



# COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

## Candidates talk about new jobs, others gratitude

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Following Tuesday's election, many candidates talked about the results whether they won or lost at the polls.

In the contested race for Thomas County attorney, Andrea Wyrick, the Republican challenger with 62 percent of the votes said she's ready to take office in January.

Wyrick said she wants to meet with law enforcement before the end of the year and make sure everyone is on the same page. She said she intends to give the citizens of Thomas County an update each month on what cases are being filed and how cases are being disposed of.

Wyrick also said she has been hearing expectations from people for the county attorney's office to include a tougher stance on plea bargains and diversions as well as crime in general.

"Over and over again people think things have been too soft," she said. "I think the people of Thomas County have spoken," she said, adding that they helped bring about change with their votes.

For Allan Taylor, who held the county attorney position for nearly 16 years, said he wanted to thank everyone who supported him.

"I appreciated everyone who voted for me," he said. As for the job, Taylor said it hasn't always been an easy one, but he derived satisfaction from doing his best.

"I intend to continue the job as county attorney and representing the people of this county until January," he said, "and focus now on finishing pending matters."

Taylor said that prior to being elected county attorney, he was in private practice for 11 years and intends to continue that job.

As for losing the election, Taylor said, "it's time to move on to something different, but I appreciated the opportunity to serve."

With respect to the Thomas County Sheriff's race, Mike Baughn, the Republican candidate who captured 82 percent of the vote, defeating write-in candidate Scott Sitton, said he was thankful for all the support he got prior to and after the results were tabulated.

"I appreciated everyone through their vote, for allowing me to put signs out and the general encouragement," he said. Baughn said he has no major changes planned for the sheriff's office.

"I will implement some ideas I have," he said, "by balancing criminal interdiction, which is vital, along with increasing patrol in non-Colby towns.

"Probably four out of five drug crimes involve automobiles, credit card theft, and nearly every gamut of crime," he said. "We also have another need — and that is enhancing our rapport with citizens."

Baughn said many people he has talked with expressed concerns about that need to patrol in the county.

"My philosophy in law enforcement is to be a 'peace officer' rather than 'law enforcer.' I believe we are here to provide public peace and serve the people," he said.

Another area that Baughn plans to watch closely will be the sheriff's budget.

"We operate our budget using property tax and we need to be responsible to the taxpayer," he said. "We need to operate in the most efficient way possible and we can use drug forfeiture money to augment this," he said. As for his new undersheriff, Jason Moses, Baughn said he will begin making the transition on Dec. 1 in order to get familiarized with the county.

Baughn also said he plans to work something out with Sada Munkres as well.

"Maybe we can make Sada an honorary deputy," he said today.

Scott Sitton, the write-in candidate for sheriff, said he wanted to congratulate Baughn on winning the election.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Republican Paul Steele (right), the newly elected Thomas County Commissioner in District #2, spent a lighthearted moment with his daughter, Geri, and son-in-law Phil Shuman, at the courthouse on

"I wish Mike all the best and I want to thank everyone who supported me," Sitton said.

He too, spoke of Sada Munkres, who received three votes for sheriff, saying that he was tickled to see her included. "I think making her a special deputy would be great," he said.

Taxpayers will also see a new face in the Thomas County Clerk's office. Shelly Harms, Republican, defeated incumbent Tracey Perkins with 57 percent of the vote.

She first wanted to thank her family, friends and co-workers for their support during the past months as well as those who were confident enough to vote her into office.

"When I take office in January," Harms said, "initially I plan to acquaint myself with the office and I hope Kristi Rubio, (the current deputy clerk) and Barbara Hopper, (assistant deputy clerk) plan on

staying since I don't plan to make any changes in the staff."

"I am excited to start my new career and eager to work with the commissioners and everyone associated with Thomas County," she said.

Perkins, who will be leaving the office in January, said that for now she will continue to serve the people in Thomas County as their clerk. "I want to thank everyone who voted for me and appreciate all the support," she said.

There's also two new commissioners in Thomas County. Paul Steele, a Republican in District #2, said Glen Kersenbrock, the retiring commissioner, told him that he needs to get to work next Tuesday.

"There's a development alliance meeting in Great Bend," Steele said, "and Glen said I need to know more about economic development."

Steele said that he is not up to

election night. Along with his daughter, Geri, Steele and his wife, Sharon, have another daughter, Jo Kraus of Hays, and a son, Jean, who is an engineer in Fort Worth, Texas.

speed on everything going on in the county and with the people voting in favor of the sales tax, he believes the economic development issue is one of the upper most things on the voter's mind.

"I am so grateful to the voters, my friends and even some friends I don't even know," he said. Regarding what Steele plans to do as a commissioner, he said, "I think it is important right now for me to be a listener — I am going to have to find out what people want by being a good listener."

Jim Cousins, the Democrat who challenged Steele in District #2 also spoke about the election results.

"I wish the new commissioners coming in the best of luck and know they will do their best for Thomas County," he said. "I also want to thank everyone who worked so hard for me."

In the other commission race for

District #3, Ken Christensen, the Republican candidate took 71 percent of the vote. Earlier today, Christensen could not be reached by telephone; however, Rosalie Seemann, who was defeated for that position, said she was glad the election was over.

"I will continue working as the chairman of the Thomas County Democratic Party," she said. Seemann also represents the Silverhaired Legislature and plans to continue with that, along with babysitting her grandchildren and sewing.

Regarding the outcome of the election, Seemann said, "the voters spoke."

*Editor's note: A breakdown of the 18 polling locations and how the votes were distributed within those areas among the candidates will be published in the Friday edition of the Free Press.*

## City council hears report on power distribution system

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

The Colby City Council received an overview of its power distribution system during its meeting Tuesday. Joni Batson from the Nashville office of R.W. Beck gave a report on a study the company did on the city's distribution system.

The study was of the southern half of the city's system, which in-

cluded computer modeling of the electrical system, mapping the conductors and evaluating the two power substations on the south side of the community.

Batson said software was used to simulate the flow and load of electricity on the system as well as future growth and what would happen if one of the substations went down. "Under normal conditions, every-

thing's fine," she said, adding the city should be in good shape with normal conditions and growth.

Batson said they had a few recommendations as well.

Director of Public Utilities Marc Gilman said the estimate for a distribution upgrade was \$40,000; \$50,000 for switches and \$150,000 for upgrading the southeast and southwest substations.

He said city won't take any action on anything until it gets input from an engineer.

"That would give you adequate capacity," Batson said.

She explained the third option would allow the city to get back up to full power more quickly after an outage. Mayor Warren Hixson said everything looks good and originally, they thought it would cost up

to \$500,000 to do the upgrades.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong was also happy with the results. She said the city has money in its budget for the upgrades and was also pleased with the estimate because it was less than anticipated.

The next step, Batson said, would be to model and analyze the power plant.

Armstrong said the city is happy

with the company's work, but the council always has the authority to go through the competitive bid process. She said they would like the firm to do some design work and would like to bring the contract for that and the second phase of the study to the council by the beginning of the new year. Hixson said they would continue with those plans.

## Briefly

### Commissioners to canvass votes

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet Friday at 9 a.m. in the courthouse to canvass the results of the election from Tuesday. The meeting is open to the public.

### High school broadcast begins Saturday

This year's first *Eagle High News* broadcast will air on S&T Channel 117, Saturday, at noon, 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., said school officials. The channel was designated for Colby High School by S&T Communications and will continue to air at the same times on a regular basis with a new broadcast every two weeks. The goal, said school officials, is to eventually offer continual information about the high school and Colby School District along with broadcasting live on a regular basis.

### Pancake feed planned to help Boy Scouts

There will be a pancake feed on Saturday, Nov. 13, from 5 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Colby Community Building. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go to help eight Colby boys attend the Boy Scout National Jamboree in Virginia. This event is only held every four years, said Brian Quagliano, one of the coordinators of the feed. The boys planning to attend the jamboree include: Jarrett Marker, Troy Koon, Nathan Quagliano, Cory Sager, Sam Kendrick, Christian Wilson, Jed Oesterriech, and Andrew Ketchum. For questions, call Quagliano at 443-0226.

### Marines wanted for birthday party

Anyone who has served or is currently serving with the U.S. Marine Corp. is invited to attend the corps' birthday celebration starting at 9 a.m., Wednesday, Nov. 10 at the Colby Country Club. For more than a decade,

former and active duty Marines in the area have gotten together for the special birthday.

"This is an informal get together for old and young," said John Sears, organizing the event. Sears encourages anyone with Marine related photographs or handbooks to bring them to the celebration. For questions, call him at 460-7793.

### Names sought for 'Heart Tree'

Organizers of the "Heart Tree" are once again seeking names of children who could benefit from having their wish realized during the holiday season. The "Heart Tree" was established three years ago in remembrance of Dr. Jeff Jennings, who died suddenly at the age of 29 and prior to Christmas in 2001. The tree symbolizes Dr. Jennings' love for the holiday season, coordinators said. Anyone who might know of a child in need is asked to call Jennifer Van Eaton at Sacred Heart, 462-2179.

### Airport meetings open to everyone

Colby's municipal airport board and the city are beginning a master plan update and want input from the community. There will be three focus groups involving business, medical and government participants, said Mark Ostmeyer, airport manager, with those groups meeting at the Colby Municipal Airport at various times on Tuesday, Nov. 9. Starting at 8:30 a.m., the airport board will hold its meeting and then at noon a presentation will be made to the Colby Rotary Club in the student union on the Colby College campus. The focus group times continue that day starting at 1:30 p.m. with the business participants; 2:45 p.m., medical participants; and 4 p.m., governmental participants. The general public informational meeting starts at 7 p.m. when the Colby City Council meets, also on Nov. 9. Any person who is interested is welcome to attend any or all of the meetings that day. For questions, call 462-4410.

Colby  
Hoxie  
Oakley



## 60s and then the 70s

**Tonight...**Clear. Lows in the upper 20s. Northwest winds around 10 mph shifting to the southwest 5 to 10 mph after midnight.  
**Friday...**Sunny...Warmer. Highs in the mid 60s. Southwest winds 5 to 15 mph.  
**Friday night...**Clear. Lows in the mid 30s. West winds 5 to 10 mph.  
**Saturday...**Sunny. Highs in the lower 70s. Northwest winds 10 to 15 mph.  
**Saturday night...**Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s.  
**Sunday...**Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 60s.

### The numbers

Wednesday's high, 58  
Low this morning, 26  
Year ago today, 48 and 29  
Records for this date, 80 in 1945 and 11 in 1967  
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
November total, 0.00  
Soil temperature, 44

### 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.



