance Butler County

"We get bigger crowds from closer Schwanke, public information officer teams," he said. Adams also said the could be eliminated. He said the fire at the college. Even with all the other mid-week games don't draw as many activities, Schwanke said the numbers people as Saturday games

House committee endorses plan for new research center

Bill would authorize \$110 million in bonds for three universities

TOPEKA(AP)—Abill authorizing \$110 million in bonds for three new university research centers has cleared a House committee over the misgivings of some minority Democrats.

Federal grants and private donations would supplement the bond revenue for the centers for biomedical research at the University of Kansas, food safety at Kansas State University and aviation research at Wichita State University.

The House Appropriations Committee endorsed the bill Wednesday on a voice vote, sending it to the House for debate.

Board of Regents members and legislative supporters contend the centers would stimulate economic development — and attract federal and private grants to help pay for them. "I think that it is an excellent oppor-

tunity for the state," said Rep. Jeff Peterson, R-Manhattan, a member of the Appropriations Committee.

While not objecting to the plan, some Democrats on the committee said they worried that legislators will pass the bonding bill, then cut universities' operating budgets and fail to give pay raises to faculty.

Gov. Bill Graves has expressed similar concerns, noting legislators promised universities extra money when they reorganized higher education in

"The Legislature traditionally has a terrible case of Attention Deficit Disorder, where we abandon last year's initiative for something because it's shiny and new," said Rep. Rocky Nichols, D-Topeka.

He and other Democrats said they don't know exactly where the state will get the money to cover bond payments. Under the bill, the state would be

obligated to pay off the first \$50 million of the bonds, with a limit of \$10 million a year in payments, starting in fiscal year 2004.

The universities would have to pay off the remaining \$60 million. The ing is at 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 28, the Kansas Development Finance Authority said it would issue 20-year bonds at 4.97 percent interest.

Insurance talk focus of county

By MAXINE NELSON

Colby Free Press Randy Dick of KAW Valley Insurance of Rossville, brought a mid-year review of the county's health insurance to the Tuesday meeting of the Thomas County Commissioners.

The insurance is carried through Central Benefits, and is partially selffunded. The county pays the premium for single employees, and those wishing to insure family members pay additional, Dick said.

For a single person, \$250.08 goes into the county insurance fund each month, and \$88.08 of that goes to Central Benefits, he explained. Medical claims are paid out of the

county insurance fund, and if an employee incurs more than \$10,000 in claims per year, the excess is paid by the other carrier. Dick said.

Dick said claims to date, at the midyear mark, have totaled \$54,270. Funding has been \$86,520, which leaves a reserve of \$32,251.

He said he hadn't had any complaints, after some initial adjustments at the beginning of the coverage in August. He will bring a proposed premium rate for next year in early May. Commission Chair Ron Evans said he was not in the mood to change insurance plans unless they have to.

In other business:

• They instructed Jeff Unger of Jim's Electric to install a fire alarm in the courthouse which will ring in the law enforcement center, and the fire depart-

There had been some problems with the previous alarm and it had been disconnected without their knowledge. causing alarms go to off in the courthouse, and the elevator doors to freeze

Unger said the new system could be installed using existing phone lines. and the dedicated line for the old alarm bells in the courthouse are still working, just the line to the law enforcement center had been disconnected.

 Marc Gilman was on hand to discuss some concrete work in front of the courthouse. The curbs are broken where the sidewalk meets the street and Evans wants the cement removed and some sloping ramps put in to comply with the ADA. Gilman will bring a

• The commissioners approved two tax abatements, one for \$388.34 for a 2001 Dodge pickup which was sold in May, and one for \$101.50 for a 1975 portable building owned by someone other than the person accessed.

• They called Rosalie Seemann and approved her written request to build some more shelves in the Genesis Thomas County food bank in the Thomas County Office Complex.

• They approved a contract with EAF Service to do random drug and alcohol testing for the road department.

 They also approved spending \$275 to send Susan McMahan to Barton County to take some training to become an emergency medical dis-

The commissioners will meet in special meeting at 9 a.m. Thursday to open bids for a pickup for the noxious weed department.

The next regularly scheduled meetlast business day of the month, to pay bills and conduct business. All meetings are open to the public.

Briefly

to waiting customers.

Weather: Balmy

room worker Carla Sullivan.

The National Weather Service in Goodland said tonight's low temperature will be in the 20s with winds from the west at 10 mph. On Friday, partly sunny with highs in the upper 60s and west winds at 10 to 20 mph. Friday night lows are expected in the 30s. The extended forecast for Saturday is calling for partly sunny skies and highs in the lower 70s. Colby's high Wednesday was 58. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Orchestra to perform Sunday

The Pride of the Prairie Orchestra will be performing at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday in the Colby High School auditorium. The event, "A Classic Winter's Tale," promises to delight young and old with the sounds of Haydn's Toy Symphony and a Muppet Medley for children and Jazz Legato, Duke

Ellington, and John Henry for the adults. Other favorites included will be Holiday for Orchestra, Procession of the Sardar, and Lohengrin. The Pride of the Prairie Orchestra is supported by its many Friends of the Orchestra. Admission to the concert will be by Friends of the Orchestra membership or tickets available at the door.

JAY KELLEY/Colby Free Press

Red Cross classes set

The scout hut, behind City Hall, was full of goodies for a short time

Wednesday when 813 cases of Girl Scout cookies, each contain-

ing 12 boxes, were delivered. Bonnie Lewis, one of the organizers,

said 59 girls sold the cookies and they are already out delivering them

The Thomas County Chapter of the American Red Cross is sponsoring a CPR and first aid class with two sessions on Monday, Feb. 25, and Monday, March 4, at 6 p.m. at the Colby Community College student union. This course, said Donna Finley, director of the Thomas County Red Cross chapter, trains individuals to act in an emergency and to recognize and care for respiratory or cardiac emergencies, sudden illness and injuries. To register or for those with questions, call Finley at 462-7161 or 462-2366.

Brewster board meeting tonight

The Brewster School board will hold its regular meeting tonight, beginning at 5:30 p.m., in the school cafeteria, 127 Kansas St. Items on the agenda include reports from insurance committee, Washington D.C. trip, Northwest Kansas Technical School, and calendar review. New business items listed were weightlifting purchase recommendations, volleyball uniforms, cheerleader, drill team, and flag team tryout regulations and approval of tractor bid.

College to host job fair in April

Colby Community College will host a job fair for health care workers from noon to 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 18, in the Robert Burnett Memorial Student Union on campus. "We are encouraging all health care workers and students to attend this job fair," said Tina Schrick, nursing instructor at the college. "We will have a large number of poten-

tial employers from across the state of Kansas." For information or questions, call Julie Horney at 462-4788.

Pre-enrollment scheduled

Colby Grade School is offering kindergarten pre-enrollment for the 2002-03 school year on Friday, March 1, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The enrollment will be held in the conference room behind the grade school office. For questions, call 465-5100.

Flea market slated for April

The Thomas County Alcohol Drug Abuse Council is seeking donations for its flea market scheduled for Saturday, April 13, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

All donations to the council are tax-deductible and for those needing to make arrangements to have items picked up, call 462-6111.

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