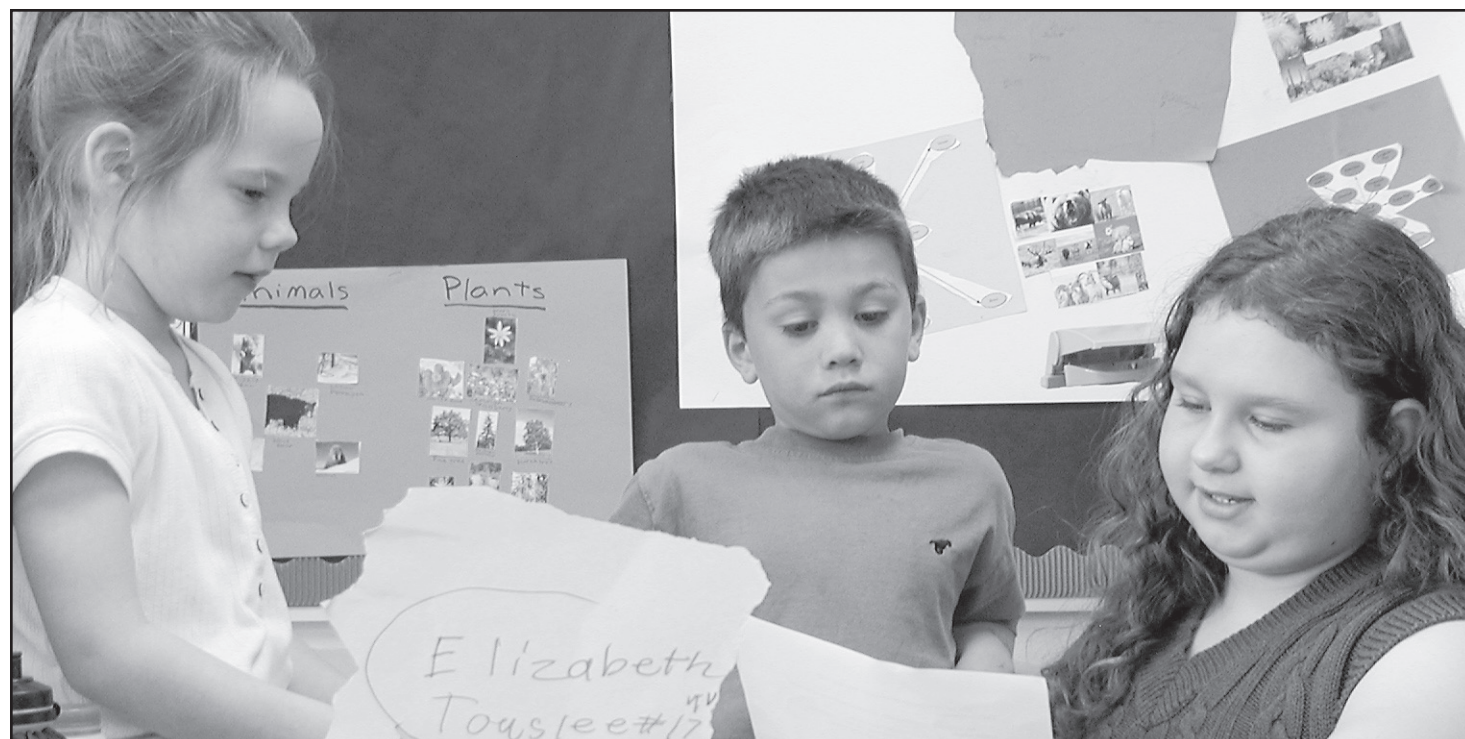




COLBY FREE PRESS



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

ABOVE: Elizabeth Touslee, far right, a fourth-grade student in Kathy Vaughn's class at Colby Elementary School chose Montana as her favorite state during a recent history project assignment. Kindergarten students Emily Stoltz, left, and Aden Wayne Basgall listened as Elizabeth talked with them about Montana's resources. BELOW LEFT: Brenly Terrell took about one month to complete her project focusing on Alaska's animals, natural resources and people. Kindergarten student Leanna Huddle listened to her presentation. BELOW RIGHT: Andrea Browne spoke about the Alaskan pipeline to Miranda Coon (middle) and Piper Koeperich, also in kindergarten.



Colby College crosses ocean for students

By Jan Katz Ackerman

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Officials at Colby Community College hope to attract 125 international students to fill seats and dormitories for both terms of the 2008-09 academic year.

"This is our first venture in doing this," said Skip Sharp, vice president of student affairs and marketing.

"In some ways it's a risk, but we can sit here and do nothing or risk not having students."

Sharp said the college has hired a Washington, D.C.-based student recruiting service, Archimedes, to try and attract 125 students from outside the United States to come to Colby. "International students are attracted to the area because the Midwest is less populated, the campus size and town is smaller with lower costs," Sharp said. "You put those together and Colby Community College fits that bill."

Sharp said while Archimedes typically recruits for four-year universities, Colby College and Cowley Community College in Arkansas City hired the service for the two-year colleges.

"We've stressed we prefer Eastern Asian students," Sharp said. "Preferably from Korea and Japan because these students have excellent work ethics, pay their bills and are good students."

Sharp said with the declining student base in northwestern Kansas, college officials decided it was time to broaden its recruitment base. He also noted the close proximity to Garden City, Dodge City, McCook, Neb. — all of which have community colleges.

"We are surrounded by community colleges," Sharp said. "We are losing students at a great rate so we had to look at how to recruit students unless it's for a specific

program such as dental, vet tech or ag tech?"

He said most students who grow up in or within 100 miles of a community college opt to attend the one closest to their hometown.

"Most students won't go out of that 100 mile radius to get a two-year degree," Sharp said.

"We are kind of land locked with how many students we can bring in. And international students tuition is high enough they almost pay their way."

Tuition at Colby Community College for an international student costs \$112 per credit hour, compared to \$48 per credit hour assessed an in-state student. Both students pay room and board over and above the tuition.

Currently, room and board at Colby Community College costs \$3,900 based on double occupancy (see related story).

"We haven't backed off recruiting out-of-state students from Colorado and Nebraska," Sharp said. "Our next best source of revenue is student athletes, but we end up paying scholarships to attract them."

With an average of 200 to 225 student athletes on the college campus, Sharp said they make up "one-fourth of the current enrollment," which runs between 950 and 1,000 full-time students this year. Student athletes are classified as such for not only team sports, but rodeo and livestock based sports as well, Sharp said.

"International students strengthen our general education classes," Sharp said. "That makes it worth hiring teachers to teach them."



Sharp

Colby High in tune at recent contests

Colby High School band and choir students have made their impression on judges during recent contests.

State Solo/Ensemble Festival was held Saturday at Andover High School. A one (I) is the best rating a performer can receive followed by II and III.

Students/Ensembles receiving I's were Eli Robert for his vocal solo and the Flute Trio consisting of Paige Pfeifer, Chelle Shoemaker,

and Anna Taylor.

Soloists receiving II's were Josh Weed (vocal), Bryan Brewer (vocal), Cory Sager (Trombone solo), Heather Griggs (vocal), Lucas Baumfalk (tenor sax), Leah Cox (vocal), Barbara Bickner (flute), and Brock Wagoner (vocal).

Ensembles receiving II's were the Percussion Ensemble consisting of Jared Bixenman, Taylor McClure, Aaron Mead, Lauren Shoaff, and Brock Wagoner as

well as The Colby High School Singers consisting of Kaitlyn Albers, Ebony Creighton, Megan Higerd, Tiffany Wilson, Josh Weed, Bryan Brewer, Eli Robert, Brock Wagoner, Jenny Dickman, Brittany Fisher, Paige Pfeifer, and Tasha Wagoner.

Soloists receiving III's were Josh Weed (vocal) and Cailyn Wright (vocal).

"Overall, it was a great day for Colby High School and its music

department.

"These students represented our school, and town, amazingly and have done a great job polishing and refining their skills," said Colby High music instructor Joey Nickols.

"I am proud of the hard work and dedication each of these young men and women have shown me," he said.

See "RESULTS," Page 3

Hail, heavy winds damage Selden

By Kimberly Davis

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Heavy winds, hail as big as tennis ball and tornado warnings sent people in the Jennings area and northern Sheridan County to the basement Thursday evening.

Tornado warnings were issued for both Decatur and Sheridan counties, said Dave Floyd, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Goodland.

No tornadoes were confirmed in Decatur County, he said, but Emergency Management Director Patti Skubal said there were trees and power poles down in Cedar Bluffs, north of Oberlin. She also

said an old grain bin had been knocked over by the wind.

There were reports of 65 mph winds north of Oberlin, said Mr. Floyd, and lots of reports of hail.

He said he wasn't sure how strong the winds got, but there could have been gusts over 80 mph for the storm to blow over a grain bin.

About 10 miles south of Jennings at the home of Bill and Marilyn Noone, hail the size of tennis balls came down for 10 to 15 minutes. Noone said it was around 8:30 p.m. when the family heard on the weather alert radio that there was a tornado near Selden.

See "STORM," Page 3



Stephani Noone held two tennis ball-sized hail stones at her home near Jennings.

Titan's coach backs down

By Joey Falkoff

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For next year at least, Beau only knows basketball.

Colby Eagle head boy's basketball coach and Triplains-Brewster head football coach Beau Sheets informed the Free Press Monday of his decision to give up coaching football next year.

That means Sheets won't return to the Triplains-Brewster sidelines after four seasons, nor will he take the offensive coordinator position at Colby High School vacated by Todd Murdock earlier this year.

Though football remains in his blood, Sheets said he has too much on his plate to continue to coach both sports next year.

"I'm working on my master's

degree, and I want to spend more time with my family this fall and focus on basketball," said Sheets.

Travel concerns were also a major factor in Sheets' decision not to return to Triplains-Brewster. Sheets, a resident of Colby, had to make the commute to Brewster or Winona nearly every day during the fall.

"The biggest reason for me there was the distance driving back and forth," said Sheets. "With the price of gas, it's not always the easiest thing. Having three kids, it's also a huge time commitment. If it just came down to coaching the kids, I'd do it again."

Knowing he wasn't coming back to coach the Titans, Sheets admitted to having discussions with Colby Eagle head football Chris Gardner about joining

his staff, but ultimately decided against that as well.

"He talked to me about helping with offense, and it was very tempting just because we share the same philosophy" said Sheets, who also ran a spread offense at Triplains-Brewster. "It would be very exciting for me, but after praying on it the timing just wasn't right. If the same position was open one year later, I'd definitely jump on it."

A month ago Sheets said he was uncertain of his plans next year, but came to a decision a few weeks back.

"I didn't get back to them until about two weeks ago and I told them I decided not to do it," said Sheets.

See "SHEETS," Page 3

Briefly

Class of '98 plans reunion

Members of the Colby High School Class of 1998 are planning a 10-year reunion. The plans are to meet Friday, July 25th at 8 p.m. City Limits fireside lounge for a social, then Saturday, July 26th at Noon, Fike Park for a brown bag lunch with families, pets etc. encouraged to come, next anyone interested in dining together meet at 6:30 p.m. at Montana Mike's conference room, finishing at 8 p.m. at City Limits fireside lounge for another social. We hope all are able to attend! Please update your contact information at <http://www.eaglesalumni.org.

Archeology school offered

Participants in the 2008 Kansas Archeology Training Program field school will have a rare opportunity to excavate at a nationally significant site from May

31 through June 15, said Virginia Wulfschuh, public archeologist with the Kansas State Historical Society. "The Pawnee Indian Museum State Historic Site (14RP1) sits on the bluff overlooking the Republican River in Republic County, and the field school will recover new and valuable information about this fortified village that was occupied by the Kitkahaki band of the Pawnee tribe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries," she said.

Details of the project will be included in the registration packet, which is available in hard copy and posted on the state historical website: kshs.org/resource/katpcurrent.htm. Registration forms submitted by May 2 qualify for reduced rates. Although field and laboratory activities continue without stopping for the 16-day period, volunteers may participate for a single day or the entire time. Participants must be at least 10 years of age, and those younger than 14 must plan to work with a parent or other sponsoring

adult at all times. A legally responsible adult must accompany participants between 14 and 18 years of age. For other details, call (785) 272-8681, ext. 266 or locally, people can call Nancy Arendt in Colby, 460-6653.

Day of prayer set Thursday

The Thomas County Ministerial Alliance invites everyone to join them at noon, Thursday, May 1, in front of the Thomas County Courthouse, 300 N. Court Ave., Colby, for observance of the national day of prayer. There will be opportunities for group and individual prayers. The service concludes at 12:30 p.m.

Prayer rally scheduled

Area Christians are invited to participate in a National Day of Prayer Praise and Prayer Rally from

7 to 8:30 p.m., Thursday, in the Colby Community Building's Little Theater, 285 E. Fifth St. "This will be a time of honoring God through singing praises and praying for our nation," said Karen Merryman, one of the coordinators.

For more information call her at 443-3715 or visit the National Day of Prayer website at www.nationaldayofprayer.org and click on events and the map of Kansas. Follow the links for all prayer events across the state.

Second half of taxes due

The Thomas County Treasurer's office is reminding taxpayers the second half of 2007 personal property and real estate taxes are due May 10, said Donita Applebury, treasurer. Since May 10 falls on a Saturday, taxpayers have until Monday, May 12 to pay the final half. For questions, call 460-4520.