



COLBY FREE PRESS

12 pages

SCHULTZ

The crowd goes wild as Colby grad performs

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Thursday night was Mark Schultz night in Colby.

Period. The Colby High School grad, a renowned Christian adult con-



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Jim Kitch of Quinter danced with his daughter Rebekah during the concert.

temporary music artist, played his first home concert ever in the Community Building.

He was on stage nearly two hours in front of a sell-out crowd, performing a high-energy show that was high on audience participation.

He's earned six No. 1 hits during his career so far but nothing could compare to the thrill of playing for family, friends and others he grew up with in the town he still calls home.

"It was fantastic," Schultz said. "I knew it would be exciting."

He said he didn't know it would get so emotional at the end, where everyone was on their feet. The crowd also got him to come back out for an encore after leaving the stage.

The show started with no lights on in the building but Schultz told his crew to turn the lights on so he could see the faces of everyone in the crowd.

Before the concert, excerpts from his new DVD were shown, highlighting the places and faces he grew up with.

After the show, Schultz signed autographs, posed for pictures and spent a little time with everyone waiting in line to meet him.

Between songs, he talked a little about growing up in the community, some of his experiences in Nashville before landing a recording contract and of course, his songs.

He was "overwhelmed" so many people came to the concert, which made for a fun evening for him.

Audience participation added to the lively show.

He enjoyed the fact people have heard his songs on the radio enough to sing along. Schultz had people laughing, clapping and in a few cases, even dancing.

At one point he even jumped off the stage to go say hello and hug his first grade teacher Lenora Haney. He said she lives in Ulysses at a retirement center.

Almost 90, she talked the staff into bringing her and a group up for the concert.

"It was so great to see her out there," Schultz said.

"That was really a lot of fun for me."

His parents, Ronnie and Gary Schultz were here from Kansas City along with other family members.

Schultz said it was "fantastic" to have them here for the show in the town where he grew up.

He said his family usually comes to several shows a year, including the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson, where he's performed twice.

Schultz will be staying in town for the All-School Reunion this weekend, a little downtime before resuming his concert schedule next week with five shows in five days.

Schultz is on a 32-city tour to promote his new DVD and upcoming album.

Ronnie Schultz said being in Colby for her son's first show at home was an unbelievable experience.

"It's a dream," she said.

"We didn't know this would ever



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Mark Schultz, a 1989 graduate of Colby High School, now a Christian adult contemporary artist, performed his first concert in front of his hometown crowd Thursday at the Colby Community Building. Schultz sang in front of a full house.

happen." She said they're proud of their son.

They lived 24 years in Colby and Schultz was 2-years-old when they moved here.

Ronnie said they go to a couple of his concerts each year and were in Topeka Wednesday. That concert was the first in his latest tour.

"He did a good job," she said.

"We're proud."

Schultz also thanked Rich Epp and his wife Judy and everyone else who helped make the concert a memorable experience.

Colby College trustees schedule public hearing Monday

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

A public hearing for the 2005-06 Colby Community College budget is scheduled for Monday during the regular trustees' meeting at 5 p.m. in the board room of the administra-

tion building.

The same 31.58 mill levy as last year or \$2,476,734 will give the college \$50,073 more than last year's levied tax of \$2,426,661. The reason for the slight increase in money, said Dan Erbert, dean of fis-

cal affairs, is based on the county's valuation being higher this year from \$76,846,263 to \$78,425,933.

The projected budget total to include local levy, state funding and other revenue sources, he said, is about \$8.5 million with expendi-

tures about the same.

Carryover cash from last year's budget was about \$1,165 million, he said.

Other items on the agenda include a Kansas State University and Colby Community College agree-

ment; approval of contracts and agreements; and payment of claims.

The board will also go into an executive session for non-elected personnel.

Another item on the agenda noted there will be a public statement

made, but no further details were available.

All meetings are open to the public and trustees encourage attendance at the public hearing prior to approval of the budget. For an agenda, call 462-3984.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Colby Fire Department firefighters Wayne Plumisto (left) and Brian Quagliano put water on a tire that caught fire Wednesday.

Boom sprayer hits county power line

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A tire fire on Wednesday drew the Colby Fire Department, Rural Fire District 3, Thomas County Sheriff's Office, Colby Police Department and Midwest Energy to the scene.

Sheriff Mike Baughn said they got a call at 2:30 p.m. about a Rogator boom sprayer, driven by

John Friesen, a farmer, hitting a Midwest Energy power line, ultimately resulting in a tire fire. The incident took place on County Road Q east of Country Club Drive.

Baughn said Friesen was turning in the roadway when one of the sprayer's booms touched the power line. The sprayer then went into the south ditch and the right front tire

caught on fire.

He said no one was injured and the sheriff's office was involved because the incident took place out in the county.

Colby Fire Department assistant chief Rick Dickman said there was only minimal damage to the power line, which will be repaired by Midwest Energy.

County budget meeting set

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A public hearing on the 2006 budget will start off Monday's Thomas County commissioners' meeting at 9 a.m. at the courthouse.

The commissioners worked on the budget at their Aug. 1 meeting, coming up with a preliminary figure of \$5,310,629, an increase of \$251,000 over the 2005 budget of \$5,085,871.

At that meeting, County Clerk Shelly Harms said the increases in the budget are from additional money for the voting fund to buy equipment, hiring a full time emergency management director and a two percent raise next year for county employees.

The possibility of consolidating voting places into one in the county also came up at the Aug. 1 meeting. Others on the agenda Monday

include Brian Staats of Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball with the 2004 audit and a special landfill report; approval of the first half of August accounts payable; approval of the Aug. 8 minutes; Kansas Department of Transportation five-year construction program; and Northwest Kansas Solid Waste Authority regional plan update.

The meeting is open to the public.

Death toll among part-time troops in Iraq soared during early August

WASHINGTON (AP) — The National Guard and Reserve suffered more combat deaths in Iraq during the first 10 days of August — at least 32, according to a Pentagon count — than in any full month of the entire war.

More broadly, Pentagon casualty reports show that the number of deaths among Guard and Reserve forces has been trending upward much of this year, totaling more than 100 since May 1. That ranks as the deadliest stretch of the war for the Guard and Reserve, whose members perform both combat and support missions.

There is little evidence to suggest that part-time troops are being specifically targeted by the insurgents, since the Guard and Reserve troops are mostly indistinguishable from — and interchangeable with —

regular active-duty troops.

The 42nd Infantry Division of the New York Army National Guard is commanding a combat force in north-central Iraq that includes two brigades from the active-duty 3rd Infantry Division, and a brigade from the Mississippi Army National Guard is operating with the Marine Corps.

The Pentagon rejects any suggestion the Guard and Reserve are more vulnerable in combat because they are part-timers.

"We will not deploy a soldier, sailor, airman or Marine who is not fully trained and prepared for the mission," said Air Force Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke, a Pentagon spokeswoman.

"Combat operations are inherently dangerous and despite the best training and the best equipment, we

will unfortunately have service members killed and wounded in action."

Some see it differently. Michael O'Hanlon, a military analyst with the Brookings Institution think tank, said Thursday that while the performance of reservists has been generally excellent, some are short-changed on training prior to arriving in Iraq.

"If we really believe that military personnel need months of intensive training before being at their best — as logic suggests and other evidence would seem to prove — it is hard to believe that most reservists in Iraq are really as strong as active-duty troops, especially when they first arrive in country," O'Hanlon said.

The 32 combat deaths in the first 10 days of August are in addition to one death classified as non-combat.

