

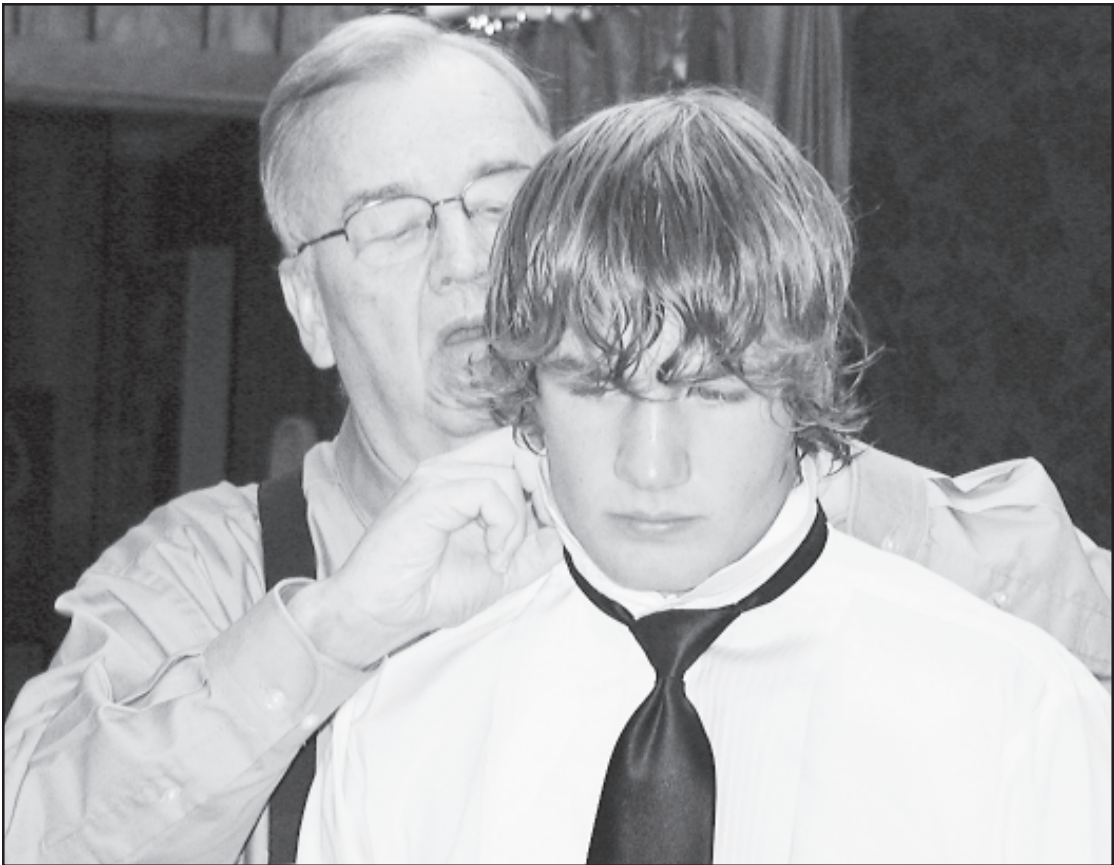


COLBY FREE PRESS

All dressed up



ABOVE: Colby High School Senior Brian Saddler and his date, Carly Cadena of Louisburg, arrived for prom Saturday in a 1929 Model A Ford. Brad Kersenbrock, one of the valets, inside the car, looked down at the three-speed stick prior to parking the vehicle. **RIGHT:** For more than 30 years, Dave Jennings, owner of the "His Shop," has been making sure the young men throughout northwest Kansas know the proper way to wear their tuxedos when attending prom. This year was no different as Jennings helped Kyle Withington, a Colby High School senior, with his cuffs, tie, jacket and other accessories on Saturday morning.



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Taylor emphasizes museum's needs

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

More than 75 people attended the Thomas County Historical Society's annual meeting Sunday with the director reiterating the importance of saving the facility. Museum director Sue Taylor also spoke about the planning process at the museum and provided updates following the meetings held earlier this month to save the facility. "As you have read in the newspaper, the historical society and museum are reaching out to the community for help and support," she said.

The budget for this year is \$165,000 — \$65,000 from the county and the other \$90,000 must be raised with \$10,000 from savings. "For over 20 years, we have received \$65,000 from the county and as cost have increased, the amount has stayed the same."

"The museum is operating at the lowest possible budget and we currently have two full-time positions that have been left unfilled," she said.

Taylor said, over the years the historical society has received several large bequests from individuals and that money has been used for special projects and to serve as emergency funds.

"We have depleted most of those funds," she said.

"After this year, we will have just \$15,000 in reserves for emergencies."

The museum board, staff and



J.C. Carter of Colby looked at archaeological finds from a dig last summer Kanorado during the Thomas County Historical Society's annual meeting Sunday.

volunteers from the area are working on a strategic plan and Duane Cheney of the Western Prairie RC & D has been facilitating the process.

The three meetings held earlier this month covered five areas of the museum's operation — finance, facilities, public relations/marketing, programming and personnel.

The broad goals of the plan are to (1) take care of the facilities and enhance the site; (2) market to both area people and tourists; (3) provide for the current and future funding

needs of the museum; (4) provide opportunities for adults, children and families to learn about area history and art through the Kuska Collection; and (5) provide the human resources necessary to carry out the plan through board, staff and volunteers.

"Our goal that was mentioned in each group was the idea of volunteering and how important it was for people to get involved in the museum."

During the annual meeting, Taylor noted the museum covers 24

acres with eight buildings.

This summer, she said the museum will offer a workshop to train a group of people to work with the collections.

"We are asking for the community to get involved," Taylor said Sunday.

Cindy Cersovsky went off the museum board this year and Dan Baalman took her place. Other members include Rex Van Horn, Sarah Saddler, Mike Baughn, Shelli Bielser, Bev Eicher, Lon Frahm, Cal Mahin, and Naomi Ward.

Colby native promoted by highway patrol

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

Colby High School graduate David Albers, 27, was recently promoted within the Kansas Highway Patrol to lieutenant and assigned as a zone supervisor in Pottawatomie, Wabaunsee and Nemaha counties in northeast Kansas.

"David is one of the younger troopers to achieve the rank of lieutenant," said Lieutenant John A. Eichkorn of Topeka.

"As a six-year veteran, he is now a first-line supervisor."

Albers joined the patrol in July 2000 and as a trooper did patrol duties in the Goodland area, Eichkorn said.

In April 2003, he was transferred to the Wichita area and did road patrol duties on the Kansas Turnpike.

Albers has also been recognized for achievements in the patrol to include the *Kansas Highway Patrol Superintendent's Award* for meritorious service and also the *Kansas*

Association of Chiefs of Police Gold Award for his action during an officer-involved shooting on Interstate 70 near Goodland.

"The Kansas Turnpike Authority presented Albers with an *Above and Beyond Award* in 2003 for his efforts to save a heart attack victim," Eichkorn said.

Albers was again honored by the Turnpike Authority in 2004 with a second *Above and Beyond Award* after leading an investigation to identify a suspect placing objects on the turnpike roadways, he said.

A native of Colby, Albers received his associate's degree from Colby Community College in computer science.

He is the son of Mike and Patti Albers of Colby. His grandparents in Colby are Joan and the late George Albers.



D. Albers

New math course hit with students

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Teachers at Colby Grade School are raving about math.

The teachers gave a curriculum presentation on the school's new math curriculum at the April 17 Colby School Board meeting, and had nothing but good things to say about the Everyday Math program.

District Curriculum Director Diana Wieland said this is the first year for the curriculum. It's being used in kindergarten through fifth grade and in sixth grade at Colby Middle School.

Third-grade teacher Robin Schwanke said, "This year, things are going well, and students and parents aren't struggling with math."

She said the curriculum is concept-oriented, and has worked so well, they have taught seventh-grade concepts to third graders.

Title-math teacher Nancy Baker said, "The skill progression is there like in a regular math curriculum, but the concept building is better."

The curriculum exposes students to a concept, then later re-exposing them to it, or another way to solve a problem as they go through it. If they don't understand the first time, they later get a chance of looking at the problem in a different manner.

Baker said the program is integrated. For example, as students are working on fractions, they'll also be

learning measurements.

"They're also gaining social skills," she said, "because they work together with hands-on problems and while playing math games that help hone their problem-solving skills."

Fifth-grade math teacher Gerri Balthazor said this year was the first time the fifth graders took the state math assessment. She said the curriculum helped them succeed on the tests.

"It was a very, very difficult test," Balthazor said. "We were very impressed with how they did. They learned some wonderful things with this program. We really like it."

Across the board, the program has been successful.

"There are a lot of skills gained and reinforced," Wieland said. "We're seeing a lot of positive results. Students are excited about learning and problem-solving."

In the classroom, there's been an increase in communication. Students are talking with one another about how to solve problems, and the teachers can see how they're thinking.

Every seven years, the district's curriculum is reviewed. Last year, it was time for a new math program. Wieland said the staff visited several schools and reviewed Everyday Math. It was a unanimous choice for the school.

"This is the one hands down the staff chose," she said.

Farmers gearing up for spring planting

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Clayton Prah was in an optimistic mood as he began planting his corn last week in south-central Minnesota.

His corn and soybeans did well in 2005, and he's hoping for another good turn this year. So he was quick to take advantage of the pleasant weather to get an early start.

"I just hope it keeps going as good as it's going so far," he said by cell phone above the roar of his tractor near Gaylord.

"If the weather cooperates we can have a good week or two here."

But experts say it will be hard for Minnesota farmers to make up for high fuel and fertilizer costs and earn as much as they did in 2005.

"We need another bumper yield like we had last year or this is going

to be a very difficult year to make ends meet," said Dale Nordquist, associate director of the Center for Farm and Financial Management at the University of Minnesota.

"We've had two outstanding years in a row in Minnesota in terms of farm income."

"It's hard to imagine we're going to have a third, but we never know what's going to happen," he added.

Minnesota farm income hit record levels last year, when net farm income from farming operations averaged \$87,491, according to a report Nordquist issued last week.

"We had three things that went right for us last year," he said.

"We had pretty outstanding livestock prices. And the government payments were up, too."