



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Colby High will have new football coach

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

A new high school football coach and technology issues were discussed at the Colby School Board meeting Monday.



Robbins

The board approved the hiring of Chris Gardner of Colby as the new Colby High School head football coach.

Gardner teaches seventh grade social studies at Colby Middle School. He replaces Bob Ray, who coached one season. Ray resigned in December to take an assistant football coaching job at McPherson College in McPherson.

Rocky Robbins, high school principal, was on the selection committee. He said the committee received 25 applications, including two from within the district. One was Gardner.

"We interviewed some pretty good candidates," Robbins said. "I wouldn't have made this recommendation if we didn't feel comfortable with it."

The committee narrowed their choices to seven applicants for interviews, and recommended Gardner to the board. Larry Gabel, activities director, said Gardner was the best choice.

"Mr. Gardner is willing to lead the program where it needs to go," Gabel said.

However, board member Joel Powell had one concern. He said players might miss out on communication because Gardner will not be at the high school during the day, like past coaches who taught there.

Robbins said two other middle school teachers are high school head coaches, and they work around the issue.

Matt Sims, eighth grade math teacher, is the high school's head wrestling coach and Kevin Cox, middle school physical education teacher, coaches the high school baseball team.

"You have to want to do it bad enough to incur the wrath of the community to do it."

Phil DeYoung
Technology coordinator

In other business, the board discussed its current and future technology needs, but nothing was decided.

Phil DeYoung, district technology coordinator, said computers need replaced.

He also talked about the possibility of providing one laptop computer per student at the high school.

Seventy-six percent of the district's computers are more than five years old.

"We haven't been very aggressive buying computers over the past several years," DeYoung said.

Instead, a year ago, the board approved a network upgrade that cost \$160,000.

Other needs are upgrading the PowerSchool server, more servers for general information storage, PC upgrades and the possibility of providing wireless internet on the high school campus.

DeYoung said the total cost of all that, plus computers for each student and teacher at the high school would be about \$540,000.

Jo DeYoung, district financial officer, said that figure was unfeasible, considering the district needs new buses and has other additional concerns. Board member Kevan Taylor was surprised by the amount.

"There is no way to do it without \$200,000 a year," he said. "The whole \$500,000 is kind of shocking."

DeYoung said the district has leased computers before, paying for it over three years instead of up front. He cautioned that the laptop initiative is something that should not be taken lightly.

"You have to want to do it bad enough to incur the wrath of the community to do it," he said.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Jill Withington galloped by volunteers at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program banquet Wednesday at the American Legion Hall.

tee, presented the awards, which honor volunteers for their service hours.

They are honored beginning at 1,000 hours, which begin accumulating when they sign up as a mem-

ber. Volunteers and their hours will appear in a future edition of the *Colby Free Press*.

Volunteers honored for hours of service

By Tisha Cox
Colby Free Press

People came from far and near for a "roundup" Wednesday in Colby. But this was no ordinary event.

Volunteers in the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program were honored with a banquet at the American Legion Hall.

The theme for the event was the "RSVP Roundup."

"The volunteers provide something good and pure in the community," said program director Laura Withington.

The event is a thank-you for what the volunteers do during the year.

This is the 34th anniversary of the program, which had more than 200 volunteers from Thomas, Logan, Phillips and Sheridan counties attend the banquet.

The program is a non-profit organization for people 55 years old or older, providing opportunities to volunteer in their towns.

Withington said Colby Community College sponsors the senior volunteer program locally. Students helped decorate and put on the banquet.

Hubert Cooper cooked the meal, which was served by students.

Kenton Krehbiel, college trustee,

Oberlin men could face trespass, theft charges

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

A case which briefly confused law enforcement officers has been cleaned up and charges are pending against two Oberlin men.

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn said this morning that he's wrapping up paperwork which will be sent to Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick to charge John David Clapper, 40, and Ralph Lesley Clapper, Jr., 50, with criminal trespass and theft.

"I expect (Wyrick) should have the case tomorrow," Baughn said. "I'm recommending charges of

criminal trespass and theft." Criminal trespass is a Class B misdemeanor punishable by six months in the county jail and a fine of \$1,000.

The punishment for theft depends on the value of the property stolen and the criminal history of the individual charged, information not available until formal charges are filed and prosecution, should it occur, takes place.

Originally reported that Ralph Clapper would be charged with driving on a revoked license, Baughn said he was not pursuing that charge at this time.

Baughn said his office received

the case from the Colby Police Department after it was initially believed the two men took copper and other wire bundles from a Colby business on April 5.

Circumstances leading up to the men's arrest included a report by Colby Police Chief Randy Jones that a 911 call received at 12:40 p.m. alerted law enforcement officers that two people in a 1999 white Chevrolet van were suspected of taking items from an auction.

The auction was being held at the former J & J Oil location at College Drive and South Range Avenue.

When Jones responded to the location he learned the lot was behind

Western Sprinklers, which is not within city limits.

It was instead under the jurisdiction of the Thomas County Sheriff's office.

Jones contacted Baughn, who along with Undersheriff Jason Moses and another deputy responded.

The Clappers were followed by Jones until Baughn and the others could meet up with them in the 2400 block of North County Club Drive to make the stop.

Prior to the deputy stopping the Clappers, Jones said the alleged stolen items were tossed out of the van near Experiment Station Road.

Colby, Thomas County officials sponsoring annual cleanup week

By Patty Decker
Free Press Editor

Colby and Thomas County are sponsoring a City-wide/County-wide Cleanup Week from Monday through Friday, May 7-11.

"All individuals can help our city by making an effort to clean and dispose of those unsightly items cluttering your yards, removing vehicles which no longer have a purpose, and pulling those weeds which detract from the beauty of our city," said Mayor Ken Bieber.

Whenever possible, Bieber also encourages helping neighbors who can't manage the entire cleanup for themselves.

In addition to tidying up yards, alleyways and around businesses, the city and county will again offer free disposal of large items cluttering yards.

Appliances, furniture and other eyesores can be hauled away by calling the city office during the cleanup week.

City crews will follow the regularly scheduled routes for yard waste and trash pickup during the week; however, there will also be personnel available to handle the extra trash generated by cleanup

week, said Chris Bieker, Colby public utilities director.

"Trash should be boxed or bagged and placed at the street for pickup," he said.

"Any appliance which has contained or which does contain refrigerant must either have a certificate showing that a certified technician performed the removal of the refrigerant, or a fee of \$25 must be paid by the owner before the appliance is removed by the city and accepted at the landfill," Bieker said.

Along with neighborhood beautification, city and county officials are also asking business owners to help by cleaning the alleyways behind their buildings as well as the areas easily visible to everyone.

"Area service clubs and church groups are asked to commit their organizations to clean public areas of the city," Bieker said, "and individuals and businesses are also encouraged to make an extra effort during this week to spruce up their yards and share in the pride of having a clean city."

Areas that need special attention include the parks, ballfields, and all roadsides and entrances in Colby.

Other suggestions for the clean-

up week included planting at least one tree.

"All trees planted on public grounds must be approved by the city's Tree Board, so should you choose to plant a tree in one of Colby's public areas, please submit the idea to a Tree Board member first," Bieker said.

For those who want to volunteer their services in assisting the elderly and infirm, call Jo Strange, assistant to the city manager, 460-4410 and leave a name.

Also, those who need assistance should also call the city office and leave your names.

"The city will then try to match up those who can help with those who need help," Strange said.

The county landfill is not offering free disposal of waste tires this year, but the city will haul tires to the landfill, but the regular tire disposal fees must be paid before they leave a person's property.

The charge for car and pickup tires is \$2 and regular truck tires; \$5; however, there is a full list of tire disposal fees available at city hall.

For those wanting to make arrangements during the May 7-11 cleanup week on larger items, also call 460-4410.

Dangers of alcohol, drugs



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Dian Organ, a consultant with the Regional Prevention Center in Colby, recently spoke to students at Colby Middle School about the dangers of underage alcohol abuse. The prevention center's staff has spent time in Thomas County schools this month to raise awareness about the issue.