



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Trustee must resign from college board

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

Larry Arehart resigned his position as trustee with Colby Community College after serving two and one-half years of his four-year term.

The announcement came at the end of last week's college board meeting when Arehart "with deep regret" said he was resigning because he no longer was a resident of Colby.

Arehart said he and his wife, Patsy, are moving to Arizona and establishing residency there, which means he is no longer qualified to serve as a trustee.

Since his term won't end until June 30, 2007, the college began its search for a replacement by placing an advertisement in the *Colby Free Press*.

The procedure allows for a waiting period of 15 days, according to board policy.

During that time, interested applicants are encouraged to send a summary of their qualifications and a letter to Skip Sharp, interim president.



L. Arehart

Applicants must also be a Thomas County resident.

Arehart began his term in July of 2003 after vying for one of the three trustee positions open. During that election, six people ran for the three openings to include Arehart, Larry McDonald, Mark Schwarz, and Lon Frahm. Incumbents Don Kready and Ken Poland were also seeking another term.

Prior to throwing his hat in the race, Arehart was employed by the college as the director of sheep production in 1974.

Arehart continued to work for the college until his retirement in 1995. The couple have a son, Scott, who lives in Phoenix, Ariz. The end result was Arehart, McDonald and Kready were elected.

Anyone with an interest in the college and is willing to consider the challenges and needs of the school have until 5 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 15, to send a the summary and letter to Sharp at Colby Community College, 1255 S. Range Ave., Colby, Kan. 67701.

Whoever is selected to finish Arehart's unexpired term will continue in that position until July of 2007. At that time Arehart's successor, McDonald and Kready will have completed their terms and voters will again consider electing or re-electing them for another four years.

## New bookkeeper says she's ready for challenges

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A new bookkeeper and clerk at the Colby School District is helping things run smooth.

However, the face is a familiar one.

Rhonda Kropp took over as district bookkeeper/clerk on Dec. 22, 2005, replacing Marilyn Reed, who retired.

Before coming to the district office, Kropp had worked as a secretary at Colby Grade School since 1997. She decided to pursue the district clerk job because she was ready to take on new challenges.

Kropp's duties include working with the budget and overseeing the day to day activities and paperwork involving purchases, invoices, statements and more.

She is also the board clerk, and helps prepare for board meetings and takes the minutes.

Her first board meeting as clerk was Monday, Jan. 16. Kropp was a little nervous at first, but said it went well.



R. Kropp

She attended board meetings before Reed's retirement, watching how she did things.

"I trained with Marilyn several months before she left," Kropp said, adding Reed was an "expert" at the job. "She showed me every detail."

Kropp was grateful for the training she received, and said Reed did a "great job" helping her.

Her duties aren't the only change.

A big change, she noted, is it's quieter at the district office, and there isn't as much communication with parents and students.

And after Christmas break, she expected the office to be "wild," like at the grade school, but it quickly settled down.

"I really enjoyed it over there," Kropp said. "It's busy there all the time, but I like what I'm doing."

Before working for the school district, Kropp spent 20 years at Farmers and Merchants Bank. She started there as a bookkeeper in 1976.

She later became a teller, then a supervisor and operations officer.

When she left in 1997, she was an administrative assistant to the president.

Kropp is still adjusting to her new surroundings, but is adapting quickly. "It's going to work out well, I think," she said.

duced a Legislative Research Department spreadsheet to show their mix of policies would work without causing future budget disasters.

Barnett's plan depends on its key assumptions. They're rooted in a belief that cutting taxes actually will cause revenues to grow by stimulating economic growth — a strategy pursued nationally by Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush.

Barnett's plan also assumes that Kansans will accept four years of frozen spending

in many parts of state government and a two-year delay in the completion of some highway projects.

"This plan is ambitious," Barnett said in announcing it. "It recognizes tough choices."

History makes Democrats skeptical.

Nationally, budget deficits ballooned following Reagan and Bush tax cuts, and the causes and importance of the red ink remain hotly debated.

In Kansas, a mid-1990s economic boom

led to big but dispersed tax cuts — and plenty of second-guessing when the economy soured after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

"Barnett is going to drive us back down to the road to instability," said Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, D-Topeka. "Why try to gamble away our resources here, with this fiscally irresponsible plan?"

Barnett's plan calls for phasing in income tax cuts for individuals over four years, expanding an income tax credit for busi-

nesses for investing in machinery and equipment and eliminating estate taxes in 2008. According to his spreadsheet, Kansans eventually will save \$460 million a year.

But he'd also phase in a \$400 million increase in aid to public schools over four years and guarantee state universities, community colleges and vocational colleges annual budget increases of 2.5 percent, while covering increases in the cost of medical services for the poor and disabled.



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Buffy Coleman helped a youth spin a basketball on the tip of his finger Saturday during Coleman's presentation at the Fellowship

of Christian Athletes Breakfast of Champions. The annual event is traditionally held during the Orange and Black Classic.

## Hoop dreams

**“Hard work is the key to success in anything. I tell you, young people, always believe in yourself.”**

Buffy Coleman, featured speaker

John Van Nostrand

Colby Free Press

Buffy Coleman is having a ball, even though it is not what he dreamed of doing with a basketball.

Coleman was the featured speaker Saturday during the Colby High School's Fellowship of Christian Athletes annual Breakfast of Champions.

After Coleman's dreams of playing professional basketball or with the Harlem Globetrotters faded, he found other ways to utilize his basketball interest.

"God gave us all talents," Coleman said. "And he gives us all choices, good choices or bad choices."

Growing up in Heflin, La., Coleman loved basketball and dreamed of playing in the National Basketball Association. But only standing 5-6, Coleman feared the opportunity to play would be slim.

"I knew I had a talent," he said.

While in his early 20s and college basketball was not possible, Coleman videotaped his basketball dribbling skills and sent the tape to the Harlem Globetrotters, the basketball team that combines basketball

with humor and tricks and tours across the country. On Sept. 3, 1993, the Globetrotters called Coleman and invited him to a Globetrotter camp to try out for the team.

He was not able to make the team because of an aggravated knee injury, but that didn't mean Coleman's love of basketball was finished. Since he was flattered the Globetrotters thought he had talent, he was inspired to start his own basketball show.

He relates his own show to scripture in the Bible. "With faith the size of a mustard seed you can move mountains," Coleman said. "That's true."

Since then, Coleman spends a portion of the year touring the country showing his basketball talent

and giving inspirational speeches to school students. Coleman's show is heavy in crowd involvement. He picked several people from the audience to participate in a basketball-pass contest.

"Hard work is the key to success in anything," he said. "I tell you, young people, always believe in yourself."

Coleman appreciates the efforts of student groups like Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"I've always chosen to be around positive, Christ-like people," he said Coleman said groups like that give students a chance to share and grow with other peers. "It challenges you," he said.

Coleman said growing up in rural America, like he did in Louisiana, should not hinder youth. He

said substance abuse was common among people he knew during high school.

"Living in a town of 1,000 people, I didn't let that stop me," he said.

"If Buffy can come from a small town in Louisiana ... I can do it if I put God first."

As for those others he knew in high school, Coleman said their criminal activity caught up with them and some are now incarcerated.

Either in rural western Kansas or posh Beverly Hills, Calif., Coleman said many of today's high school students are facing the same things.

"It's peer pressure," he said. "And drugs are everywhere. They just try to impress friends."

Coleman said part of the problem for today's adolescents are kids not believing in themselves and parents who don't believe in their kids. "Parenting is key for kids."

The impact of Hurricane Katrina on Louisiana is also a factor on teens in that area, he said.

"They have been unstable," he said. "Not having a house, that would affect anybody. They are really uncertain about their future."

## Missouri counties struggle with livestock odor

SHELBYVILLE, Mo. (AP) — Hog farmer Chuck Wood is no stranger to stink. Around here, they say, manure is the smell of money.

Some neighbors of northern Missouri's numerous factory-size livestock operations are less effusive. They call the pervasive odors a public health threat, leading to respiratory illnesses and mood disorders, not to mention plummeting property values.

In the past decade, more than a dozen Missouri counties have passed health ordinances restricting the location of concentrated animal

feeding operations, or CAFOS. Several others, including Shelby County, are debating such ordinances even as state legislators mull whether to make it more difficult for local governments to do so.

As Shelby County's presiding commissioner, Wood, 61, is caught in the middle of a debate pitting neighbor against neighbor in a tight-knit, rural community desperate for economic salvation.

"They don't want to limit growth; they don't want a health ordinance," Wood said. "But they sure ... don't want a hog farm next to them with-

out a say in it."

State law requires industrial-size livestock operations — those with at least 7,000 beef cattle, 17,500 hogs or 700,000 chickens — with animals primarily confined inside to be at least 3,000 feet from a residence. Those standards, enforced by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, are woefully inadequate, said Putnam County farmer Terry Spence.

Spence's home near the Iowa border is two miles from 80,000 hogs owned by Premium Standard Farms Inc. "I wouldn't wish that on

anybody," he said.

The talk of public health restrictions comes as Cargill Pork looks to expand its contract livestock operations in northern Missouri.

In a county with a declining population, limited industry and young people leaving after high school graduation, the potential investment by Cargill is at risk, said local farmer Mark Wilson.

"If you pass a health ordinance of any kind, you'll put a 'Closed for Business' sign at every entrance to Shelby County," he said at a recent public hearing.

## Republican 'Prescription for Growth' depends on key assumptions

TOPEKA (AP) — Maybe it sounds just a little too good to be true.

Sen. Jim Barnett, who hopes to win the Republican nomination and unseat Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius this year, has outlined a "Prescription for Growth" plan designed to allow the state to both cut taxes and increase spending on education during what would be his first four-year term in office.

But Barnett, of Emporia, and his running mate, Sen. Susan Wagle, R-Wichita, pro-