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College ups tuition rate for students

By Andy Heintz
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The Colby Community College board agreed Monday to raise tuition for the 2011-2012 year from \$52 per credit hour to \$57 for in-state students, hoping to help close a \$400,000 budget gap.

The hike was recommended by Alan Waites, vice president of business affairs, and Keegan Nichols, vice president of student affairs, at a regular board meeting at Thomas Hall. In-state students will pay an extra \$5 per credit hour; out of state, an extra \$8; and international students, \$12.

For in-state students taking 15 hours a semester, this would increase tuition costs by \$75.

Waites said the college is increasing tuition to help make up for the revenue shortfall expected next year. The shortfall stems from a 7.5 percent decline in credit hours students took in the fall and having 50 fewer students living in dorms than expected this year.

Board member Arlen Leiker asked if the increase would discourage students from lower-income areas, such as Rawlins and Wallace counties, from attending the college. Nichols said the majority of students receive some sort of scholarship. In an interview the next day, she said 85 percent are on scholarship.

She said these students should have no obstacles when it comes to registering for class. She also said lower-income students can get federal Pell Grants to help pay for college, as well as loans.

On a positive note, Waites said students had enrolled enough credit hours this spring to keep the shortfall from getting any worse. Nichols said students enrolled in 12,402 credit hours this spring, adding that the college needed at least 12,400 to keep the budget stable. She said the college will add credit hours from the spring eight-week courses to the total when they are counted in mid-

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Baby, it's cold outside, but warm in the cab



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Colby High sophomore Seth DeHart drove his family's John Deere tractor to school on "Take Your Tractor to School Day" on Friday. The event, part of the annual FFA Week, also drew stock trailers and other equipment.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Commodities adviser Dale Herschberger says serving out part of a term has given him a better understanding of his job on the Colby Community College board.

Part term gave man education on board

By Vera Sloan
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After coming onto the Colby Community College board a year ago to fill an unexpired term, it's been a good experience, said Dale Herschberger, who is running for his first full term in the election April 5.

Herschberger, who attended the

college, said he liked what he saw when he came on the board, and although there have been lots of changes in the last year, he hopes they have been for the best.

"Decisions are made to the best of the board's ability, good or bad," he said, "and maybe even with controversy, but all have been done with the betterment

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Groceries may get to sell booze

By John Hanna
AP Political Writer

TOPEKA — Kansas would phase in the sale of full-strength beer, wine and liquor in grocery and convenience stores by 2017 under a bill endorsed Tuesday by a state Senate committee.

The Federal and State Affairs Committee rewrote the legislation before approving it, going slow on historic changes in liquor laws that have set Kansas apart from many states. The committee's voice vote sent the measure to the Senate for debate, which could occur as early as Friday.

Senators tried to balance the long-standing desire of grocery and convenience store owners to expand what they can sell, starting next year, against liquor store owners' worries that

changing the law will allow large retail chains to drive them out of business. Backers of expanded sales still saw the committee's action as a significant victory, while liquor store owners still appeared upset.

State law allows grocery and convenience stores to sell "cereal malt beverage," also known as "weak" or "low-point" beer. Kansas is one of only five states to make such a distinction about beer based on the alcohol content, and it's often seen as a reflection of the dry heritage in a state once known for Carrie Nation's saloon smashing.

Supporters argue a change in liquor laws will create new jobs and generate revenue for the state, as well as help struggling rural grocery stores and stores in some border counties.

"I'm excited that it's going to be on the Senate floor and everybody's going to get into the

debate," said Brenda Elsworth, operations director for Pete's Convenience Stores, which operates 24 stores in southeast Kansas.

Liquor store owners argue the main beneficiaries of the change will be big, out-of-state retail chains. Kansas law now limits liquor licenses to people who've lived in the state for at least four years, with an individual allowed to own a single store. Those restrictions would be removed under the bill.

"It takes everything that we do right now, currently, keeping our businesses in Kansas, and gives it to corporations," said Steve Nelson, who owns Brown Bag Liquor in Olathe. "Money's going to go out of the state."

Under the bill, liquor stores would continue to hold special licenses allowing them to sell

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Colby woman wins state prize for writing

By Vera Sloan
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The Native Sons and Daughters have named Sheryl Brenn of Levant as second-place winner in the annual Kansas Factual Story Contest sponsored by the family of Olive Ann Beech.

Brenn was honored at the group's banquet on Jan. 28, in Topeka, where her essay was reproduced as part of the program. She received a \$125 cash prize.

Her story centered around her life as a young girl in 4-H whose heart's desire was to own an electric sewing machine instead of

having to use her mother's old foot-treadle model.

She told of her excitement when she learned she could buy one with "Gooch Red Circles" when the Gooch's Best elevator in Salina had their "Red Circle" auction.

As a kid, she had never bid at an auction, so thinking she should "practice" the art of bidding, she decided the way to learn was by bidding on a prize Hampshire gilt that was in the Red Circle Auction.

She was getting quite comfortable with bidding until she real-

See "WRITING," Page 3

House speaker considers banning rowdy lobbyists

TOPEKA (AP) — Kansas House Speaker Mike O'Neal says he's looking into banning union lobbyists involved in a demonstration from the chamber's gallery.

The Hutchinson Republican said Friday he and others are reviewing an incident the day before, when the House approved a bill to end voluntary deductions from union members' paychecks to finance political activities.

Several dozen union mem-

bers in the House gallery began shouting at House members to vote no. They were removed from the gallery.

O'Neal said he's working to identify any lobbyists involved. He said banning them from the gallery or some legislative offices is a possible response.

But House Minority Leader Paul Davis, a Lawrence Democrat, said it's troubling to think the House would act against people who demonstrated over a political issue.

Briefly

Soccer signup open all week

The American Youth Soccer Organization is enrolling players for the spring season through next Friday. Kids 5 to 19 are welcome. For information or to sign up, call Emily Griffin at 460-0647.

Prom dresses on sale at church

Gently used, like-new prom dresses will be on sale from 6 to 8 p.m. from Monday to next Friday in the basement of the First Presbyterian Church, 515 W. Fourth St. in Colby. New styles, great colors and sizes, \$20 each. Proceeds go to Genesis-Thomas County Food Bank. For information, call Sue Draper at (785) 460-6322 or Shanda Mattix at 460-5464.

Lost pet staying at shelter

Colby Animal Clinic has a stray 7-month-old neutered male lhasa apso looking for its owner. Lost or

strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and adoption costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

Legion serving biscuits, gravy

The Colby American Legion Post will serve biscuits and gravy on from 7 to 11 a.m. Saturday at the post hall, 1850 W. Fourth St. Donations will be accepted for building improvements. For information, call 462-3809.

Wellness checks at Smoffee's

Thomas County emergency medical technician students will be performing wellness checks from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday at Smoffee's coffee shop downtown, including blood pressure and blood sugar. For information, call Dawnelle Umberger at 460-4585.

Church video concert Sunday

The Colby Berean Church will have a Gaither Homecoming video concert at 6 p.m. Sunday. This new concert, featuring Majesty, is free and open to the public. For information, call the church at 460-2763.

Apply now for youth grants

The Thomas County Community Foundation is accepting applications for "Kids Can Do!" grants, which provide \$200 for nonprofit organizations or classrooms. Applications are due by Tuesday. For information, go to www.thomascountycommunityfoundation.com or call 460-9152.

Learn how you can save a life

Thomas County Emergency Medical Service will have a cardiopulmonary resuscitation information

meeting for the public from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday at Smoffee's coffee shop. It costs \$20 to be certified in the technique, but anyone can attend the meeting. For information, call Dawnelle Umberger at 460-4585.

World Day of Prayer coming

Church Women United will sponsor a World Day of Prayer lunch and service at noon next Friday at the Colby United Methodist Church. Women from Colby churches will present a program prepared by Chilean women called "How Many Loaves Have You?" Donations will be accepted. For information, call Millie Horlacher at 462-3104.

