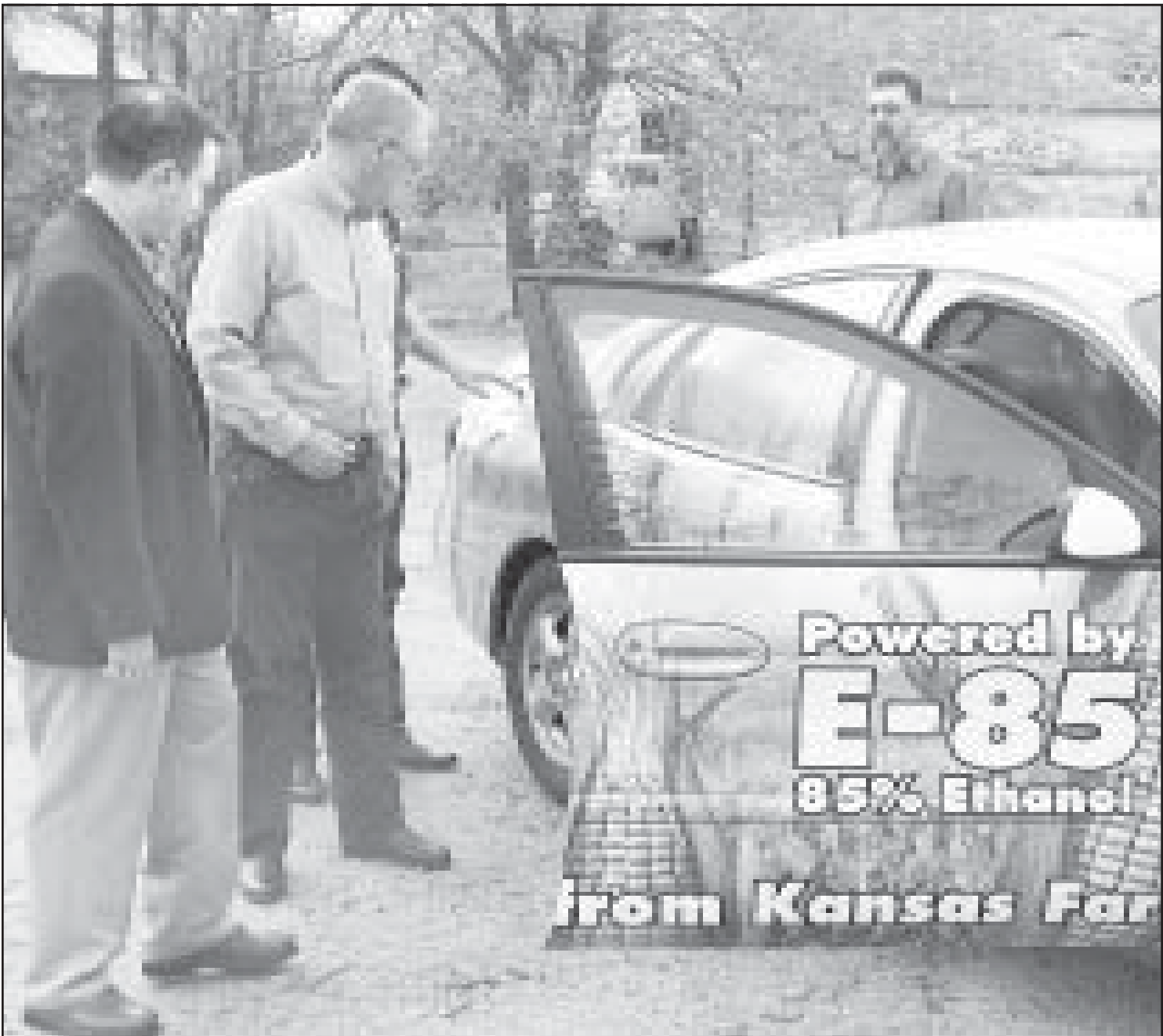




COLBY FREE PRESS

Propelled by corn



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Robert White of Garnett, Steve Friesen of Colby, David Studer of Atwood and Daniel Schultz of Grainfield looked at a car that runs on ethanol at the Northwest Kansas Corn Growers Asso-

ciation annual meeting in Gem on Tuesday. The meeting, held at the Gem Community Building, featured a business meeting and a presentation by state climatologist Mary Knapp.

Hunt begins for new Eagle football coach

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The search for a new head football coach at Colby High School has begun.

Principal Brian Kraus said during his report at Monday's Colby school board meeting that interviews would begin this week. A replacement is being sought for Brad Wildeman, who has been in that position the past two seasons. His record was 2-7 both years.

This morning, Kraus said one candidate was interviewed Tuesday. Another is scheduled for Thursday with two possible interviews next week. He declined to name the candidates but said he, Athletic Director Jeff Quenzer and middle school Principal Robb Ross are conducting the interviews.

Marilyn Reed, board clerk, said the board decided at its Jan. 19 meeting to advertise for a new head football coach. She said nothing has officially been done yet with Wildeman's contract.

Contract negotiations with faculty in Colby schools has barely begun. School board member John Cranston briefly updated the board on the process.

He said they've met but they want to hold off on negotiations until they see what state funding will be.

Board member Kevan Taylor said the teachers have expressed that their three main concerns are money, insurance and how sick leave is handled.

In other business, the board got a chance to experience a slice of recent student life with a demonstration of the online version of the Kansas State Assessment tests in reading and math.

The school principals and Superintendent Kirk Nielsen also gave their reports. Kraus said students at the high school are nearly done with their assessments. "The online testing was a good experience," he said, adding it seemed that students put forth a better effort.

Ross said there would only be 89 students left in the middle school building by the end of the day Tuesday. The sixth grade class was going to Goodland on Tuesday for career day and 98 members of the middle school track team were headed to Norton for a track meet.

He also said the students finished the reading and math portion of the state assessments but are still working on writing. Ross added he was hesitant at first about the online testing but it has worked.

Terrel Harrison, grade school principal, said students have finished the writing and reading assessments and are now working on math. "They went great," she said.

Also, the fifth grade class will have a career day on Thursday and will be shadowing people during the morning to learn more about different jobs.

The board also had a 15-minute executive session to discuss personnel, but no action was taken.

Street improvements get green light at council meeting

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

A resolution for special street improvements on Copeland Avenue from W. 5th to W. 7th Streets passed by a vote of 4-2-2 during the Colby City Council meeting Tuesday.

Council members John Bremenkamp, Beverly Eicher, Ken Bieber and Jim Brown voted in favor of the street improvements, with Jim Tubbs and Mark Beringer casting no votes. Both Herb Sunderman and Eugene Wieland, the two other members, were absent.

By approving the petition filed by a majority of the property owners in that area, the end result will mean new concrete paving, curb, gutters, storm sewer upgrades and reinforcement bars at an estimated cost of \$38,900.

With 10 property owners involved in the special street improvement, the cost will be

equally assessed per front foot, according to the way the petition is worded. Prior to the vote; however, Councilman Tubbs said he had received many calls about this issue.

"The way I understand it after talking with people," Tubbs said, "there are two different problems." One of those problems is that Copeland Avenue has really never been a street, he said, and if it is paved the maximum width would be 20', which is about 4' less than the city's ordinance of a 24' minimum width on streets. Tubbs questioned whether or not the street would end up being one-way since two vehicles would not be able to go by one another.

Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, told the council that one reason Copeland Avenue would only be 20' wide was because of the ditch and power line poles going through that area. The second problem is water drainage on Copeland. "The way it was explained to me," Tubbs said, "was that

the water drainage problem will not be resolved by making a street."

Another concern Tubbs said he had with the petition was that those professing to want the street improvements will be paying less than those who don't want it.

"How did you figure that cost?" Bremenkamp asked Tubbs during the discussion to which he replied it was on the last page of the petition.

Tubbs said that three of the five opposed to the improvements will be paying an estimated \$170 more apiece since they have 5 feet more in frontage property or 125 feet.

In the petition, 10 property owners were named with some of them having more than one lot. Those signing the petition all had 120 feet of front frontage owned. They were: Keith and Charlene Baalman, Dr. Gary Slavens, Larry and Sarah Jane Barrett, Steven and Linda Vaughn and Scott and Bronwyn King. Three property owners

opposed to the improvements had 125 feet of front to include David and Sherry Kriegshauser, Voss Rentals, LLC (Todd Voss) and Colby Sixth Street Club, Inc. The other two property owners either opposing or not signing were Mark and Rebecca Peterson with 60 feet, and Teri Grillot with 120 feet.

According to statutes, when a petition is filed for improvements as in this case, the council can either approve or reject the request even with a majority of landowners agreeing, Mayor Warren Hixson said at an earlier meeting.

With 10 property owners named, exactly half signed the petition; however, those signing had a majority of the frontage property necessary to bring the matter forward to the council. Of those who signed, the total frontage was 600 feet as opposed to 555 feet not signing. For those five who wanted the improvements, the assessment

on their property totals \$20,288 and those opposed will be a total of \$18,612.

"Not everyone is going to be happy (with these improvements)," said Councilman Brown.

Bieber added that he believed it was a good improvement for Colby.

One of the property owners opposed talked about the danger at that intersection.

Peterson said he has seen near collisions in that area and as for the 20' width of the street, the only other street that width was about 20' long by trailer houses near one of the dealerships.

"Can the city change its own ordinance of a minimum of 24' feet on width?" someone asked attending the meeting.

Bremenkamp said, "yes" and that the council has the ability to do this. "There's always exceptions to everything," he said.

No date was discussed for when the street improvements would begin.

Commissioners approve carpeting bids, microfilming

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Commissioners decided to spend money on two different projects at is Monday meeting at the courthouse.

Commissioner Ron Evans said they opened bids for new carpeting

at the Thomas County Office Complex and courthouse. They received three bids and accepted the low bid of \$15,123 from Office Works in Colby.

County Clerk Tracey Perkins said Inlow Interiors in Colby submitted a bid of \$26,993.50 and

Northwest Decorating in Colby submitted a bid of \$17,273.30.

Perkins also said the commissioners approved a plan to have information from two county departments microfilmed.

Register of Deeds Maybelle Moore said it will cost \$4,733 to

have 30 books in her department, commissioners' minutes and election results for the county clerk's office microfilmed.

"It's for fire protection," she said. "Those books are in use every day."

Moore said it's mainly a safety precaution so if something would

ever happen to the information, they would have the microfilm to go back on. The county's new agricultural Extension agent Joe Leibbrandt also dropped by to introduce himself. He is filling in for Doug Musick who is deployed to Kuwait with the National Guard.



More moisture

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area Tonight...Cloudy. 20 percent chance for thunderstorms. Lows in the upper 30s. Fog likely. North winds 5-15 miles per hour with higher gusts. **Thursday...**Cloudy. 20 percent chance for rain. Fog in the morning. Highs around 60. **Thursday night...**Cloudy. A 60 percent chance for rain. Lows in the lower 40s. South winds 10-20 miles per hour with gusts to 35.

The numbers
Tuesday's high, 67
Low this morning, 35
Records for April 7, 86 in 1952 and 14 in 1961
Year ago today, 35 and 22
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.24
April total, 0.24
April snowfall, 0
Soil temperature, 57

The sources: The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby.

Briefly

Voter registration open

Voter registration books are now open for anyone who has changed their name, address or who will turn 18 before the next statewide general election. You may stop in at the County Clerk's office to pick up a registration card or call (785) 462-4500 with questions.

Fair board to meet

The Thomas County Fair Board will hold its regular meeting at 8 p.m. Thursday at the fairgrounds. Items on the agenda include Rick Dickman on the Fourth of July fireworks at the fairgrounds, Extension agent report, financial report and bills, committee reports on buildings and projects, carnival and barbecue, parade and grand marshal for this year's fair, demolition derby, races, fair book and advertising and an update on infield speakers. The meeting is open to the public.

Farm Service open house

The Thomas County Farm Service Agency will host an open house from 1-3 p.m. Friday, April 16 at the office, 915 E. Walnut in Colby to welcome Ross Sloan, county executive director. Refreshments will be served.

Hamburger feed Saturday

The Cystic Fibrosis "Great Strides Walk" will hold a hamburger feed fund-raiser in the Colby Wal-Mart parking lot starting at 10 a.m. Saturday. Items on the menu will be hamburgers, hot dogs, sodas, treats and chips. Also available will be Easter cakes and pies.

Senior banquet reservations due

Reservations for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program "Recognition Banquet" are needed by April 12 to the RSVP office. The banquet will be held Wednesday, April 21 at the American Legion in Colby. For reservations or information, call 462-6744.

Senior dance planned

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program annual recognition night will be from 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, April 21 at the American Legion in Colby. The theme is "RSVP Jungle Jam-boree." The dance is open to seniors and the Ramblin' Andy Family Band will provide entertainment. Tickets are available at the RSVP Office, P.O. Box 803, Colby, Kan. 67701 or call 462-6744. Tickets may also be purchased at the door.

Easter Cantata scheduled

A community-wide Easter Cantata will be performed at 7 p.m. on Good Friday at the Berean Church in Colby. The public is invited to attend.

Vendors wanted for Chautauqua

Food vendors are needed in June during Chautauqua, said Leilani Thomas, one of the committee members. Any groups or organizations looking for a fundraising event might want to consider this opportunity during the week of June 11 through June 15. Food service is needed each evening from 5 to 7 p.m. with beverages and sandwiches offered. Some suggestions for a food booth might include sloppy joes, hamburgers, polish sausages, bierock or casserole items. Dessert items such as pie, brownies or cookies can also be served. For questions, call 460-7643.

Class reunion scheduled

The Colby High School Class of 1984 has scheduled its 20th reunion for July 2, 3, and 4, coordinators of the event said. In an effort to communicate with others in that class, a website has been set up for registration and other information. The address is: www.colbyhigh-1984.com

