

# Happy Thanksgiving!

Wednesday

November 22, 2006

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Volume 117, Number 186  
Serving Thomas County since 1888



## COLBY FREE PRESS

14 pages

### Colby's new to-do list

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A new distraction for travelers on Interstate 70 through Colby will list the current attractions in town.

A new message sign, with scrolling messages and animation, standing 42 feet will be turned on today.

"They can write words and scroll them," said Bruce Bandy, with Commercial Sign, who installed the sign.

Measuring eight feet tall by 32 feet long, the sign itself will flash messages about upcoming events in the community in red. This weekend, it will have information about Santa City at Fike Park.

The effort to get the sign came out of the tourism committee's desire to help improve the visibility of the museum as well as community happenings.

The sign will also be used to advertise events such as the Celebration on the Plains, Orange and Black Classic and more. The committee will decide what goes on the board.

The sign cost \$94,000, and was paid for with hotel guest tax revenue, said Leilani Thomas, director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Thomas said the sign is a project owned and managed by the tourism committee, but built on museum property.

"They were gracious enough to allow that to happen," she said.

A sign stating Colby's Prairie Museum of Art and History museum's name will be installed on top of the sign early next year.

The sign is one of the biggest of its type Commercial Sign has installed.

Bandy said this type of sign has its advantages.

"The LED signs use a small amount of power and don't require hardly any maintenance," he said.

Bandy said it will be about \$100 a month to power the message board.

He also explained what makes the sign different.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

An employee of Commercial Sign in Colby worked to weld a new sign to posts at the Prairie Museum of Art and History Tuesday. The new sign will promote community activities and the museum, said Leilani Thomas, director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Instead of having regular tungsten light bulbs, each one of the diodes is sealed and filled with a red element. The diodes don't burn out, and have a life expectancy of 100,000 hours.

### Center plans may be ready in December

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees discussed progress on the proposed college wellness center at its meeting Monday.

College president, Dr. Lynn Kreider, said the community committee has been "working diligently" on the project. The committee has met with the architect weekly for the past month to work on the center's design.

The committee could have a design to present very soon.

"I would like to have it by December, but there are no guarantees," Kreider said.

The committee was formed a couple of years ago to help design the wellness center and what it will include. The center was originally conceived as a facility with exercise and meeting areas to help meet fitness needs of college students and provide a practice facility for teams. It would also be open for the community to use.

The center will be somewhere on the college campus, but an exact location has not been chosen yet.

The integration of environmental-friendly technologies is just one aspect. Kreider said they are consid-

ering wind and solar energy and recycled materials into the construction of the center.

He also said the potential exists to use wind power to a greater extent on the campus than just the wellness center, which would help offset energy costs on campus.

"That's one of those dreams of mine," Kreider said.

When a final color rendering is complete, it will be presented to the board for approval, then the community.

"We have come a long way from where we were before," he said.

Kreider discussed having a symposium for rural community college presidents. He is working with the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., to have the event held at the academy.

Last week, he said, approval was given for that to happen.

"It should be a nationally-recognized event," Kreider said.

The board also voted to change the date of its December meeting to Dec. 11.



L. Kreider

### Rexford City Council staggers member terms

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

Rexford City Council positions will change as far as how often members are elected.

Mayor Bill Dible and council members Mike Johnson, Dave Williams, Nancy Dahl and Dennis Allison approved a charter ordinance staggering the terms of council members. Member Dwight Williams was absent.

Dible said he sees the change as one which will avoid the potential of the entire council being changed at one time, having no one on it with knowledge of the council's history. He said the change will keep some members to help new council members.

"Everybody won't be due at one time," Dible said Monday.

The mayor and all five council members are currently elected every two years and all of them are up for re-election in April 2007. Under provisions of the new ordinance,

which goes into effect in April, the mayor and two council members receiving the highest amount of votes will be elected to serve four-year terms.

The remaining three council members will be elected to serve two-year terms in order to start the staggered rotation.

In other business, a street improvement project has created a sidewalk in front of Rexford Grain. Western Concrete Works of Leoville is laying the sidewalk. Dible said construction started about 10 days ago and two blocks are completed.

"It's coming right along," he said.

The council's goal is to have a sidewalk along each street in Rexford. Due to a lack of interest, the Rexford Pride Committee is dissolving. City Clerk Jolene Hansen said she did not know how long the organization has been established in Rexford, but steps were being taken with the state to dissolve the committee.

### Municipal airport hangar leases revised

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Colby City Council approved revised lease agreements at the airport during its meeting Monday.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong recommended to the council making individual leases with tenants in the International Hangar at the airport. She suggested terminating the other leases at the airport Dec. 31 and having new lease agreements begin Jan. 1.

The council approved that, along

with new lease rates.

New lease rates for city-owned hangars will be \$100 per month. The rate for privately-owned hangars on city-owned land will be \$100 per month, plus one cent per square foot of land.

The change was prompted by the use of private hangars. Three hangars are being used for purposes other than aviation. Airport manager Mark Ostmeyer said according to FAA rules, hangars must be used for aeronautical purposes.

Mayor Ken Bieber said the coun-

cil needs more information on the matter before deciding anything.

In other airport news... A letter was sent to Tuffy Taylor, who owns a home just south of the airport.

Armstrong said a pond on his land could become a hazard to the airport if it fills with water and becomes wildlife habitat.

"I honestly don't know what to do," she said.

City Attorney Dave Starkey said the city can't stop a private landowner from using his land the way

he wants. He said there is no zoning to deal with such an issue.

Armstrong said she and Starkey will continue to research the issue.

In other business, the council approved:

- Awarding a bid of banking services to Farmers and Merchants Bank in Colby.

- The city had previously used First National Bank. The agreement with Farmers and Merchants will run until Feb., 2009.

- The purchase of 45,000 pounds of street repair material for \$13,905.

### Democratic majority changes positions for Kansas lawmakers

WASHINGTON (AP) — After a dozen comfortable years in the GOP majority in Congress, Rep. Todd Tiahrt is now searching for common ground with Democratic colleagues who control the House.

Over in the Senate, Republican Sen. Sam Brownback is taking the same tack now that Democrats hold a 51-49 edge.

Both Kansas lawmakers plan to focus more on bipartisan legislation that can get through a Democratic Congress.

"As a practical matter, it's better for me to be in the majority, no doubt about it," Tiahrt, of Goddard, said in an interview. "But I've

watched other members on the other side of the aisle be effective over the last 12 years and I've taken some lessons from them."

While Kansas' mostly Republican congressional delegation will lose some clout in the new Congress, Democratic Rep. Dennis Moore, of Lenexa, is looking forward to wielding more authority for the first time since he was first elected to Congress in 1998. He'll have company in the form of Nancy Boyda, the Topeka Democrat who unseated Republican Rep. Jim Ryun.

"I hear it's more fun in the majority," Moore said. "But the bottom

**"I hear it's more fun in the majority."**  
Rep. Dennis Moore, Democrat, Lenexa

line to me is what can we accomplish. If the Democrats stick together, we should outdo the Republicans."

Brownback, weighing a 2008 presidential bid, is looking for more opportunities to work with Democrats on issues of mutual concern.

He is working with Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., to pass a mea-

sure that increases cancer research grants and reduce cancer deaths through earlier detection, better treatments and more screening. Brownback said Democrats are also interested in his bill that would allow patients to store health records electronically, creating a nationwide health information network. "We're trying to target what we

might be able to move things on," Brownback said. "For Democrats, if they are looking to move things rather than score political points, these are some things the president would generally say yes to and we could get a bipartisan group in the Senate to support."

Brownback will lose his chairmanship of the Senate Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on the Constitution, a panel he has used to draw public attention to his stand against abortion and gay marriage.

Republican Sen. Pat Roberts will be losing his high-profile position as chairman of the Intelligence Committee. He has said he hopes to

complete the second phase of the review of prewar Iraq intelligence by the end of the year.

Roberts would continue to play a pivotal role on the committee if he remains as its ranking minority member. His spokeswoman, Sarah Little, said Tuesday it would be "premature to comment on committee assignments that are not expected from leadership until sometime in December."

For Moore, bipartisanship has been his calling card since he was first elected in a Republican-leaning district in 1998. He says that's not about to change with Democrats in the majority.