



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Insurance hikes seen for staff

By TISHA COX  
*Colby Free Press*

Staff at Colby schools will be facing increases in their health insurance rates.

In order to keep pace with a 3.4 percent rate increase, the Colby School Board approved increasing the single contribution \$5 and the family contribution \$25 at its Monday night meeting.

District financial officer Jo DeYoung explained a single individual pays \$20 a month for insurance and a family \$430.

The increase raises the individual contribution to \$25 and the family contribution to \$455 a month.

School board president Stan Molstad said the board feels lucky that the increase isn't more than it is. He said it's something the board has to deal with annually.

Molstad said many people experience huge increases in their health insurance rates.

Several bus drivers were at the meeting letting the board know they would like health coverage.

Molstad addressed the issue and said he thinks they haven't been included by choice, but that's changing.

The age of the bus drivers has changed and he said they're driving buses because of necessity and not out of choice.

He said now they just want the chance to be included in the coverage.

DeYoung said district employees who work more than 20 hours a week are eligible for benefits.

She said she looked at the hours for some of the drivers and they would qualify because their hours have been "pretty consistent."

## Microwave tower doomed



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

The microwave tower at the former KLBY-TV station on Range Ave. in Colby, was taken down Tuesday morning. Bryan Frye, marketing director for KAKE-TV, KUPK-TV and KLBY-TV, said the microwave tower was erected in 1986 when the station was purchased by Chronicle Broadcasting. Frye said the tower was used to transmit stories between Colby, Garden City and Wichita and back and had nothing to do with transmitting the actual television signal. He said the tower had to come down since it was on land belonging to the owner of the building where KLBY had offices that are no longer being leased. Frye also said closing the Colby facility and working out of Garden City will save money that will be used to start broadcasting in High Dimension Television after the first of the year. KAKE is investing \$500,000 in the Colby area alone to comply with federal mandates to broadcast in high-dimension television.

## Former hospital chief takes lawsuit to federal court

By PATTY DECKER  
*Free Press Editor*

The former administrator at Colby's hospital has dropped a civil lawsuit in Thomas County against four officers of a grassroots organization that he claimed made false and defamatory statements about him — but he will be refiling in Wichita's federal court.

Michael Boyles, former chief executive officer of Citizens Medical Center, filed an order to dismiss the petition without prejudice, which was granted by Judge Glenn Schiffner on Thursday, Nov. 6, and submitted through his attorney Larry G. Michel of Salina.

The four officers involved in the alleged claim of false and defamatory statements included John Kern, Henry Vette, Dennis Horney and Carol Voisin, who were at the time of the allegations all serving on the Area Citizens for Healthcare board.

Michel said on Monday that the primary reason for dropping the lawsuit in Thomas County was so that his client could refile the lawsuit in federal court.

Since Boyles is no longer a resident in the Colby area and because the lawsuit is between people of different states with an amount in controversy above \$75,000, he can ask for diversity jurisdiction in federal court.

However, even in federal court, Michel said, the case is still subject to Kansas law and still under its control procedurally.

The main difference between the district court and federal court is the change in location or venue. Boyles is now living and working as an administrator in Colorado.

As for refiling the lawsuit, Michel said it will probably be within the next 30 days and in Wichita.

The original petition was filed Sept. 24 with Boyles seeking dam-

ages on two counts — one for "tortious interference" with his contractual relationship at Citizens Medical Center and the other for alleged slanderous remarks by the four individuals.

The suit charged that Kern, Vette, Horney and Voisin circulated a memorandum suggesting that Boyles made threats to one of the physicians and that he was "a known child abuser." (In a separate criminal case, Boyles has been charged with battery against his son.)

The petition further noted that these alleged statements were not true and that because of those statements he was terminated from the hospital.

Also in the original lawsuit, Boyles' attorney had asked for a trial by jury of 12.

The Area Citizens for Healthcare was organized about one year ago for the purpose of promoting unity between the hospital, patients and doctors, while at the same time allowing people to have a voice about their hospital.

Kern and the other three officers involved in the lawsuit were asked by a majority of the people attending those early organizational meetings to serve as officers.

This civil lawsuit also is somewhat related to another criminal lawsuit involving Boyles, who is charged with battery on one of his two children. The case is related in that Boyles accused the four of saying he was a known child abuser. In the criminal case, the allegation is that Boyles struck his son with a towel in March, leaving a mark on the boy's face. Colby attorney, Cal Williams, is representing Boyles in that case.

Boyles has pled not guilty to the battery charge and is requesting a trial by jury, which is scheduled for mid-December.

## Computer upgrade approved

By TISHA COX  
*Colby Free Press*

Colby Community College's computer system is getting a new database server to help support the new mainframe the school purchased several months ago.

The board of trustees approved the purchase of the server at its meeting Monday night.

Three bids were received for the server and accepted the low bid of \$17,947 from Gateway Computers. The other bids were from Dell Computers and CDW, the company that makes Compaq and Hewlett Packard computers.

Computer department head September Lee told the board that they

would pay less over time with a new server in place. Lee said the software for the new mainframe needs a large server to help make it work.

The bid also included a five-year maintenance agreement.

In other business, volleyball coach Gina Chvatal turned in her resignation to the board, effective immediately. Public information officer Deb Schwanke said Chvatal cited personal reasons as why she wanted to resign.

"She wanted to spend more time with her family," Schwanke said.

The board also approved periodic renewals for the library. The cost of the renewals, \$9,789, includes on-line access to the periodicals.

## Vehicle tag advisory is issued

Thomas County Treasurer Donita Applebury reminds vehicle owners whose last name begins with T, V or W, that the courthouse will be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28.

For those needing to renew their

license plate tags in November, the last day of the month will be Wednesday, Nov. 26 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Applebury said she wanted to make sure everyone was aware of the earlier deadline for November due to the holiday.



## Moving toward snow

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie forecast

**Tonight...**Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.

**Thursday...**Partly cloudy. Highs around 70. Southwest winds 5 to 10 mph. **Thursday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s. North winds 5 to 15 mph.

**Friday...**Partly cloudy. Much colder. Highs in the upper 40s. East winds 10 to 15 mph. **Friday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 30s.

**Saturday...**Partly cloudy then mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain and snow in the afternoon. Breezy...Highs around 40. **Saturday night...**Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow.

Breezy...Lows in the lower 20s. **Sunday...**Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow. Breezy...Highs in the lower 30s.

**By the numbers:**

Tuesday's high, 56

Low this morning, 31

Records for Nov. 19, 78 in 1897 and 4 in 1937

Year ago today, 58 and 29

24-hour precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.00

Month's precipitation, 0.16

Year's precipitation to date, 14.42

**The sources:**

The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

## No action on high school track

By TISHA COX  
*Colby Free Press*

The Colby School Board heard four presentations on resurfacing the track at Dennen Field at its Monday night meeting.

The board took no action on the matter and no bids have been put out.

Four companies gave presentations on their product, including Dennis Regan of SRI Sports and Jason Johnson of A.T.G. Sports, both of Wichita.

Regan said he had a chance to walk the track and it has several good things going for it, adding the curbs and drainage on the track are in good shape.

He also said the track's foundation is decent. Johnson also said the track is in good condition, considering its age.

"You made that thing work," he said. "That track's really done it's job for a latex track."

He did say the latex is eroding in some spots and there are two asphalt cracks.

The board found out they have two choices for track surfaces — latex and polyurethane.

There are also different options on what they can do, including just resurface the track or go underneath, put down a new asphalt base and then a new surface.

School board president Stan

Molstad said the board probably won't discuss the matter at its next meeting. "I'm afraid the board will probably be in seven different directions on what they want to do on the track resurfacing," he said.

He said just to replace the old latex surface with a new latex surface would be about \$45,000, which would include tearing off and disposal of the old surface. Next summer is the earliest anything could be done.

Molstad said the current track surface has lasted twice as long as expected, which is "excellent."

The latex surface track was laid in 1989, and the asphalt base underneath was laid at the same time.

## Briefly

### Wellness Fair screenings announced

As in year's past, the annual Wellness Fair is once again offering laboratory screening tests for participants. Blood testing will be done from 6 to 9 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 8, Saturday, Jan. 10, Monday, Jan. 12, and Tuesday, Jan. 13. Lab tests include TSH (thyroid) at \$12; CBC/lipid/glucose at \$15; and PSA test at a cost of \$18. Participants will register for the fair at a cost of \$5, in addition to paying for lab tests prior to blood being drawn. These screenings require a 10 to 12 hour fast. For questions or other information, call Jeanene Brown, Citizens Medical Center, at 460-4850. The 2004 Wellness Fair is from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 17, at the Colby Community College student union. Screening results will be available for review the day of the fair.

### Landfill to close for holiday

The Thomas County landfill will close for the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, said Larry Jumper, supervisor. The landfill will reopen during its

usual operating hours on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. For questions, call (785) 462-8139.

### Barrows reception scheduled

Todd Barrows, a Colby city councilman and county executive director of the Thomas County FSA office, has taken a new position at the Kansas State FSA office in Manhattan, and a going-away reception in his honor is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 25, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the office, 915 E. Walnut. Everyone is invited to attend.

### City announces schedule change

The City of Colby's sanitation department will not be operating on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28 for the Thanksgiving holiday. For those who normally have a Thursday or Friday trash day, the holiday schedule will mean pick up on Saturday, Nov. 29. Gerry Bieker, public utilities director, asks that residents please have all trash at the curb by 8

a.m. For questions call the Public Works Department at 462-4420.

### 'Pray for Rain' rally Saturday

There will be a "Pray for Rain" event on Saturday in the 4-H Building at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. "Those who have drought in their area are encouraged to come to the meeting from 3 to 6 p.m.," said Leonard Kinkade of Brewster, who is coordinating the event.

### Thanksgiving service planned

A special Thomas County Community Thanksgiving Service will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 24 at the Berean Church, 1000 S. Franklin Ave. in Colby. All are invited to attend this special giving of thanks, hosted by area pastors with special music from "Power Praise Kids" and drama from "True Nation Takers." Refreshments will be offered after the service. The event is sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Association.

