



COLBY FREE PRESS

50¢

Monday

May 19, 2008

Volume 119, Number 81

Serving Thomas County since 1888

8 pages

Colby High class leaves its mark

By Joey Falkoff

Free Press Reporter
jfalckoff@nwkansas.com

After four years of hard work and obedience, the 2008 Colby High senior class couldn't wait any longer to let loose.

While their class song "Our Lives" by The Calling was being performed Sunday inside a jam-packed Colby Community Building, several seniors began spraying party streamers at each other, popping balloons and blowing water bubbles.

Moments later, when the senior class was officially announced by principal Rocky Robbins, the seniors threw their caps in the air and the celebration only intensified.

Before they set out on their journey toward adulthood, the class of 2008 just couldn't resist the urge to show they were still kids at heart.

"It feels great to be done," said senior Rebecca Howard, who will be attending Colby Community College the next two years. "It feels like we've accomplished a lot."

That would be understatement. This year's senior class featured

18 members of the National Honor Society, an Ivy League scholarship recipient, state competitors in forensics, journalism and scholar's bowl; four members of a state championship girls basketball team, a state champion discus thrower, the second best cross-country runner in class 4A and a runner-up at the state wrestling tournament.

"This classes achievements will endure in the halls of Colby High forever," said Robbins.

Aware of their accomplishments, guest speaker Darrell Henry, a financial investor at Edward Jones, told the seniors to keep on shooting for the stars.

"I want to leave you with a quote from hockey legend Wayne Gretzky," said Henry. "You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take."

Josh Baden, class valedictorian, had no doubt his classmates would continue to succeed at a high level.

"The class of 2008 won't settle for average," said Baden, who will attend the University of Kansas on a track and cross-country scholarship. "This class has many gifted individuals, and we'll always continue to strive for better things.

That's our legacy."

Baden was one of seven students honored for being in the top 10 percent of the senior class. The others were Laura Dougherty, Lissa Mazanec, Rochelle Shoemaker, Paige Stephens, Cody Wark and Johnna Wiens.

Wiens, the class salutatorian, followed Baden's speech by reading a poem titled "I knew I could."

The 71 seniors were then recognized by Robbins and presented with their diplomas by various members of the Colby school board.

Not long after, the celebration ensued and the senior class exited the gymnasium floor to Edward Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance" March No. 1 for the final time together.

"The thing I'll remember most about high school is just all of my friends," said Howard.

Howard's path will likely take her in a different direction from many of her classmates, but as Baden noted, they will always share a common bond.

"We'll always have one thing in common," he said. "We'll always be the class of 2008."



JOEY FALKOFF/Colby Free Press

Colby High senior Todd Ziegelmeier, back, hugged school secretary Tanya Staats after receiving his diploma Sunday during the commencement exercises for the class of 2008 at the Colby Community Building. A total of 71 seniors made up the school's most recent graduating class. Colby businessman Darrell Henry was the guest speaker.

Graduates thankful for support during school and life

By John Van Nostrand

Free Press Publisher
jvannostand@nwkansas.com

Among the laughs about remembering honey-mustard flavored pretzels, trips to the Oregon Trail, Washington D.C. and branded by a hot-dog cooker, the four Heartland Christian School graduates also showed the emotion and tears the impact the school had on their lives.

Heartland held commencement exercises Friday, its second graduating class since the school opened in 1995. Graduates included Randi Donley, Andrew Myers, Kale Regier and Brittany Sowers. Rather than ask someone to give a speech during the ceremony, school administrator Jesse Vincent allowed the four to speak.

Regier thanked his father, Randy, for what he has done and for the relationship they have. Randy, one of the founding members of the school, serves on the school board.

"Lead by example," Kale said he remember his father telling him at a young age.

"I've watched you be the example. I want to be like you. I want to be that loving father and husband," Kale said.

During his speech, Kale also acknowledged his grandparents who were in the audience. Two years ago, Randy's father died and Kale said he was troubled by that since he would not be there for his high school graduation, wedding and other milestones in life. Kale said



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Heartland Christian School graduates Randi Donley, Brittany Sowers, Andrew Myers and Kale Regier shared a moment together before greeting people after their commencement ceremony Friday at the school.

he turned to his faith to help him continue to live like his grandfather would have wanted him to.

Kale was grateful for what his family has done for him through school.

"I wish every human being could be blessed with family like I have," he said.

Donley was thankful for the school board creating a high school curriculum.

"I'm sure it was not easy, but well worth it," she said. "I can still feel the prayers."

Without the high school classes, Donley said she would not have been able to learn more about the

Bible through courses taught by Vincent or American and world history from Tammy Higerd.

"Without the details of World War I, where would I be," Donley said with a laugh.

Donley said she was also grateful for her parents and what they have done for her.

"God put me in the perfect place, even though I'm far from perfect."

Donley said her mother, Lona, is a friend and inspiration. Lona teaches kindergarten at Heartland and Randi said she has an interest in teaching — thanks to her mother.

A slide show during the ceremony included a picture of Brittany Sowers receiving a certificate finishing kindergarten from Randy Regier. That one picture contrasted to her concept of time while at school.

"At times it seemed like it was going to drag," she said.

Although she remembers the pretzels from kindergarten, she also was thankful for former school administrator Rick Roberts.

"He wanted us to search deeper," she said.

Among all the classes, books and lessons during school Andrew Myers said what happened during an eighth-grade field trip will never be forgotten. While cooking hot dogs over a campfire, he remembers Kale branding him with the end of a hot-dog cooker.

But there were more people in Andrew's life during school that branded him in a much different way. He said he was grateful for the preachers and other people affiliated with churches he knew and motivated by during school. He mentioned Wade Hatfield, Tim Morehart, Gene Rothfuss and Becca Bargmann.

"Looking back at the school years, God has been working," he said. "It was painful at times. I see his plan."

In closing, Myers reminded current Heartland students to read Jeremiah 29:11 which God states his plan for his followers' hope and future.

Briefly

Lions Clubs to help China

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) announced that it is mobilizing US\$1.5 million to aid Lions-led relief efforts in China. There are four active Lions Clubs in Thomas County. Rexford, Gem, Colby and Brewster

Lions and LCIF are already responding to the powerful, massive earthquake that struck Sichuan Province in central China on Monday, May 12.

Lions in Hong Kong and Macau have raised \$600,000 and LCIF has committed an initial grant of \$500,000 to address immediate needs and provide medicines, clothing, blankets, water purification and temporary housing.

Lions have already sent 5,000 tents for displaced victims, and more are on the way. Through a vast network of Lions clubs members in Hong Kong and China, Lions and LCIF are also dispatching relief

teams to the affected areas to deliver supplies and assist with hands-on relief efforts.

U.S. donors can:

Donate Online Now and note in comments field that donation is for "Lions China Earthquake Disaster Relief Fund." Go to www.lionsclubs.org.

Mail a check to LCIF. Make the check payable to LCIF and write "Lions China Earthquake Disaster Relief Fund" in the memo field. Send the check to LCIF, 300 W. 22nd St., Oak Brook, IL 60523, Attn.: Donor Services.

Make a credit card donation with a MasterCard, Visa or American Express by calling LCIF at 630-571-5466, ext. 517 or 581. Call between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. CST Monday-Friday.

McDonald's to help family

From 5-8 p.m. today McDonald's of Colby customers are encouraged to help support Justin Ken-

nedly, and his sister, Jessica. During this time period, hamburgers will be priced at only 49¢ (plus tax) and cheeseburgers at only 59¢ (plus tax).

Justin and Jessica have both been diagnosed with Cushing's disease which is a rare endocrine problem caused by too much cortisol in the body. Both siblings have a pituitary tumor that causes excess cortisol production. The tumors will be removed this month during surgery in Houston, Texas. The surgery is expected to resolve the hormonal imbalances. Justin has been a McDonald's of Colby team member for one year and is a junior at Colby High School. Jessica is a freshman in high school.

City council meets Tuesday

Colby City Council will meet 7 p.m., Tuesday at council chambers.

Agenda items include approval of agreement with Midwest Energy; Tuffy Taylor pond update; security report from EMC Insurance; floor tile project for the community building; agreement with Farm Credit of Western Kansas in regard to sidewalk; agreement with Lang Diesel; approve final plat for Bosselman addition; wind-damaged building and proposals for water tower paint and repair.

School board to meet

The Colby School board is scheduled to meet 7 p.m. tonight at the administration building, 600 W. 3rd St in Colby. The board will discuss or take action on unfinished business items that include infrastructure and security cameras, approval of the 2007-2008 republished budget and the Thomas County Foundation fund. New business items include handbook changes for the 2008-2009 school year and transportation fleet bus lease/purchase items.