



COLBY FREE PRESS

County 'airs' concerns

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

The cost of cooling the Thomas County Courthouse was one of the key topics at the Thomas County Commission meeting Monday.

Commissioners Ron Evans, Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen are looking at options for cooling the courthouse.

"We are OK now, but for a long range plan we may look at a change over," Evans said about current gas air-conditioning units.

The eight units used to cool the courthouse have four back-up units donated by Cheyenne County. The used units will allow Thomas County to repair existing units until a decision is made whether to convert from natural gas to electric.

"Our large gas consumption is in the summer," Steele said.

"But that might not be accurate since we haven't had bad winters the last couple years," Christiansen said.

After a brief call to Cheyenne County to find out the name of their custodian, commissioners decided to have Jim McGuire visit with Carl Williams about the units. The two custodians will also talk about the costs of using gas versus electricity to cool a building such as a courthouse.

"We'll let Jim talk to Carl and I'm sure Jim will bring us his recommendation," Evans said.

Jerry Baird resigned as Lacey Township trustee and Jonathan Higerd agreed to accept the position. The commissioners voted unanimously for Higerd, effective immediately.

Cereal malt beverage licenses for RDC Steakhouse and Saloon in Brewster were approved. The business is owned by Ross and Dana Cranston.

Also approved was a license for Richard Kyle's business in Rexford, the Country Store.

This is the first year the 55 county employees were given \$25 coupons to have blood drawn and tested as a prevention option for their health-care.

Those employees are encouraged to participate in the 2006 Wellness Fair, including blood tests, that will take place Saturday at Colby Community College.

"I talked with Jeanene Brown at Citizens Medical Center and she said typically there's a 20 percent usage of coupons like this," Christiansen said.

Brown is manager of educational services at the hospital.

Commissioners are considering sponsoring a dental clinic similar to the one which took place last year in Salina.

Steele said he had talked to Juanita Gatz, county health nurse and county health administrator, about such a clinic.

"I'd like her to see if there is grant money available for a dental clinic," Steele said.

"We have to work and cooperate with our local dentists and be fair to them, but like I said, this is in the thinking stage."

In other business, the commissioners talked with road supervisor Clair Schrock about the need to stay on top of deadlines for work on Willow Street.

Work tentatively scheduled for May includes the area from Bourquins Old Depot Restaurant and RV Park east to Country Club Drive.

"We are going to widen, straighten the curve on the east end and overlay the road with asphalt," Christiansen said.

The Kansas Department of Transportation scheduled field checks on the proposed work are complete and the commissioners want Schrock to find out when the work can actually begin.

On Jan. 16 agenda will be a meeting with Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn and Schrock to discuss where gasoline for county vehicles is purchased.

A walk in the park



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Grahm Robbins, 6, and younger brother Porter, 2, of Colby enjoy some time Tuesday afternoon on the playground equipment at Fike Park.

Trustees mull faculty pay and president

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Faculty negotiations kept the Colby Community College board of trustees in executive session during most of their special meeting Monday.

The board went into executive session four times to discuss the matter.

Board president Don Kready said they were talking about what they will negotiate with the faculty alliance.

The board must submit a letter to the alliance by Feb. 1, and the alliance must reciprocate with their own letter.

In other business, the board talked about the Wellness Center and heard an update on the school's presidential search.

The board approved putting together an advisory committee to be headed up by board member Kenton Krehbiel to review plans for the center.

Kready said they will go back and look at the original plans and com-

pare with what they have not to see if they're still on the right track. They will make any updates if needed.

"We want to verify it will be a benefit to students," Kready said.

He also said there were questions about if the center was just for students.

"There was some confusion," he said, but it will be used by the college's students as well as the public.

The search for a new college president is also on track.

"We're pretty much still on schedule," Kready said.

The board found out the screening committee has finished its job of narrowing down the pool of applicants.

From there, the search committee will take the remaining applications and pick who they want to invite for the first round of interviews, which will probably be done by ITV, Kready said.

The board will next meet at 5 p.m. Monday for its regular meeting. The meeting is open to the public.

Funds near \$2 million

TOPEKA (AP) — Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius began this year with nearly \$1.75 million available for her re-election campaign, almost six times as much as her two main Republican rivals combined.

But the attorney general's race looked more competitive in fundraising. Republican-turned Democratic challenger Paul Morrison, the Johnson County district attorney, had about \$315,000 on hand, or \$14,000 more than GOP incumbent Phill Kline.

Neither Sebelius nor Kline has publicly announced any re-election plans, but reports their campaign

organizations filed Tuesday with the secretary of state's office left little doubt about their plans. Those reports cover contributions received and expenses made last year.

The governor raised nearly \$2 million, almost half of what she raised during her 2002 campaign. She spent about \$393,000, making payments to pollsters and consultants. That compared to the \$282,000 raised by Republican Sen. Jim Barnett, an Emporia physician. After campaign expenditures, he began this year with almost \$252,000. His fundraising total included \$110,000 in loans from his trust fund.

Brewster man's kidney donation all in the family

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

For Tony Horinek of Brewster, donating a kidney was the chance to do something with meaning. Horinek donated one of his kidneys to Brennan Reinert of Greeley, Colo., the cousin of his wife, Anita.

The transplant took place Nov. 15, 2005, at the University of Colorado Hospital in Denver.

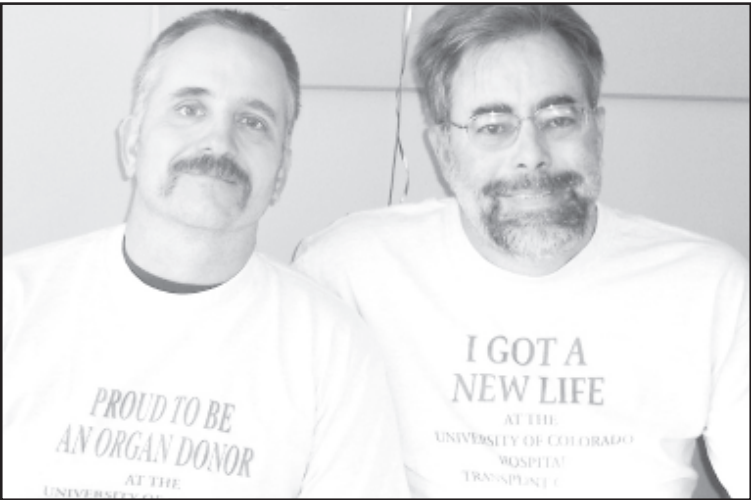
Horinek's decision to become an organ donor started last summer.

In June, Reinert and his wife stayed with the Horineks while on the way to a family wedding.

"I really didn't know Brennan all that well until last summer," Tony said.

In August, Tony and Anita went to Estes Park, Colo. to celebrate their anniversary and stayed with the Reinerts in Greeley. Tony said Brennan never complained once about his condition, and didn't ask for anything.

Tony said it wasn't fair Brennan had already gave up so much, including his job, because of his condition. Horinek felt a calling to do something about it, so decided to see about donating a kidney. Brennan had been on the transplant



Courtesy photo

Tony Horinek, left, donated one of his kidneys to Brennan Reinert.

waiting list for more than a year.

When they left, Horinek told Reinert he wanted to be considered to be a donor candidate. Brennan gave him a number to call in Denver, and soon, the testing process began.

He went through all the necessary tests, both physical and emotional, and eventually found out he was indeed a viable match.

Then, the two had to go see their doctors together.

Anita explained her cousin has

polycystic kidneys, a condition where the mass of the kidney is replaced by cysts, which hinders and eventually leads to kidney failure. It's also a condition that has one of the highest rates of success for a transplant.

As a nurse, Anita was familiar with the condition, and everything a transplant would entail. Anita said she was at peace with the entire idea.

Much of the testing took place during fall harvest but each time

when it was time for more tests, it was either raining or the crops were too wet to cut.

"Everything worked well," he said. "It was all in God's plan."

The day of the transplant, he was nervous.

Anita said Horinek isn't exactly fond of the hospital setting, but that day he was peaceful and even singing before they took him in for the operation.

Horinek said he felt peace in pre-op and was happy. At the same time, family, friends and church members elsewhere were praying.

"It was an awesome experience," he said.

Horinek said most people give money in offering, but he felt the calling to do something more.

"I really prayed it would be a rewarding experience and the opportunity to give sacrificially," he said.

He spent four days in the hospital after the transplant, and it was hard to leave when it was time to go.

"When I left that was the best four days of my life," Horinek said.

Up to the transplant, the two each had a separate medical team working with them, but on the day of the operation, they interacted.

"They really looked out for me,"

Horinek said. Now, nearly two months later, Horinek said he's almost completely back to normal.

Brennan is also doing well. He hasn't had any problems with rejection and is regaining his health. He's also doing things around the house.

The first few days after going home, Tony said they spent a lot of time on the phone, and have become fast friends.

"We're best buds now," he said. "We can't wait to see each other."

Horinek encourage others to consider kidney donation. He was grateful for the opportunity, and said it was a rewarding, faith-filled experience he wanted and prayed for.

"It's a part of sharing and stewardship," he said.

Anita said there are many misconceptions about organ donation, one of which is the donor must pay for their operation. She said there is no expense the donor beyond missing some work, and four to six weeks of recovery time.

Horinek was surprised at how quickly he found out he couldn't overdo things, but he has recovered quickly.

"I just wanted to go God's will," he said.

Korean scientists claim to have cloned embryos, stem cells

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — An academic panel investigating the work of South Korean researcher Hwang Woo-suk said Tuesday he fabricated data to support his claim that he cloned human embryos and extracted stem cells from them. The latest revelation by the Seoul National University panel was another disappointment

to scientists and patients alike.

Hwang's claim of a cloning breakthrough had offered hope to millions suffering from paralysis and debilitating diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and AIDS.

The same panel concluded last month that Hwang falsely claimed in 2005 to have developed 11 stem

cell lines tailored to specific patients.

Hwang "did not have any proof to show that cloned embryonic stem cells were ever created," the panel said in a report, disputing the central claims in Hwang's 2004 paper in the journal Science. In the paper, Hwang said he had cloned a human embryo and extracted stem cells

from it.

The university cast doubt on whether an embryo was cloned, saying there is a high possibility it could have merely been a mutated egg, which could appear to have similar qualities of an embryo.

"The 2004 paper was written on fabricated data to show that the stem cells match the DNA of the provider

although they didn't," the report said. The panel upheld Hwang's claims last year to have created the world's first cloned dog, an Afghan hound named Snuppy. The journal Nature, which published Hwang's cloned-dog article, said Tuesday preliminary results from its independent tests also showed Snuppy was indeed a clone.