



COLBY FREE PRESS

Parent questions school's alcohol policy

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

The Colby School District's alcohol policy was called into question during a board meeting Friday.

Pat Tubbs of Colby addressed the board about the policy.

"I think the current policy is creating a negative atmosphere," she said.

Tubbs said if an incident involving student drinking is not on school property or during a school activity, the district needs to stay out of it.

Tubbs said the self-reporting part of the policy, which involves a student telling an administrator, creates dissent among stu-

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— Pat Tubbs, Colby district patron

dents. She said it can cause coercion or retaliation between students who are on the same team.

"If those words were removed," she said, "it would eliminate problems."

In the policy, if a student self-reports their

first offense, their ineligibility would be reduced to 15 percent. That would be further reduced if they complete a four-hour class on substance abuse.

The policy states a "minimum suspension of one game or activity event will be

imposed" if both of those steps are completed.

If they do not self-report, they will be ineligible for 25 percent of their activities for the current season.

Board president Tracy Rogers said they need the self-report policy.

"Basically we're doing away with the policy if we take out self-reporting," he said.

Board member Joel Powell said a policy needs to be in place to discourage underage drinking.

"The kids know what the policy is, and don't put themselves in that position because of the policy," he said.

Colby High School principal Rocky

Robbins said the self-reporting allows an intervention and opportunity for a student to learn about the dangers of alcohol abuse.

Tubbs said the district has enough to govern on campus, and activities.

"Most parents won't know about changes in the policy until their kid gets in trouble," she said. "Students drinking happens more often than you think."

Board member Stan Molstad said the policy, as it stands, is fine.

"I don't think this is all that bad," he said.

Molstad said the assumption cannot be made that all the students are drinking. The board will further discuss the matter at its July 23 meeting and when it meets in August. It took no action on the issue.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Harvest season

ABOVE: Trucks lined up at the elevator in Colby Friday to deliver their loads of wheat. **RIGHT:** A combine emptied its load of wheat in a field near Colby Friday. According to the Kansas Wheat Harvest Report, the harvest in Thomas County is in varying stages of completion. As of Friday, Rexford Grain was reporting they were about half-done with harvest. Some parts of Thomas County have yet to get underway. Yields there range from 35 to 70 bushels an acre.



College has new athletic director

By John Van Nostrand

Free Press Publisher

Duane Arntt has coined a new phrase: like daughter, like father.

Arntt is Colby Community College's new Athletic Director. He followed his daughter's footsteps to Colby.

"I've always been interested in athletics," Arntt said.

"My daughter went to school here. We met Carl Adams and Brittani played softball."

Brittani was a freshman last year at Colby. Arntt replaces Carl Adams who died in December.

A 20-year veteran of public education, working in schools in Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado, Arntt recently served as principal/athletic director of Burlington, Colo., High School.

In addition, Arntt was kindergarten through sixth-grade principal of Southern District in Wymore, Neb., from 1999-2005 and principal of Vermillion, in Centralia, from 1997-1999.

He was the head wrestling coach from 2000-2005 at Wymore and coached the 18-and-under girls' summer softball teams at Wymore and Burlington.

Arntt, 47, is not expecting a major difference between small-town high school work in Colorado and small-town community college.

"I want to take some time to get used to what's going on, then we'll

get cranked up," he said. "It's still

small town and communities. I went to a small college and loved it. I really don't see a big change, but I could be wrong."

Arntt received his undergraduate degree from Peru State College and his master's degree in educational administration from the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

Arntt and wife, Debbie, have four children. Their three older children are in their 20s.

In other Colby college news, Ryan Sturdy was named head coach of Colby's softball team.

Although he is not new to Colby Community College, Sturdy begins the 2007-08 school year with a new title. Sturdy, who served 11 years as the assistant softball coach at the college.

In addition, Sturdy was the assistant athletic director for eight years and served as the interim head softball coach and athletic director following the death of Adams.

A graduate of Colby Community College, Sturdy was the director of the Colby Recreation Department prior to accepting the job as head softball coach.



Arntt

Two motorcycles collide, riders OK

A motorcycle accident near Oakley Friday morning sent two Canadian residents to the hospital.

Patricia R. Jacobsen, 59, of Delta, British Columbia, was southbound on U.S. Highway 83 about 5 miles north of the Interstate 70 interchange at 7:50 a.m. when she drove into the back of the motorcycle in front of her, said a spokesperson with the Kansas Highway Patrol.

Jacobsen, who was wearing a helmet, was driving a 2006 Harley Davidson when she struck the 2007 Harley Davidson motorcycle driven by Lasse Jacobsen, 61, of Delta, British Columbia.

Lasse was also wearing a helmet at the time of the accident. Both riders were taken to the Logan County Hospital where they were treated and released.

Struggling long-term care center increases rates

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

A major loss two years in a row has prompted a room rate hike at Sheridan County Health Complex in Hoxie.

"At some point in time we have to be fiscally responsible and it is not being fiscally responsible when we are losing money to the degree we did in 2005 and 2006," administrator Joe Stratton said.

Stratton said a loss of \$169,517 in 2005 and \$193,011 in 2006 in the long term care portion of the complex spurred trustees to raise room rates \$10 per day across the board.

It currently costs \$110 dollars per day for a resident to live in the long term care facility. On Aug. 1, the rate will go to \$120 dollars per day. Stratton said in 2006, the complex lost \$15 per day per resident in the long term care facility. He said part

of the decision to increase room rates stemmed from the fact the facility does not charge extra for beauty shop services or personal care items for residents. He said a \$16,396 loss from the beauty shop needs to be offset.

"The thing is," Stratton said. "Those are all inclusive charges but we are not charging for them like some other facilities do."

Stratton said the \$16,000 plus loss in the beauty shop included the salary for one beautician, as well as routine maintenance and supplies for residents.

The increased cost is only one of two rate changes for the long term care facility.

On Sept. 1, the long term care rates will be based on a six-tiered charge system that depends on the level of care a resident needs. The level of care charge is not in addition to the flat rate charge.

"At some point in time we have to be fiscally responsible and it is not being fiscally responsible when we are losing money to the degree we did in 2005."

— Joe Stratton, administrator

"A level one charge will be for the least amount of care," Stratton said. "And a level six charge will be for a resident that is totally dependent for care or at the end of life state."

Stratton said the range of rates will be \$120 for level one, semi-private room to \$145 for level six level of care in a semi-private room. Rates for private rooms will be \$135 per day for level one care to \$160 per day for level six.

One Hoxie resident having a fam-

ily member in the long term care is not as concerned about the rate change as she is about the quality of care residents receive.

"I don't mind the rate increase as long as the residents are taken care of and that there are enough employees to take care of them adequately," Cheryl Pedigo said.

Pedigo's mother, Evelyn Ginther, 79, has been a resident for the past three and one-half years. Pedigo is not satisfied with the quality of care

her mother is currently receiving at the facility. While she would not elaborate about changes she believes need to be made, she said she is waiting for results.

"I have concerns that I have addressed with Mr. Stratton and the long term care director of nursing, Danielle Schiltz, and given them 30 days to correct the situation or I will take appropriate action," Pedigo said.

Rates for the eight assisted living apartments will also increase. It currently costs \$35 dollars per day for an apartment. The rate will increase on Aug. 1 to \$45 dollars per day.

Stratton said trustees Richard Krannawitter, Charles Schwarz, Randy Farber, Craig Cooper and Ronnie Kauk have held off raising rates as long as possible.

"We have to take better care of our finances here," he said.

City meets Tuesday

The Colby City Council will hold its regular meeting at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, in council chambers to consider approving an auditing service contract with Adams, Brown, Beran, and Ball; charge-off list items; and to schedule a special meeting for a budget workshop.

Brian Staats with Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball requested the council consider renewing its contract for auditing services providing proposed fees of \$13,106 for 2007; \$13,565 for 2008; and \$14,040 in 2009, said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong.

The council will also look at approving a meeting at 7 p.m., Tuesday, July 10, to review the city's budget.