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Three candidates file for council in Colby election

By Andy Heintz
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Three people, two of them current councilmen, are on the ballot for three open seats on the Colby City Council in the general election on Tuesday, April 7, with at least one write-in candidate for the other open seat.

Tim Hutfles and Mark Beringer are seeking re-election in Wards III and IV, while newcomer David G. Voss is a candidate for Ward II, replacing Tom Waldschmidt, who did not file for re-election.

In Ward I, where Phil DeYoung did not file for re-election, Raymond Weber has announced as a write-in candidate.

While the polls will be open at the Colby Community Building the day of the election, anyone who wants to get this chore out of the way can cast a ballot beginning next week.

Advance voting can be done through the county clerk's office. To be mailed an advance ballot, call the office at (785) 460-4500 or write to the County Clerk, Thomas County Courthouse, 300 N. Court Ave., Colby, Kan., 67701. They will send you an advanced voting application, which must be signed and returned to receive a ballot.

Advanced voting in person will

be available to any voter from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday through Friday, April 3, and from 8 a.m. to noon on Monday, April 6, at the clerk's office in the Thomas County Courthouse. No reason need be given to vote early.

Elections-day voting will be from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Colby Community Building.

In order to vote, you must be 18, properly registered and a resident of Kansas. If you have changed your name or addresses, you must re-register, said Assistant Deputy Clerk Kristi Mann. Citizens who have been charged with a felony must have received a final discharge from imprisonment, parole or conditional release.

The Colby council includes eight members, two from each of the four wards and the mayor. Candidates must live in the ward they run in, but the mayor can be elected from any ward, said Jo Strange, administrative assistant of the city manager. She said people could only vote for candidates in their district.

The *Colby Free Press* asked candidates what they believe needs to happen or what needs to happen for the city to attract businesses and people to the area.

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School spending likely won't get cut

By John Hanna
AP Political Writer

TOPEKA — Public schools are emerging as a protected class as Kansas legislators struggle with the state's budget problems, much to the frustration of Republicans who believe schools aren't shouldering their share of the burden.

The state appears unlikely to cut its aid to Kansas' 295 school districts anywhere near as much as it will reduce some programs or agency budgets, if at all. Key reasons are the backing schools enjoy from Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and the influx of money from the recently enacted federal stimulus package.

The Democratic governor's administration is telling the Republican-controlled Legislature that the federal stimulus law doesn't allow

Kansas to cut its aid to schools and still claim stimulus dollars for education. Republicans who've read the education section of the law and consulted national groups believe she's wrong.

Republican leaders are especially frustrated because they believe the state's finances are going to get worse in the next few months. Revenues will continue to fall short of expectations, they believe, and legislators will be forced to consider another round of cuts; school aid consumes a little more than half of the state's general tax revenues.

"Any time you take 50 percent of your budget out of consideration, then some people are going to get hurt a whole lot more than others," said Senate Ways and

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ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Students investigate clues at mock crime scene

Lindsay Frahm (top, from left), Autumn Preston, Brianna Elliot, Veronica Thornburg and Ryan Downing checked a mock crime scene during an "investigative scenario" for students in criminalistics, criminal justice and law enforcement classes at Colby Community College on Tuesday.

Students were investigating the shooting of a police officer. After following the clues, the class determined that Dalton Simon was probably guilty of the shooting. After finding a video

and a "suicide bomb" in Simon's room and talking to a witness who was a passenger in his car during the shooting, the class decided the two were planning to blow up a college building when the governor was visiting.

Johnny Unruh (above left) tried to find clues at the scene. Later in the day, Becca Howard (above right) "arrested" Simon. The event was put together by Josh Hunter, a Colby College alumnus with a degree in criminal justice.

College makes plans to survive and flourish during recession

By Andy Heintz
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Colby Community College will not only survive the recession, but could serve as an example to other schools, President Lynn Kreider said Tuesday in his "State of the College" address.

Alan Waites, chief financial officer at the college, said the college expects to have its state money cut by \$300,000 next year. This is just an educated guess, he added, because the Legislature has not yet

decided how much to cut.

While tuition fees will be raised by \$4 per credit hour for in-state students and \$10 an hour for "border," out of state and international students, said Kreider, the rates are still lower than the rates for community colleges in Nebraska and Colorado.

Waites said the college will meet the budget challenges this year through what he called "revenue enhancement," including new courses and fee increases.

Debbie Schwanke, public information director at the college, said later that the college has been work-

ing on ways to increase enrollment. One plan is to add courses, including culinary management, turf grass management and a leadership course to start next year.

The college has applied for a federal Title III grant that would give it \$1.8 million to spend over a five years, said Waites. Most of the money will be used to expand enrollment, he said.

If we could add 50 students next year, each student would be worth about \$6,000 a year in revenue, Waites said.

The plans are to expand education efforts on cam-

pus, around the area and online, Kreider said. He said officials are "aggressively" looking into alternative energy.

The school had done a remarkable job at maintaining enrollment, he said, but now it has to grow. Since high school enrollment in the 14 counties in northwest Kansas that feed the school continues to dwindle, he said, the college needs to recruit more from the border states and from other areas inside and outside the U.S.

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Weather Alert

Forecasters expect a strong winter storm to move across the area Thursday afternoon, with 5 to 9 inches of snow and winds of 25 to 30 mph producing near-blizzard conditions by Thursday night.

Heaviest snowfall was expected along and south of I-70. Kansas Department of Transportation officials said they expected to close I-70 at Goodland when Colorado closes the road.

Travelers, including anyone going to the state Kid Wrestling championships, were advised to leave Thursday morning, ahead of the storm.

Susan McMahan, Thomas County emergency management director, said officials were told to expect 6-12 inches from the state line to east of Colby. Only light snow showers were expected today, with light rain Thursday morning.

Snow and wind were expected to linger into Friday morning.

Briefly

Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a 4-month old fawn-colored female boxer puppy, a 1 1/2 to 2-year-old male lab/corgi mix and a 6-month to 1-year old little long-haired brown dog available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

High School 'WhoDunit' set

Come help solve them mystery of "The Great High School WhoDunit" at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 2, in the Colby High School auditorium. The forensics team will have a donation soup supper before the show from 5:30-6:45 p.m. in the commons area and a dessert buffet during intermission. During the break, there'll be a clue hunt. Tickets are available at the

door, from cast members or at the high school office at \$4 for adults and \$2 for students.

Tech for seniors program set

A lunch program on assistive technology will be given at 11:30 a.m. Thursday at the Colby Senior Center. Members of the Morning Glory Family and Community Education Club will demonstrate gadgets that can make life easier for seniors.

FFA offers work, food

The Colby High FFA chapter will have a labor auction and mountain-oyster meal at 6:30 p.m. Friday at the school. Students' labor, projects and various items will be auctioned off. Ag instructor Shawna Howell-Hoffman said they will have door prizes and giveaways. Everyone who attends will get a free bird feeder as a thank-you from Howell-Hoffman. Tickets

are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. Call Howell-Hoffman at 460-5320 for questions.

Barbershop on tap at college

The quartet Realltime, the 2005 international champions of Barbershop, will headline the program for "Back to the Roots of Barbershop," sponsored by the Colby Area Barbershoppers on Saturday. Shows will be at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. in the Frahm Theatre of the Colby Community College Cultural Arts Center. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door. Call (800) 269-7059 or (785) 462-2474. Will-call orders can be held at the ticket window.



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