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Oakley teacher loses job

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

A teacher at Oakley High School has been fired for not having a Kansas teaching certificate.

During its meeting on Oct. 9, Oakley's school board voted unanimously to terminate the teaching contract of Fayann Salisbury effective immediately. Salisbury taught the English and Forensics.

Board President Raelene Keller said Thursday afternoon despite a check into Salisbury's background Salisbury did not present the district with proper state certification and could not be paid.

Keller said this was Salisbury's first year in Oakley, but had taught several years "in the Midwest," thinking Iowa or Illinois.

Superintendent Bill Steiner said this morning Salisbury came to Kansas after teaching in Illinois. He said the district gives teachers coming to Kansas from another state a period of time to obtain a Kansas certificate.

"I just don't know why she didn't, get it," he said.

Dale Dennis, spokesman for the Kansas Department of Education in Topeka, said state law prohibits school districts from paying teachers who are not properly certified.

"The law is a single sentence," Dennis said. "It shall be unlawful for the board of education of any school district to issue an order for payment of the salary of any employee required by law to be licensed who does not hold a license which is valid in the state of Kansas for the particular kind of work to be performed."

Dennis said all Kansas teachers are required to take an assessment test before teaching. While he could not talk about Salisbury's specific case, Dennis said there could be a "lot of variables" why her certification was not in place.

"The real issue is why she doesn't have a license," he said.

Efforts to contact Salisbury were not successful.

Salisbury is permitted a due process hearing as part of the action taken against her by the district. That hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m. on Nov. 13 at the board's meeting room located at 208 E. Second in Oakley.

Keeping a positive outlook



Colby High School cheerleaders held up a banner while the band, football team and members of the community lined up behind it on Franklin Avenue Thursday for a victory parade recognizing the football team. More than 100 fans turned out to support the Eagles, who play the last home game of the season at 7 p.m. tonight at Dennen Field.

TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Suspects arrested in Brewster burglaries

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Four men have been arrested this week for a break-in late last month in Brewster.

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn said Michael L. Doxon, 19 of Edson; along with three Goodland men, Nicholes E. Slusher, 18; Andres J. Zimkus, 21; and Joseph C. Lindsley, 20, are alleged to have broken into a Frito Lay truck in Brewster.

The alleged break-in happened sometime between 9:30 p.m. and 11:30 a.m. Sept. 25 in the 200 block of Rock Island.

"We had information that the incidents were related."
— Sheriff Mike Baughn

Baughn said about \$870 worth of Frito Lay product was taken.

He said the same men are alleged to have taken a stereo and speakers from a car in the 300 block of Nebraska and a satellite radio from a car in the 300 block of Kansas.

Baughn said while investigating the crimes in Brewster his office was alerted that officers in Goodland suspected the same four men

in crimes committed in Sherman County.

"We had information that the incidents were related," Baughn said.

"We contacted the Goodland Police Department and Sherman County Sheriff's office and a deputy and myself assisted them on a search and recovered some of the stolen property."

Baughn said when the search warrant was executed, law enforcement in Goodland were able to solve several burglaries.

All four men have made their first appearance in Sherman County District Court on multiple charges which include burglary, possession of stolen property and criminal use of a bank card.

Paperwork with pending charges of burglary and theft have been forwarded to Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick for her review. All four men were released from Thomas County jail on recognizance bonds pending filing of formal charges.

Student count is down

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

Enrollment at the Colby School District is lower than last year.

District financial officer Jo DeYoung said the full-time equivalent, the number turned into the state, is 965.5 for 2006. Full-time equivalent is the number of students used by the state to determine how much money a school district receives per student.

That is lower than the two previous years. In 2005, the full-time equivalent was 989.5. In 2004, it was 1,025. The 965.5 is 4.5 less than what DeYoung estimated last month.

This year, the district is receiving \$4,316 per student., up \$60 from last year.

While the decrease was significant, she said it was within what the district estimated.

"We estimate four percent," DeYoung said. "It's probably a little more than we hope."

For budgeting purposes, the district has the option of using this year's numbers, or last year's, or a three-year average.

The average for 2004-2006 would be 993.1.

"That number should hold," DeYoung said.

The official head count is 1,012 for this school year. In 2005, it was 1,024 and 1,076 in 2004.

DeYoung said that number did not go down as much as expected because a few students from Sacred Heart School are taking band in the district and Head Start numbers are also up. However, the loss of students has become a trend.

"It's disappointing that we keep losing enrollment," she said. "You wish that could happen again (and increase). It could be worse."

The average enrollment decrease over the past two years has been 2.53 percent.

DeYoung said the enrollment has decreased each year for the past decade. When she first joined the district in 1994, there were 1,323 students enrolled at Colby schools.

She attributed the decline to people moving away, not having as many children and many kids aren't returning to their communities after graduation.

Active afternoon



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Wynn Duffey, left, handed out markers and name tags to Bridget Bickner and Emma Wang Tuesday during an after school program at the Colby Community Building. The program will run through December, and provides children the chance to participate in activities. Each week, activities and snacks are provided by a different organization.

Corn production outlook lower

WICHITA (AP) — After already losing much of this year's drought-plagued winter wheat, Kansas farmers now are likely to bring in far smaller fall-harvested crops, Kansas Agricultural Statistics Service said Thursday.

In its October crop production report, the agency lowered its earlier forecast for the state's corn crop to 387.5 million bushels. That figure is 2 percent below the previous forecast and is 17 percent below last year's crop.

Kansas farmers are harvesting their corn, sorghum, soybean and sunflower crops.

But even this short corn crop is expected to surpass newly revised figures for the Kansas winter wheat crop. That means the state, considered the nation's bread basket, will harvest more corn than wheat this season.

Production of winter wheat, which is harvested in June in Kansas, was estimated Thursday at 291.1 million bushels, KASS said. That represents a 23 percent drop from a year ago.

Projections for the other two major Kansas crops — sorghum and soybeans — were unchanged from last month but remain far below last year's harvest.

The agency projected the Kansas sorghum harvest to come in at 144 million bushels, down 26 percent from a year ago. The state's soybean production of 93 million bushels is

"In the sunflower industry we ended up with a year-and-a-half worth of production and therefore did not feel we needed production to be up for 2006 — we really don't need it."

— General Manager Lynn Hoelting, Mueller Grain Company in Goodland

12 percent below last year's crop.

But the most dramatic percentage loss is for the state's sunflower production: down 62 percent from a year ago, the report showed. The new forecast estimated sunflower production at 170.3 million pounds.

The plummeting sunflower production comes from vastly reduced numbers of acres.

Kansas farmers are expected to harvest 141,000 acres of sunflowers, compared with 289,000 acres a year ago, the report showed.

Lynn Hoelting, general manager for Mueller Grain Co. in Goodland, said one of the major reasons for the reduced sunflower plantings in Kansas this year was the bountiful 2005 sunflower crop, which brought unprecedented yields that year.

That large carry-over depressed sunflower prices when farmers were deciding what crops to plant for 2006. At the same time, the

prices of other feed grains like corn were on the uptick, said Hoelting, who also is chairman of the High Plains Committee for the National Sunflower Association.

"Sunflowers were not competing," Hoelting said.

"In the sunflower industry we ended up with a year-and-a-half worth of production and therefore did not feel we needed production to be up for 2006 — we really don't need it."

But demand for sunflower — especially for the NuSun sunflower oil that contains no trans fats — has since risen dramatically with new labeling requirements instituted this year for products, he said.

Hoelting already is contracting with farmers to plant more sunflowers in 2007, and he said he expected sunflower production next season will likely approach 2005 production.

"That is yet to be seen," he added.