



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Roll camera



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Darren and Susan Clark, left, watched Caleb Carter prepare to watch a presentation at Thomas County Academy Monday. An open house and informational meeting for parents was held at the academy, which is the Colby School District's charter school. Carter is a sixth grader at the academy, and was taping the presentation for other students to see.

Colby schools to kick the can

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

National organizations are doing more than just giving lip service to the problem of childhood obesity by getting state and federal legislators involved in curbing the problem in public school systems.

An effort between the William J. Clinton Foundation, the American Heart Association and several beverage producers has prompted changes in how schools will sell carbonated beverages to students.

The nation's largest beverage distributors have agreed to halt nearly all soda sales to public schools. Cadbury Schweppes PLC, Coca-Cola Co., PepsiCo Inc. and the American Beverage Association have all signed onto the deal.

The companies have agreed to sell only water, unsweetened juice and low-fat milks to elementary and middle schools.

And why target soda? Most experts agree that cutting out soda can be a big help in fighting obesity because of its caloric content and popularity among children.

Colby is wasting no time getting aboard.

"For the past five months," said Colby High School Principal Rocky Robbins, "a committee made up of community members and representatives at all three building levels have been analyzing how to comply with the federal and state mandates for this nationwide epidemic."

Colby Middle School Principal Robb Ross, also on the committee, said the district is following the guidelines.

"We will do our part," Ross said. Many middle schoolers are already choosing juices and water over pop.

"It is a mixed bag, though," he said.

Polling a cross-section of students, Ross said some are mad about losing Mountain Dew while others are saying, it's no big deal



"It's a bold and sweeping step that industry and childhood obesity advocates have decided to take together."

Jay Carson,
Clinton Foundation



S. Redmond

with the absence of sodas.

"Our coaches don't want us drinking pop anyway," one middle school student told Ross. Another said, "Drinking water and juice is becoming a habit — I don't even miss pop."

Reaction by high school students has been similar.

Sarah Redmond, a senior, said although she wasn't aware of any changes, it wouldn't bother her either way.

"I don't drink much pop," she said.

Redmond attributed some of the reason for her preferring juice and water over carbonated beverages had to do with what she has read and heard.

"We have gotten a little information in the physical education classes," she said "Pop isn't a healthy choice."

Currently, the high school has soda, juice, Gatorade, candy and other items in its vending machines available, but not between 11:15 a.m. and 2:15 p.m.

The idea is to shut down the machines during the lunch hour and for one hour after lunch, Robbins said.



R. Robbins

ago not to charge people hauling yard waste to the landfill.

Jumper said it would be "nearly impossible" to define which people were mowing lawns for profit and which were doing their own or helping a neighbor.

"We have to keep a certain amount of waste out of the pit to stay under our 20 tons per day limit," Jumper said. "Having grass separated out lessens the quickness the pit fills up."

Schultz does not require his customers to separate household solid waste items from yard debris. Nor does he haul yard debris exclusively on a separate day.

"I don't care whether they pay or not, but it needs to be fair," Schultz said.

Yard debris and grass clippings are worked into compost which is free to Thomas County residents for their gardens and yards.

Evans told Schultz the fees would

continue as they are, and Schultz was encouraged to attend a meeting in December where representatives from Colby, Brewster and Rexford are expected to talk about the landfill and fees.

Tipping fees range from \$2 to dispose a tire from cars and light trucks to \$55 for a large loader tire. The fee for disposal of municipal solid waste runs \$29 per ton, and fees to dispose construction and demolition debris run from a \$3 minimum to \$15 per ton. Out of county wastes are assessed a fee of \$60 per ton. A complete list of fees is on file in the office of Thomas County Clerk Shelly Harms.

"It's not a perfectly fair deal out (at the landfill) and it never will be," Evans said.

Evans suggested Schultz segregate what he hauls to the landfill to avoid being charged tipping fees on yard waste.

Landfill tips man to complain

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

A complaint about tipping fees at Thomas County's landfill was discussed at Monday's county commission meeting.

Mike Schultz of Brewster is owner of Western Kansas Sanitation and he wasn't happy he is being charged tipping fees when some other people aren't being charged.

"If I'm going to pay it I expect everybody else to be charged or I'm not going to pay them any more," Schultz said.

Schultz believes all business owners, including those doing commercial yard care, should be assessed a fee to haul materials to the landfill.

Commissioners Ron Evans, Paul Steele and Ken Christiansen, along with landfill director Larry Jumper, told Schultz it was decided years

Three employees say goodbye to Colby Public Schools

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

More than 73 years combined. That's the experience three Colby School District employees have given the community and its schools.

Colby Grade School counselor Lois Unger, copy center manager Joann Minchow and Colby High School teacher and coach Bob Mannebach were honored with a retirement reception Monday at the district Administration Building.

Lois Unger

Unger was with the Colby district 12 years as counselor and spent a total of 32 years in education.

She came to Colby from Walsh, Colo., to make the switch from teaching to counseling. Unger previously taught Title I math.

She spent time in each classroom once a month. When she started, there were 29 classrooms to oversee, but that has declined to 19. She provided guidance lessons on everything from respect and anger management. Unger also helps out during state assessments.

"I also support both the students and the teachers as well," she said. "We have a super staff that have been so wonderful to work with."

She considered retiring for two years before finally making the decision this year.

was the right time," she said.

Unger got more out of Colby than a career. She also met her husband, Duane, after moving to Colby. The couple was introduced on a blind date by Superintendent Kirk Nielsen and his wife Sue. Ungers have been married nine years.

She said she plans to travel and has already scheduled a three-week trip to the northeast this summer. Unger also plans to spend more time with her 2-year-old granddaughter.

But she won't be done with schools.

"I think I'll probably be volunteering in the schools in the future," she said.

Unger said she will miss the "outstanding" staff and loved working with the district's children, who she will miss as well.

Joann Minchow

Though not an educator, Minchow was with the district the longest of the three people for 18 years. She ran the district's copy center.

Her job included making copies for the entire school district, Head Start, individual departments and offices and charter school, transparencies, laminating, copy editing and "just about anything else to do with documents," she said.

"It's a challenging job but I enjoyed it," Minchow said.

One of the biggest challenges was adapting to equipment evolu-



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

tion. When she first took the job, copies were made with a mimeograph machine, which used stencils to create a copy. That later changed to liquid copier and traditional copy machines, which helped create time to

do other things.

"The district recently purchased a digital copier, but I didn't get to do much with it," she said.

Minchow isn't completely retiring from working. She and her husband Rick will move to Manhattan,

where she will get a part-time job.

"We love Manhattan," she said. "We're big Wildcat fans. It seemed like a good place to go."

As "Cat fans, they have season tickets to Wildcat athletics.

The Minchows have seven

grandsons, six of whom are in Colby.

Bob Mannebach

Of the three, Mannebach has more time in education — 43 years.

Mannebach spent 16 years with the Colby district. He came to Colby from Salina Sacred Heart, where he taught and coached for 21 years. Originally from western Kansas, his decision to come to Colby hinged on the fact his parents lived in the area and he had already spent some time here.

"I did my student teaching here," he said. "This is where I started."

He taught business classes at Colby High School and coached basketball and cross country.

"I coached just about everything possible — football, baseball, golf and track, in addition to cross-country and basketball," he said.

As a coach at Sacred Heart Salina, he racked up four state championships in basketball; three in football as an assistant coach and one in cross country.

With Colby, his success was in cross-country. The girls team made it to state in each of the past five years and won 11 league championships.

"It's been fun working with these young people," Mannebach said.

He and his wife Evelyn plan on traveling in their retirement.

"We have children in every time zone," Mannebach said.