



COLBY FREE PRESS

Sub-committees formed New stadium eyed

By **PATTY DECKER**

Free Press Editor

The Colby Booster Club is taking on the task of planning and looking at ways to fund a new stadium and track at Dennen Field, but organizers say it will need the help and support of everyone to become a reality.

After nearly three years of planning, a core committee met Monday night for the first time to discuss the new stadium, which would replace the current 50-year-old facility, along with refurbishing the track.

Known as the Dennen Field Stadium-Track Project, Colby Booster Club members assigned to the task, broke into sub-committees at the initial meeting and are now encouraging anyone interested to join the effort, said Joel Powell, who is one of the members researching grant information and stadium schematics.

"In order to make this large project successful," Powell said, "we will need the support of you, the school board members, the staff of the Colby School District and our community."

The first priority, said Jeff Quenzer, one of the advisors, would be the new track. He estimated the cost for refurbishing the track at approximately \$60,000. The targeted timeline to begin this portion of the project would be in the late spring of this year. The reason for the urgency, Quenzer said, is that if left the way it is and the district continues to patch the holes, the cost will continue to go up, citing anywhere from \$120,000 to \$150,000.

As for the stadium, Powell spoke about the history and uses of Dennen Field over the years. He also provided pictures of possible new stadium configurations with an approximate cost of \$202,000. However, that cost would not include removing the current bleacher structure, concrete work for sidewalks and related work, along with mechanical and electrical needs for the announcer's booth.

"In 1953, the football field was moved from the fairgrounds to its present location," he said, "and was named after R.L. Dennen, longtime superintendent."

The present stadium was built shortly after the move with the building material purchased by the Colby School District and the construction work was completed by the National Guard, he told the group.

Bill Helus, who was one of the original builders of the stadium, is still employed with the district, Powell said.

There are five sub-committees that will be responsible for finding out information about grants, the track, the stadium, publicity and fund raising, he said.

Thus far, the core committee has contacted many companies requesting information and assistance about the new stadium.

"We received the best response from Heartland Seating in Shawnee," he said. "They have been in Kansas and in the athletic seating business for over 20 years."

Powell said the current seating capacity is between 1,000 and 1,080. The new stadium would seat 1,500. It is the hoped to have the new stadium by summer of 2004.

The following core committee members were assigned to sub-committees and Powell reiterated that if anyone would like to help, they are welcome.

There are three advisors to include Quenzer, activities director and assistant high school principal, John Cranston, school board member, and Diana Wieland, curriculum director.

Others involved so far include



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

A core committee with the Colby Booster Club met for the first time Monday night to begin work on raising money, support and interest in the Dennen Field Stadium-Track Project. In the foreground is Tanya Staats, treasurer; Lesley Wagoner and Gordon Rasmussen, track sub-committee members; and Jack Elliott, club member. Anyone interested in helping on a sub-committee can call Joel or Anita Powell, 462-6820, or any other committee member.

Tanya Staats, treasurer, publicity and grant committee; Dana Dempewolf, secretary; Joel Powell, grants and stadium committee; Dewey Augustine, stadium com-

mittee; Chuck Dempewolf, fundraising and stadium committee; Kathy Elliott, grants; Gordon Rasmussen, track; Lesley Wagoner, track; Pam Augustine and Anita

Powell, fundraising; Shawn Stephens, publicity and stadium; along with Dennis Peterson and Gary Adrian, whose tasks will be determined at a later date.

U.S. continues military buildup

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon, preparing for possible war in Iraq, is dispatching an enormous array of naval combat power to the Persian Gulf region, including two seven-ship armadas carrying thousands of Marines.

The Navy also is prepared to put as many as six aircraft carriers within striking distance of Iraq. Two already are in position, two are prepared to sprint to the region and two are gearing up for possible deployment.

The latest naval movements are part of a broader buildup of U.S. air, land and sea power in the gulf region as President Bush contem-

plates whether to use military force to disarm Iraq. Administration officials hope the size of the buildup alone will add to the pressure on Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to give up chemical and biological weapons that U.S. officials say he is hiding but that Saddam insists do not exist.

Despite the movements of ships and personnel, the White House spokesman denied on Monday that Bush has an "artificial timetable" that would trigger hostilities.

Asked whether the president was willing to wait a year, which U.N. weapons inspectors said Monday might be necessary for a definitive

reading on Iraq's armory, presidential spokesman Ari Fleischer said: "The president has not put any type of artificial timetable on how long he believes it's necessary for Saddam Hussein to prove to the world that he's going to comply."

Also on Monday, officials disclosed that the Navy is preparing to deploy as early as this week a seven-ship armada with 6,000 to 7,000 Marines from California.

The amphibious force would mirror a seven-ship deployment of about 7,000 Marines from the East Coast, which headed out over the weekend, the officials said.

Together the task forces will

present Gen. Tommy Franks, the Central Command commander, who would run a war against Iraq, with the option of amphibious assaults from the northern Persian Gulf, the officials said.

Marines also could go ashore in Kuwait to be part of an Army-led land attack into southern Iraq.

Trained to operate in austere environments, the Marines also could move by helicopter into Iraq from their ships in the Gulf or from Kuwait to establish forward bases, as they did in southern Afghanistan early in that 2001 war.

About 60,000 U.S. troops currently are in the Gulf region.

Rock star shocks fans

LONDON (AP) — Rock guitarist Pete Townshend was released from police custody Tuesday, resting at home after his arrest on suspicion of possessing indecent images of children, his lawyer said.

Police questioned the founding member of The Who at a southwest London police station for an hour and 20 minutes Monday night, releasing him shortly after midnight, nearly five hours after he was first detained.

A police spokesman said the legendary musician had signed an agreement saying he would return to the station later in January. Reporters saw Townshend —

who has acknowledged using a Web site advertising child pornography but says he was merely doing research for his autobiography — leaving the station in the back seat of a Mercedes, lying down partially covered by what appeared to be a bag or a coat.

"He is going home to get some rest," his lawyer John Cohen said.

The rock star has not been charged with a crime. Under British law, suspects are not charged immediately upon arrest and some arrested people are eventually released without charge.

Commissioners agree with county attorney on road



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

Thomas County Clerk Tracey Perkins administered the oath of office to Thomas County Commissioner Ron Evans Monday morning prior to the commissioners' meeting. Evans was re-elected at last November's general election. He is serving as commission chairman

By **DARREL PATTILLO**

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Commissioners refused to get too deeply involved in a road dispute in Kingery Township Monday morning during their regular weekly meeting.

Pam Medford wants a road created on a section line that defines a section of land owned by Phil and Alana Keck. The road would enable Medford access to land she works.

Medford, the Kecks, and several Kingery Township landowners with an interest in the proceedings were on hand to hear the opinion of Thomas County Attorney Allan Taylor, who said he had concerns about the open road issue. "I've researched this, and as far as I can tell when the Kansas statutes were changed in 1923 the issue of whether a road is open until a county closes it wasn't included in the statutes when they were published in 1923. In other words, my advice on this matter is to file a petition to have the road opened, and let the court decide."

The commissioners agreed, with their chairman Ron Evans stating, "This is a township issue, not something for the commissioners to decide."

Kathy Ryan, director of the Thomas County Health Department, was in to update the commissioners on the county's bio-terrorism program, and also to inform the commissioners that fees for all of the services the county offers have been raised to keep up with rising administration costs.

On bio-terrorism, Ryan said that the Kansas Department of Health and Environment will be sending teams out to six sites to provide smallpox vaccinations for military personnel and first-responders.

In addition, Ryan said that she was in the process of updating computers, copiers, and software and the phone system in order to provide better communications between the state and her department. Commissioner Duane Dawes inquired as to the cost of the updates, and Ryan said that the state had provided \$27,000 in grants for the costs.

"That money is actually federal money that's helping us get up to speed," Ryan said.

Brian Staats, of Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball, the firm in Colby that provides accounting services for the county, stopped by to tell commissioners that some changes have been made in the way accounting firms are doing business.

"In the wake of the recent scandals in the business world," Staats said, "the federal government has changed the way we do audits. However, since the county didn't

receive enough federal money it's not subject to what is called a 'yellow book audit,' and we can continue to provide the services that we have been providing."

Dick Weston, of the Soil Conservation office, was in to inform the commissioners of a new program starting up in Thomas County. Landowners are being sought to start *living snow fences* on their properties.

"Living snow fences," Weston said, "will help with blowing and drifting snow, soil erosion, and also provide habitat for wildlife that is desperately needed." Anyone in Thomas County who is interested in starting a living snow fence on their property can call Weston at 462-7482, extension 3.

The next meeting of the commissioners will be Monday at 9 a.m. in the commissioner's room on the second floor of the courthouse.

WeatherWatch

The numbers

Monday's high, 66
Low this morning, 17
Soil temperature, 34
Temperature at 11:30, 38
Records for this date: 68 in 1900, -15 in 1979

The forecast

Tonight: cloudy, lows upper teens, southeast winds up to 15 mph. Wednesday, cloudy, 40 percent chance for snow in the afternoon, highs 35-40, east winds turning north around 15 mph. Wednesday night, cloudy, a 60 percent chance for snow, lows around 10 above, brisk winds. Thursday, cloudy, snow tapering off in the morning, highs in the 20s, breezy.

Briefly

Blood drive planned Jan. 29

The Thomas County American Red Cross blood drive coordinators are reminding everyone that on Wednesday, Jan. 29, there will be a blood drive in Colby. The drive is scheduled from 7:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. at the Comfort Inn and organizers are encouraging anyone eligible to donate blood to help in making the drive a success. More information about the blood drive will appear in a later edition of the *Colby Free Press*. For questions or information, call either Jackie Stephens, 462-8122 or Jo Frahm, 462-2082.

Students to do job shadowing

Second through fifth grade students at Colby Grade School will be job shadowing in area businesses on Friday, Jan. 31, from the opening of that business until 10:45 a.m., said Terrel Harrison, principal. Parents will ask the business to give approval on a permission slip, which will need to be returned to the grade school office. For those with questions about the

job shadowing project, call Harrison at 465-5100.

Moran plans stop in McDonald

Congressman Jerry Moran will be in McDonald from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 22, at Peoples State Bank, 304 Rawlins Ave. as part of his "Big First Listening Tour," said Travis Murphy, public information officer. Moran will be holding town hall meetings in 69 counties during January and February, traveling more than 5,000 miles to meet constituents in the First District, he said. All area residents are invited and encouraged to attend the meeting and ask questions about any federal issues affecting them.

Booster Club seeks helpers

The Colby Booster Club is looking for any school group or team interested in earning extra money for their group's specific goals to work at its concession stand during home wrestling matches and basketball games, said Shawn

Stephens with the Booster Club. In the event there no school groups or teams requesting to work, the club will extend the offer to church youth groups and other organizations.

Landfill has new regulations

Because of new Kansas Department of Health and Environment regulations, only trees and shrubs will be allowed in the Thomas County Landfill burn pile. All other wood products, including unpainted wood and pallets, must be placed in the construction and demolition area of the landfill, said Larry Jumper, supervisor. All debris that enter the construction and demolition area is subject to the \$10 per ton tipping fee, with a \$2 minimum, he said.

Health Care meeting scheduled

The Area Citizens for Health Care will have their next meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 21, starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Colby Community Building's Little Theater. All are invited.

