



COLBY FREE PRESS

Making the grade



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press



Parent-Teacher conferences are in full swing at Colby Public Schools and Sacred Heart Catholic School. **LEFT:** Kim Wolf, kindergarten teacher, (not pictured) spoke with Brad and Kylee Philipp about their daughter. **ABOVE:** Marissa Hopper conferred with Judy Shull, another kindergarten teacher at the school, about her child, Rusti Hopper. Conferences will continue Thursday at all three buildings within the Colby Public School system. In addition to the parent-teacher meetings, a book fair will be held Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the grade school also. Colby's Sacred Heart School is also holding its conferences and Thursday meetings will run from 2 to 9 p.m. with a scholastic book fair also being held at the same time as its conferences.

First day of testimony

Board of Healing Arts begins its case in Colby

By JAN KATZ ACKERMAN
Colby Free Press

Attorneys took more than an hour to review exhibits in the case against a local doctor as the first day of a hearing got underway.

Dr. Victor Hildyard sat next to his wife, Brenda, as he watched his attorney, Mike O'Neal, Hutchinson, look at documents the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts, Topeka, plans to present against him.

When the hearing started, David Steed, Wichita, representing the state, conducted some housekeeping before opening statements. Steed wanted it made clear he wanted no part of anything which would identify any of Hildyard's patients which might be talked about during the proceedings. He told Edward Gaschler, presiding officer in the case, patient confidentiality needed to be protected throughout the case.

Hildyard's attorney, Mike O'Neal, Hutchinson, agreed but said the most important aspect of the case was that his client was given a fair hearing.

Both O'Neal, and David Steed, Wichita, kept their opening statements brief. Steed said the state planned to present evidence that Hildyard violated the state's medical laws, and O'Neal said he'd show the doctor was free of all the state's allegations.

Yolanda Suter, an employee at Citizens Medical Center, was the first of 13 witnesses to be called by the state, which began to address Gaschler at 10:50 a.m.

That session was closed and it was not known which count in the petition Suter testified regarding. Other witnesses expected to testify today included Kathy Bissett, nurse at Citizens Medical Center; Kerri Schippers, at Colby Community

College; Renee Oshner, a former employee of Citizens Medical Center and Kevan Trenkle, chief financial officer at Citizens Medical Center.

The board's action was filed against Hildyard three weeks after he marked his 30th year of practice in Colby.

The board could revoke, suspend, censure, fine or otherwise limit Hildyard's medical license.

Taking place at the Colby Municipal Airport, the hearing will begin again at 9 a.m. on Thursday and continue through Friday. It will move to Topeka on Monday and Tuesday, and be back in Colby on Wednesday through Friday of next week.

All sessions are open to the public, but portions of it pertaining to patient information are expected to take place behind closed doors, as allowed by state law.

State's board of healing arts oversees areas of health care

The 15-member Kansas State Board of Healing Arts licenses or registers 13 different health care professions and is a state agency set up to protect the public by requiring those professionals to meet and maintain certain qualifications and standards of conduct.

Once the board receives a complaint about a professional it licenses or registers, staff members make an initial determination whether the complaint meets two criteria for investigation.

These criteria are that the complaint pertains to the practice of one of the professions regulated by the board, and it alleges facts constituting a violation of law administered by the board.

Examples of prohibited conduct by professionals governed by the

Board of Healing Arts includes gross negligence or multiple acts of ordinary negligence, conviction of a felony or Class A misdemeanor, fraud, sexual abuse, or other acts proscribed by laws overseen by the board.

Once a case is opened and investigated by the board, information in the case remains confidential.

After the investigation, the case is sent to a review committee, advisory council, a panel of the board, an expert retained by the board, or a staff attorney to determine whether violations of law have occurred.

Following the review, the matter is taken under advisement by a disciplinary panel, and if necessary, that panel determines whether to file a petition may be filed against

the health care professional.

Not until a petition is filed is any part of the process open record to the public.

A hearing affords the professional all the rights and privileges of a court trial, such as calling witnesses for his or her defense and cross-examining witnesses presented by the board.

Only after the board issues its final ruling can a health care professional seek remedy in the district court system.

The board of healing arts is made up of 12 licensed health care professionals from across the state and three members of the general public.

Kansas State Board of Healing Arts can be reached at its website: <http://www.ksbha.org>

Field tour day, conference at convention center on Friday, Saturday

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

Colby will host a two-day educational conference, along with Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development office in Colby on Friday with a field trip and Saturday with sessions at City Limits Convention Center.

The idea of the conference is to confront the challenges facing public education in communities across

the Great Plains, said Darryl Birkenfeld, Ph.D., and director of Ogallala Commons, which is a resource development network for the High Plains-Ogallala Aquifer region, offering leadership and education to build thriving communities and commonwealth.

As part of the two-day event, the field day Friday will begin at 9 a.m. in the City Limits Convention Center, Colby, with tours of the Prairie

Museum of Art and History, the Kansas State University Experiment Farm, Northwest Kansas Technical College, Goodland, the technical lab at Colby High School, plus Youth Attraction strategies in Atwood.

A special presentation at 5:30 p.m. will be presented on Minuteman Regional High School in Lexington, Mass, which is an innovative institution of 600 students

learning marketable trades, in addition to high school diplomas and advanced placement courses.

The Saturday conference will begin at the City Limits Convention Center, said Birkenfeld, and feature a keynote presentation by Dr. Cornelia Butler Flora, a well-known rural sociologist from Iowa State University.

Workshops will include entrepreneurial education, community lead-

ership training, adult continuing education and place-based learning, he said.

"Education has been a hallmark of rural communities, and schools are the centers of community life," he said. "While public education is facing huge challenges with funding shortfalls, declining student populations, standardized testing, and technology demands, we also have a great opportunity to rein-

vigorate education in our communities through adult continuing education, place-based learning, leadership training, and entrepreneurial courses. To consider enrolling in this conference, call Birkenfeld at (806) 938-2529 or e-mail: darrylb@amaonline.com or the Thomas County/Colby Chamber of Commerce office at 460-3401. For those who reserve by Thursday, a discounted price is available.

Museum opens evolution exhibit

TOPEKA (AP)—Amid a debate over how public schools teach evolution, a University of Kansas museum is planning a major, two-year exhibit designed to teach visitors about the theory.

The timing of the Natural History Museum's exhibit, scheduled to open Nov. 1, is a coincidence, director Leonard Krishtalka said Monday.

"It's also very fortunate," Krishtalka added during an interview.

"Is it an opportunity to foster awareness and change in Kansas? Absolutely."

The State Board of Education expects to vote later this year on proposed science standards that will be used to develop tests for students, while leaving the decision of what's taught to local boards of education.

With a 6-4 conservative majority, the board is expected to approve proposed language from intelligent design advocates reflecting skepticism about the theory of evolution.

John Calvert, a retired Lake Quivira attorney who helped found the Intelligent Design Network,

called the exhibit "in-your-face evangelism."

"I think these exhibits are designed to promote evolution as a creed," he said.

The "Explore Evolution" exhibit — and five others across the nation — are financed by a three year, \$2.8 million National Science Foundation grant.

The universities of Oklahoma and Nebraska already have opened exhibits, and the universities of Michigan and Texas plan to do so next year, as does the Minnesota Science Museum in Minneapolis.

The exhibits tackle topics such as the rapid evolution of the virus causing AIDS, the genetic similarities and differences between humans and chimpanzees, and fossil evidence linking modern whales to four-legged ancestors.

Krishtalka said the universities and the Minnesota Museum began working on obtaining a grant in 2002 — two years before the Kansas Board of Education decided to rewrite the existing, evolution-friendly science standards.

But Kansas already had received

national attention because of evolution. In 1999, the board rewrote science standards to delete most references to the theory, an action reversed after elections in 2000.

And evolution remains a hot topic. In August, President Bush endorsed teaching intelligent design alongside evolution.

In Pennsylvania, a trial is under way in a lawsuit by parents against the Dover Area School District, filed after the district's board required teachers to read a brief statement referring students to an intelligent-design textbook for information about "gaps" in evolutionary theory.

Its advocates attack evolutionary theory that natural chemical processes could have created the basic building blocks of life on Earth, that all life had a common ancestor and that man and apes shared a common ancestor.

Many scientists see intelligent design as another form of creationism, which the U.S. Supreme Court banned from public schools. Krishtalka called intelligent design "creationism in a cheap tuxedo."

Paving the apron



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Concrete work on the airport apron was finished up at the Colby Municipal Airport late last week, said Mark Ostmeier, airport manager. APAC of Hays, the lead contractor in charge of the project, has been doing rehabilitation work to the apron and taxiways/taxilanes. The expected completion date for the concrete phase of the airport's improvement plan is scheduled toward the latter part of this month. Once the concrete is completed, crack sealing, grading, and other maintenance projects will continue with estimated completion by the end of 2005, Ostmeier said Tuesday.

