



COLBY FREE PRESS

14 pages

A one and a two . . .



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Colby Middle School students (l to r) Lauren Schoaff, Katrina Kaus and Shelby Terrell warmed up Wednesday before their solo performances during the seventh and eighth grade Northwest Kansas League music festival Wednesday at Colby Community College. Schoaff received a 1 rating, which is the third highest rating for her violin solo; Kaus a 1- , which is the fourth highest rating, for her clarinet solo and Terrell received a 1 rating also for her trumpet performance. More highlights will appear next week.

Chamber of commerce board nominations released

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Nominations for the County Chamber of Commerce's Ambassador Business Person of the Year and Community Service Award are being accepted. New chamber director Holly Stephens said nominations close March 1. The awards will be announced at the annual chamber banquet Friday, March 17 at City Limits Convention Center, she said. Guidelines exist for each category.

For the community service award, the nominee must be a chamber member or employee of a chamber member and have non-paid volunteer hours. The business person award nominees must also be a chamber member or employee of a chamber member, have a personal and public positive attitude, professionalism and excel in voluntary efforts. Past community service winners are Cathy Harris and Bill Summers, 2004; John Eicher, 2003; Kenton and Sheila Krehbiel, 2002; Chuck and Leilani Thomas, 2001;

and Cindy Black, 2000. Business person award winners are Donelan Jewelry, 2004; Mike Woofter, 2003; Mike and Jackie Wiens, 2002; Tubbs and Sons, 2001; Kevin and Cindi Kriss, 2000. Chamber board members Mike Wiens, Donna Inlow and Rex Jamison are going off the board, and there are six people running for the open seats. They are Kathy Britton, Colby Community College; Quintin Flanagin, Williams Consulting; Michelle Morris, Fotogirl Photography; Mike

Wiens, BankWest; Randy Wilson, Farm Credit of Western Kansas; Shawn Yost, Orscheln Farm and Home. Board president is Charles Schwanke; Todd Stramel is president-elect; Mike Wiens is past president. Other board members are Martha Brewer, Tom Chain, Thelma Goodheart, Tina Harris, Ted Hart, Leta Lee, Brian Staats, Harold Sulzman, Jamison and Inlow. The theme for this year's event is "Lucky to Live in Kansas." Social hour starts at 6 p.m. and followed by dinner and entertain-

ment at 7 p.m. Marci Penner, author of the book "The Kansas Guidebook for Explorers," is the featured speaker for the evening. The menu will include veggie lasagna and baron of beef. Tickets are \$25 each, or \$250 for a corporate table of eight. Stephens said businesses can also sponsor a centerpiece for \$50 or less. For information, they can call the chamber at 460-3401. "We are really excited about the banquet," Stephens said.

Northwest Kansas welcomes new doctor to Hoxie area

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Hoxie's medical community welcomed a new doctor this month. Dr. John France, 52, started work at Sheridan County Health Complex. He said he and his family were drawn to northwest Kansas because of its lifestyle and terrain. "My wife liked the area and people and it's a lot like Roswell," France said. "I'm happy to be here and the



Dr. John France

"I am happy to be here and the people are real friendly and nice."

Dr. John France

people are real friendly and nice." France earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry in 1977 at the University of Ohio at Ada. He earned a doctorate degree in chemistry at the University of Pittsburgh and his medical degree at the Uni-

versity of Missouri at Columbia in 1995. France served as a doctor in the United States Army from 1995 to 2002, and comes to Hoxie from Roswell, N.M. The doctor's wife, Dr. Ratchnee France, and two daughters, Roslyn, 14, and Daylin, 11, will join him in April. Dr. Ratchnee and the two girls will reside in Oakley where she will work at New Frontier Health Services and Logan County Hospital. Dr. John France will live in Hoxie two weeks each month and work at Hoxie Medical Clinic weekdays and at the complex during emergency room rotation. "I grew up in a rural area in Ohio and while this is much more rural, we like it," France said. The doctor is excited his work in

Hoxie will created new challenges for him. "I'm still getting used to the hospital," he said. "They have a good system here and I need to fit in and not ask them to change for me." France said he looks forward to helping the medical complex maintain what it currently has as far as services and improve as well. "I hope to make the health complex provide more health benefits and opportunities for the local residents. I'd also like to make it more consistent for patients," he said.

Good luck — mom style

Colby High School wrestler Eric Jurek received a good luck kiss this morning from his mother Tammy Jurek. A brief send-off was held for the Eagle wrestlers by their parents and other well-wishers before the team headed to the regional wrestling tournament.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Vacant position filled on college board

By Debbie Schwanke
Public Information Officer

Mark Winger, Colby, has been selected by the Colby Community College Board of Trustees to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Larry Arehart. The term will expire June 30, 2007. Winger, who has 18 years of banking experience, is the vice-president of marketing and credit at Farm Credit of Western Kansas, ACA. A graduate of Colby Community College, he continued his education at West Texas State University, graduating Magna Cum Laude with his Bachelor of Science degree. Winger is currently a candidate for his master's degree in agribusiness from Kansas State University. Winger has been very active in the Colby Community College Endowment Foundation. He has

served as the group's president, vice-president and treasurer. A graduate of Leadership Thomas County and Kansas Agriculture Rural Leadership, Winger has served on many community boards. He was elected vice-president and president of the Colby Chamber of Commerce, served as a board member for the Colby Berean Church, Genesis Thomas County, Leadership Thomas County and the 21st Century Alliance. He currently serves as the treasurer of Kansas Agriculture Rural Leadership and is a member of the Colby Municipal Airport Advisory Board and the Colby Rotary Club. Mark and his wife Tonya live in Colby with their sons Chaz, 13; Zane, 11; and Gage, 5. Winger will assume his duties on the Colby Community College Board immediately.