



# COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

## Dozens of cars enter for Rod Run

By John Van Nostrand  
Free Press Publisher

Good luck trying to find a parking spot in downtown Colby on June 9.

There will probably be people looking at what is already parked there.

Organizers for Colby's Rod Run June 8-10 have already registered 60 cars.

More is expected before the show and the day Rod Run begins. Organizers are working with the Colby Police Department to make sure enough room will be saved to show off the restored automobiles and other vehicles.

"We plan to block off Franklin Avenue from Fourth Street to Eighth Street," said Tuffy Taylor, one of the organizers.

Rod Run had been an annual event in Colby for years before a lack of volunteer help did not allow the event to be held last year. Since then, a new group of volunteers have brought back Rod Run.

Taylor said plans are to block off the streets from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. that day. People with cars to register and show are encouraged to enter Franklin Avenue from the west, by way of Chickamauga Avenue and Fifth Street.

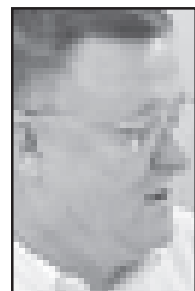
Those who register cars in advance will be told how to get to the car display portion of Franklin Avenue in their packets.

With so many cars expected, organizers encourage visitors to respect the cars.

"Most people put up a sign near their car that says something like, 'look but don't touch,'" Taylor said. Organizers are also expecting to

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Tuffy Taylor, one of organizers



Taylor

restrict parking near the Colby Community Building where live entertainment will be held the evening of June 9.

It's not just cars people will be able to look at along Franklin. Part of the Rod Run will be a flea market along another portion of Franklin Avenue.

Those who plan to have a garage sale this summer are encouraged to bring their wares to Franklin, to complement the traditional places to shop downtown.

The flea market will begin at 10 a.m. June 9. How long it lasts will be determined by those selling items. There will be no charge to set up a space for the sale.

Those interested can contact Lisa Wark at Wark's Embroidery for more information.

**Volunteers needed**  
Colby's Rod Run is led by a group of volunteers.

Those interested in helping during the weekend are asked to meet at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 31, in the gazebo in Fike Park for more information.

**Highlights**  
Cars are not the only form entertainment either. Live entertainment will be held at the Colby Community Building starting at 6 p.m. June 9. Ventriloquist Greg Claassen

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TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Thomas County Emergency Medical Services director Ken Gatlin checked on ambulance supplies Wednesday at the services' building. Currently there are 25 volunteers in the county, and Gatlin would like to increase that.

## Emergency volunteers dwindling

By Tisha Cox  
Colby Free Press

The people we call for help, need our help.

Thomas County Emergency Medical Services could use more volunteers. Colby has 17 volunteers; there are three in Rexford, and two drivers and four volunteers in Brewster.

That number is lower than what director Ken Gatlin would like.

"It's an all-volunteer squad," Gatlin said.

Attrition has taken its toll, with volunteers moving away.

"I can always use more volunteers," Gatlin said.

Scheduling is also tough sometimes.

Volunteers have families and jobs, but with numbers down, they are working more. The

schedule is done five weeks at a time, and has 420 slots. Most of the volunteers are doing 40-50, six-hour shifts in that time.

He and assistant director Martin Rinehart are the only paid employees.

With two ambulances, there could be 11 volunteers in Colby on call at one time. For example, three people — a driver and two medical technicians, would be needed for an emergency call, and two for a transfer.

More than 300 calls since the beginning of 2007 have kept volunteers busy.

Gatlin said that is down a little

from the same time period last year. He attributed that to icy and snowy roads and conditions in January and February.

"We are responsible for all of Thomas County," Gatlin said. "If there is a medical need, we roll. We're going to send the closest available ambulance."

Four ambulances belong to the service. Colby has two, and there is one in Rexford and Brewster.

The ambulances in Colby have specific duties. One is used on emergency runs and the other for patient transfers.

In an emergency, patients are taken to the closest hospital. In most cases, it is Citizens Medical Center. But in Brewster, Goodland's hospital is an option and Rexford send patients to hospitals in Oberlin and Hoxie.

Since Gatlin joined the service

eight years ago, the number of runs has increased. Then, 300-400 runs a year wasn't unusual, but that has more than doubled.

"The volume is getting greater," he said.

There are fewer car wrecks, but more people are walking away from them, thanks to seatbelts and airbags, he said.

Many of the calls are for stand-bys, where the service provides an ambulance and crew for events such as a rodeo, car races, football games, or fires.

Becoming and being an emergency medical technician takes time.

The basic technician level requires 200 hours of class time. The advanced level allows technicians to administer IVs.

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Rinehart

## Brewster superintendent: No four-day school week planned

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
Colby Free Press

Brewster school board members have tabled two issues which would have caused change for staff and students.

Superintendent Sherri Edmundson on Thursday said moving to a four-day school week is not likely to take place next year.

"We didn't get any further than a general conversation about it," Edmundson said.

"I had heard from other schools it saves up to \$45,000, but I could only find \$20,000."

Edmundson said she told board members Carrie Starns, Leisha Carpenter, Don Allen, Willard Crumrine, Bonnie Holm and

**"I had heard from other schools it saves up to \$45,000, but I could only find \$20,000."**

— Brewster Superintendent Sherri Edmundson

Lonnie Selby at their April 16 meeting that enrollment next year is expected to drop by three students.

"A drop of three plus kids would mean a drop of between \$80,000 and \$100,000 (in the budget) based on a three year average," Edmundson said. Edmundson said moving from having school five days per week to

four days per week would lower the budget in the area of food service, transportation and classified, or hourly wages.

"We decided the decrease in instructional time and hurting the staff in lost wages was not worth it," Edmundson said.

Another topic tabled by board members was a request for a cooperative agreement

with Goodland's school district for baseball.

Edmundson told board members two Brewster students wanted to play baseball with Goodland's team through an agreement similar to the one in place with Tri-Plains in Winona for football.

"We play half the games here and half the games there," Edmundson said. "And we practice half the time here and half the time in Winona."

Since Brewster does not have a baseball team and has less enrollment than Goodland, Brewster board members decided against an agreement, Edmundson said.

"We talked to their activity director (Don Smith) about it, but the Kansas State High

School Athletic Association combines high school enrollment to determine classifications and that might be a disadvantage to Goodland so right now it's on the table until next year's enrollment is determined."

During the 2006-2007 school year, Brewster High School had 55 students in ninth through 12th grades, and Goodland High School had an enrollment of 275 students.

Edmundson said Brewster's high school is expecting to drop by two students, leaving an enrollment of 53 students in ninth through 12 grades, and according to Goodland Superintendent Shelly Angelos, next year's projected enrollment number for high school is 270 students.

## Last days of school

Students in Sonja Kough's Colby Grade School second grade class took a moment to cool off after their field day at Dennen Field Wednesday. The class was getting ready to head back to the school after a day of fun outdoor events. It is one of many activities for students this week, which are all leading up to the last day of school on Friday. A picnic for third grade students is planned at Fike Park Friday, and fifth graders will have a bowling party before school is dismissed for the summer at 1:30 p.m.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

## Longtime Brewster teacher says goodbye

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
Colby Free Press

Brewster students, teachers and staff members said farewell to long time teacher Leland Francis on May 17.

"Mr. Francis had two terms with us," said Superintendent Sherry Edmundson. "This part term was for five years, for a total of 18 years."

Francis, a 55-year-old resident of Wilson, resided in Brewster during the week and in Wilson on weekends.

While with Brewster, Francis taught junior and senior high school science. Francis said he's planning a low-key retirement.

"I plan to teach my grandkids

how to cuss and spit," Francis said.

As far as changes Francis saw over the years he taught, he said the biggest change was that of school improvement.

"We made a serious attempt at school improvement," he said. "Call it QPA or No Child Left Behind or whatever alphabet soup you want, we've made a serious attempt at school improvement."

Francis and his wife, Lois, the daughter of Edith Taylor and the late Bill Taylor of Colby, have two grown daughters and three grandchildren.

Starting in August, Menlo resident Jack Steiger will teach science.

Oakley, as well as Golden Plains in Rexford and Selden, had no teachers retire this year.