



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Colby grad on national stage with rare eye surgery

By TOM (TD) DREILING

Free Press Publisher

Mention the name Dr. Darrel Williams and it may not suddenly turn on the light. Those watching the "Today Show" this morning (channel 9 on the local cable system), saw Dr. Williams being interviewed by Matt Lauer, co-anchor of the popular morning show.

But what the viewers didn't know is that Dr. Williams has a link to Colby. As in Colby, Kansas.

Dr. Williams is a nephew of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Bixenman of this community and is a graduate of Colby High School. Probably in his 40s, agewise.

Turns out that Dr. Williams is an eye surgeon, from Minot, N.D., and

had occasion to use a procedure, although not fully endorsed by the FDA — "they are too conservative" at times with their approvals, he injected in his conversation — that helped a Minot man gain sight in an eye badly damaged in an accident. The doctor was able to perform the procedure under what is called the compassionate use exemption.

John Palmer, the doctor's patient — also on the show — said that after the accident he lost all sight in the eye. Everything was blurry, he said; couldn't make out images. He also mentioned searing headaches he experienced after the accident.

Dr. William's explained that the iris of Mr. Palmer's eye was ruptured, thus the eye was not able to

regulate the amount of entering light, impacting the function of the retina.

The patient's iris was replaced with a camera-type lens, manufactured in the Netherlands. Dr. Williams said the procedure took an hour and forty-five minutes to perform. Mr. Palmer said he is now able to see images, can do some reading

and the headaches are of less concern.

The doctor was not certain whether more surgery might be necessary in the future.

He said the total cost runs around \$8,000 to \$9,000.

Palmer, said the doctor, has more vision to look forward to as a result of the procedure.

## Board to seek bids on a new building

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS

Colby Free Press

Despite the opposition of board member Gerry Fulwider, the Colby School Board voted to seek bids on building a new administration facility. Fulwider questioned why bids were going to be sought when the district doesn't have the money to build a new building.

A proposed building was presented to the board during the Feb. 21 meeting by Colby architect Glen Strait. It was decided by the board during that meeting to wait until the final plans from the mechanical engineer were done before deciding whether or not to take bids.

Strait's plans had two options for the administration building, one with a basement and one without. Over the past two weeks, the building committee met and decided to eliminate the basement as an option on the building and change the location from property at the high school to the former location of the intermediate building at the corner of Third and Grant.

The idea behind changing the location was to have more parking available and to have the building out of the direct wind. In addition, the landscaping would already be complete at that location and it would be cheaper to build due to utility access.

Strait told the board it would be better to seek bids with a firm location established and the members

present (Bill Miller and Wilburn Holloway were absent) felt the location of Third and Grant would be the site bids were made for.

During the vote, board member Stan Molstad, Cathy Gordon, Tracy Rogers and John Cranston voted to go forward with the bidding process to see how much the building would cost to build.

In other business:

- Superintendent Kirk Nielsen said Linda Taylor has suggested the board look at possibly using part of Southwind Plaza for a location for administrative offices. The two buildings at the west end were the suggested location. Nielsen said he had the keys to the facility if the board would like to evaluate the location as an option.

- Terrell Harrison, elementary principal, was the only building principal present to give a report. She reported the elementary school held the spelling bee last week and that the first graders are preparing to hold a concert on March 13. Pre-enrollment is currently being held and they have 39 children pre-enrolled for kindergarten.

- A interlocal agreement with the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center was approved. The agreement is for five years and allows Colby schools to use the services of the center.

- A field trip to Denver for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes was approved.

## Fort Riley called again

TOPEKA (AP) — An additional 2,100 active duty soldiers at Fort Riley have received orders to deploy as the United States readies for a possible war with Iraq, Fort Riley officials said.

The soldiers, including the remainder of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division and additional troops from the 937th Engineer Group received orders to deploy in support of Central Command operations. Spokeswoman Christie Vanover said the soldiers were previously on alert.

"We anticipated that it could be coming, so it really wasn't a surprise," Vanover said.

Pentagon officials gave orders over the weekend to more than 60,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen to deploy to the Persian Gulf, raising the number of U.S. forces in the region to 300,000. The Central Command is based in Tampa, Fla., under command of Gen. Tommy R. Franks. The latest Fort Riley deployment is in addition to 2,400 soldiers who were ordered to deploy in February, Vanover said.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Colby High School students participated in the Kansas Teen Baseline program today at the First Presbyterian Church. During the introductory activity this morning, teens broke into small groups to talk about places they go and problems they face in the world today, said Molly Oliver, one of the facilitators. In one

of the four small groups above were, from left to right, Casey Denneler, Maret Peterson, Erika Erickson, Joey Melnyk and Taylor Miller. The program was developed to help students examine their own personal beliefs and behaviors regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

## Colby High students tackle tough issues

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Nineteen Colby High School students took part in the Kansas Teen Baseline program today sponsored by the Colby Public School District Safe and Drug Free Schools and a grant from the Juvenile Services of Northwest Kansas, said Janet Worthy, safe and drug free school coordinator.

The purpose of the program, she said, is to examine personal beliefs and look at the physical and social consequences of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

During the one-day program, Molly Oliver, Colby, and Cris Lovington, Goodland, served as facilitators in coordinating the activities.

Students participated in a variety of discussion activities focusing on what they like to talk about, places they go and problems they face everyday, said Oliver.

In addition, the activities were designed to encourage teens to establish guidelines and priorities on a daily basis while exploring the negative consequences of drinking and learning about addiction.

Another activity, Oliver said, was giving the students a scenario in which they come to school on Monday morning and hear about what six of their friends did over the weekend.

"During this activity, they rated and discussed each friend according to the level of acceptability of their actions," Oliver said.

The scenarios included one friend who got drunk and started

walking home alone; another who had too much to drink and got in a fight, hurting another teen; a third who drank too much with her friends and ended up getting sick in their car; a fourth who went to a party, got wasted and destroyed property; the fifth was a girl who drank to get the courage to have intimate relations with a boyfriend so she wouldn't lose him; and the sixth was a boy who got drunk and humiliated his girlfriend in front of others.

The students were also asked to place themselves in an imaginary line according to the level of agreement or disagreement with statements. Some of those statements, Oliver said included: how and when people drink is no one's business but their own, people have more fun

when they are drinking and drinking helps people deal with their problems.

A video entitled, *The Epidemic Continues: Teens and Underage Drinking or the Truth About Drinking*, was shown and at the end of the workshop the students were all asked to write a letter to themselves in light of the day's activities.

In previous programs, Worthy said that students have found the activities to be valuable, enlightening and inspiring.

Along with Colby, other baseline programs have been held in Oberlin, Bird City and Atwood.

For those interested in scheduling a program at other schools, call the Regional Prevention Center in Colby at (785) 462-8152.

## Will formally protest 'reckless actions'

## U.S. is basing more heavy bombers near North Korea

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States is basing more heavy bombers near North Korea and will formally protest the communist nation's "reckless actions" in using MiG fighters to intercept a U.S. surveillance plane, officials said.

Shifting the military aircraft toward northeast Asia was described "as a prudent gesture to bolster our defense posture and as a deterrent" by Defense Department spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Jeff Davis on Tuesday.

Other Pentagon officials said the

deployment includes sending B-52 bombers to the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam. The order was issued Friday, well before Sunday's incident in which North Korean jets came within 50 feet of a U.S. RC-135S surveillance plane over the Sea of

Japan, they said. Military officials said Tuesday the United States was reviewing its options in light of the gravity of Sunday's incident, one of the most dangerous military provocations in a monthslong standoff over North Korea's nuclear weap-

ons program. Those options could include having U.S. fighter jets escort similar flights, a senior military official said. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said President Bush would consult with allies to see how to protest the incident.



### Lots of sun in the forecast

Tonight...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 20s. South wind 10 mph becoming west late. Thursday...Mostly sunny and warmer. Highs in the lower 60s. Southwest wind around 10 mph. Thursday night...Mostly clear. Lows near 30. Friday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 60s. Friday night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s. Saturday...Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 50s.

#### The numbers

Tuesday's high, 21  
Low this morning, 2  
Soil temperature, 34  
Year ago, 66 and 9  
Month's snowfall, trace  
Month's precipitation, 0.03  
Records, 83 in 1910 and -9 in 1960

## Briefly

### Vocal concerts set for Monday

The Colby Middle and High School vocal departments will be presenting their "Spring Masterworks Recital" on Monday at 7:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium. The choirs will be performing selections they sang at the music festival and also demonstrating several of their daily classroom activities.

A reception sponsored by the music boosters will be held in the commons area after the concert's conclusion.

### Kids can still be enrolled

Enrollment for next year's kindergarteners was held Feb. 28 at the Colby Elementary School. For those who missed this pre-enrollment, Terrel Harrison, principal, is asking parents and/or guardians to stop by the school office, 210 N. Grant, as soon as possible to enroll your child. Harrison said to bring the child's immunization records, birth certificate and social security number for the enrollment. Any children residing in the Colby School District and who will be

five years old on or before Aug. 31, 2003 is eligible to enroll. It is not necessary to bring children for the pre-enrollment, she said.

### Storm spotter meeting scheduled

The National Weather Service will be conducting storm spotter training in the Little Theater room of the Colby Community Building on Tuesday, March 11. The meeting will start at 7 p.m. and is open to the public free of charge.

### Walk Kansas sign-up ends soon

Registration for the Walk Kansas Program will be accepted until Friday. Walk Kansas is a fitness program sponsored by Kansas State University Research and Extension. The program will run from March 15 through May 9. Teams are formed and participants walk the equivalent of the mileage it would be to walk across the state of Kansas, or 423 miles. For information or to register, contact the Thomas County Extension Office at 462-4587.

### New exhibit opens at college

Diane Frazey Mahanna's art exhibit is now open at the Cultural Arts Center gallery at Colby Community College. Kathy Gordon, art instructor, said the exhibit can be seen from 1 to 5 p.m. daily or on weekends by prior arrangements. For questions, call Gordon at 462-3984, ext. 310.

### Help available with form filings

Free assistance in filling out the Low Income Energy Assistance Program applications is available to individuals with disabilities until March 31. Free assistance in completing the Homestead Food Sales Tax Returns will be available until April 15. For information, or to set up an appointment, call (785) 625-6942 or (800) 569-5926.

### Landfill hours noted

The Thomas County landfill's winter hours are: Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sundays, 1 to 4 p.m.

