



COLBY
FREE PRESS

Enrollment steady for first time in 10 years

By TISHA COX
Colby Free Press

The Colby School District has a little something to celebrate this year. Preliminary enrollment numbers are out and the numbers are up. Jo DeYoung, district business manager, said the total head count so far for the year is 1,085, up over last year's 1,037. She said some of those students include children from Sacred Heart School who are taking band and students at the downtown learning center, where enrollment is also up, with 59 students enrolled there.

"That's a lot of kids," she said. Also, the full-time equivalent number, which is the figure the state bases funding on, has increased over last year, from 1005.1 in 2003 to 1013.4 this year. DeYoung said it could mean up to \$50,000 in funding for the district this year. "If this is true, it is the first time we have not had a decrease in enrollment since 1994-95," she said. "It's huge."

Over the past decade, the district has experienced about a four percent loss in enrollment each year, an average of up to 30 students during each school year.

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Colby School District
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Ten years ago, the full-time equivalent was 1,323. DeYoung said increases and decreases in enrollment tend to go in five-year cycles and five years ago, things held steady for a short time before even more loss in enrollment, but she said it's starting to look better again. Schools have a choice in what they use to help calculate funding, DeYoung said. They can use either a three-year full-time equivalent average or the actual figure for the year, but she said the average helps hold the number and funding at a more even level.

Under construction



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

City of Colby employees continued working on the alley next to the swimming pool. Colby Director of Public Utilities Marc Gilman said the asphalt street is being replaced with concrete and weather-permitting, the project should be completed next week.

Colby College dean considers feasibility of adding new class

By PATTY DECKER
Free Press Editor

As the accreditation team members complete their tour of facilities at Colby College, administrators, faculty and staff will continue looking at new ideas and ways to provide services in the area. One such idea was introduced to the college's board of trustees recently by Joe Mildrexler, dean of community services, regarding emergency medical technicians and the need to keep a strong pool of trained volunteers.

Based on the premise that a "community

college" should provide partnerships with varying agencies in the county, Mildrexler said he and Kathi Wright, the director of Thomas County's Emergency Medical Services, have been talking about this type of collaboration for quite some time. Mildrexler explained to the trustees that in previous years, Jim Cage, the former emergency medical services director for the county and Marian Lindberg, assistant director, were both certified instructors for the training. Although Wright is working on those credentials, Mildrexler said, there is no one

at this time in Thomas County that can teach the program. By combining the two agencies — Thomas County Commissioners and Colby Community College — Mildrexler said he believes the result would be a win-win situation for everyone. In other words, the county would have more qualified emergency medical technicians and the college would have students receiving state aid. The trustees asked Mildrexler if he thought there would be enough interest to sustain a class.

"I think we could set up a training program with 15 students," Mildrexler said, "and I think most of them wanting to take the class would qualify for the Thomas County Community Grant." For those unfamiliar with this grant, Skip Sharp, dean of student affairs, said it was established four years ago by the college to allow county residents with only a few requirements to attend tuition-free. In the beginning many part-time and non-traditional students were taking advantage of the grant, but in recent years more full-time students are using it, Sharp said.

As for an instructor that could teach the emergency medical technician's training program, Mildrexler said there was a teacher identified in Goodland that was qualified. As the community services dean, Mildrexler said he thinks it is important to look at all kinds of initiatives and partnerships that would benefit the Colby-area and the college. The board of trustees took no action on this discussion item since the idea of adding such a course has yet to be talked about with the Thomas County Commissioners.

Power outage city problem

The power outage late Saturday afternoon in Colby, which contributed to an injury accident, along with disrupting power throughout the city, was not the fault of Midwest Energy, said Marc Gilman, the city's public utilities director. Initially, Gilman reported the

fault was with Midwest Energy; however, on Tuesday he discovered the outage originated in the city's substation. Since a recent article noted the outage was the responsibility of Midwest Energy, Gilman said he wanted to clarify that it was in fact the city's outage.

School board approves field trip requests

By TISHA COX
Colby Free Press

Out of district field trips were one of the items on the agenda at Monday's Colby School Board meeting. The board approved sending the high school's Technology Student Association to two national events, one in Chicago and the other in Washington, D.C. At its Monday, Sept. 6 meeting, the board approved all of the out of district field trips for the school year but Superintendent Kirk Nielsen said he had questions about the Technology Student Association trips and put them on the agenda for the Monday meeting. Nielsen recommended not sending Colby Middle School students to the national convention. The middle school went to the national event last year, but will still be going to the state level event this year. Nielsen said instead, they're looking at putting together an event in Colby with Colorado and west-

ern Kansas schools. Middle school principal Robb Ross said that approach worked with scholars bowl and they hope a similar effort might help with the Technology Student Association. Board president Stan Molstad asked if the group's sponsors were accepting of the decision. Board member Gerry Fulwider said some of the kids, sponsors and parents were upset over the decision. Board member Tracy Rogers said going in high school is something the students can work toward. "It gives them something to shoot for," he said. The board also heard reports from the principals, superintendent, curriculum and activities director. High school principal Brian Kraus said the first site council meeting has been held and work on the school improvement plan has started. He said the teachers are also working on development and indi-

vidual goals. Kraus said the school has also implemented an intervention program for math scores for freshmen, sophomores and juniors. Teachers will be using in class each day a question off the state test to help students get used to the format and master concepts. Robb Ross, middle school principal, said they're also working on their school improvement plan with an emphasis on writing and math. He said they've also started using PowerSchool and about 16 percent of parents are using the online resource and they've been averaging 19 hits a day. Grade school principal Terrell Harrison said they are evaluating state math assessments from the past three years and are trying to target areas where there hasn't been an improvement in scores. She said she's also been meeting with teachers about their goals for the year. Activities Director Jeff Quezner

also gave his report. He said they're getting ready to count the number of sophomores, juniors and seniors to determine the school's classification for activities this year and planning is underway for homecoming. Quenzer also said the trip the wrestling team is trying to find an alternative source of transportation to the Dallas wrestling tournament they hoped to attend. He said the Garden City team isn't going, which affects Colby's plans because the team planned on riding to Dallas on Garden's bus. Quenzer said he's also looking for one more girls basketball team for the Orange and Black Classic tournament in January. Superintendent Kirk Nielsen's report was the last of the evening. He told the board district health insurance rates aren't going up, which was positive news. Nielsen also said the work to resurface the track at Dennen Field should be completed by the weekend, if the weather is decent.

Colby
Ludell
McDonald

Turn to warmer weather

Tonight...Cloudy. Showers. Winds northerly at 10 mph shifting to the west after midnight. Lows in the 40s. Chance of showers 70 percent. **Thursday...**Partly cloudy then sunny in the afternoon. Warmer. Highs in the lower 70s. West winds 5 to 15 mph. **Thursday night...**Clear. Lows in the mid 40s. Southwest winds 5 to 10 mph. 1...Sunny. Highs in the 70s. West winds 5 to 10 mph shifting to the south around 5 mph in the afternoon. **Friday night...**Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 40s. **Saturday...**Mostly sunny. Highs in the 70s.

The numbers
Tuesday's high, 62
Low this morning, 45
Records for Sept. 22, 97 in 1939 and 24 in 1983
Year ago today, 77 and 43
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.76
September total, 1.44
Soil temperature, 67

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.

Water use
• Sept. 21= 1.533 million gallons.

Water advisories
• Water **Watch** is 3.5 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.
• Water **Warning** is 4.0 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.
• Water **Emergency** is 4.5 million gallons for 3 consecutive days.

Briefly

Scouts seek vendors for October event
Two Girl Scout Troops in Colby (Troops 162 and 167) are looking for vendors for the Craft-a-ganza Craft fair scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 23. The craft fair will be held in the community building and all proceeds will go toward trip expenses throughout the year. For information, call Jan Barnum, one of the coordinators, 462-6503.

Hunting licenses and guides available
Deer and turkey licenses for the 2004 hunting season and 2004 hunting atlas guides are now available at the county clerk's office in the Thomas County Courthouse. For information, call (785) 462-4500.

Voter registration open
People have until 5 p.m. on Oct. 18 to register to vote for the Tuesday, Nov. 2 general election. Voters can register in the county clerk's office at the Thomas County Courthouse. For information, call (785) 462-4500.

Heartland Share delivery Saturday
Heartland Share delivery is set for 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the Sacred Heart School gym in Colby. Call 460-3579 to order a September share.

Performance, potluck at Methodist Church
Captive Free will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 2 at Colby United Methodist Church. There will be a potluck dinner with the band at 6:30 p.m. Guests can bring a covered dish and everyone is invited. The performance is being presented by the church's middle school youth group.

Colby High 2004 yearbooks available
The Colby High School 2004 yearbooks are now available for last year's graduates to pick up. Anyone who has ordered a yearbook, said Donna Henry, journalism and yearbook advisor, can go to the high school office during regular school hours. She also wanted to mention that there are extra 2004 yearbooks for those who didn't order one last year. For questions, call 460-5300.

