



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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## Colby College board candidates speak

By Kevin Bottrell

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Voters got the chance to meet the seven candidates for Colby Community College board Tuesday in the college Cultural Arts Center, and heard them answer questions on issues facing the school.

Candidates Dinah Charles, Nick Wells, Angie Rogers, Susan McMahan, Arlen Leiker, Larry McDonald and Dale Herschberger each answered seven questions gathered from citizens, students and the college staff. Leiker and Herschberger currently serve on the board; McDonald is a write-in candidate while the other six are on the ballot.

Faculty Alliance President Bob Selby introduced the candidates and Tyson Miller, student government president, moderated the discussion. Candidate had two minutes to answer each question. They took turns going first.

Here's a summary of their answers:

*Why do you want to be on the board, and why should citizens vote for you?*

Charles said her 24 years in the Air Force gave her experience working in a variety of places around the country and overseas. She said she is well rounded and forward thinking.

Wells said he has considered running for some time. He said he wants to open more of a dialogue between the college board and the foundation. Serving as director of the college foundation, he said, has kept him informed on what's happening around the campus and around town.

Rogers said voters should consider her because of her experience with the college as a teacher. She said she brings inside knowledge of how the college works, as well as a background in academics.

She said she wanted to bring high standards back to the college "It's a shame that we have to watch our college go downhill," she said. "I would like to see the college become more than just a glorified high school."

McMahan said she chose to move to Colby because her brother had a good experience attending the college. A guest lecturer



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Colby Community College board candidates (above, from left) Susan McMahan, Arlen Leiker and Larry McDonald answered questions Tuesday night about their ideas and priorities if they win the election Tuesday. The candidates drew random numbers before the forum to determine their seating order. They took turns going first to answer each question. Candidate Dale Herschberger (right) was last at the table, and so answered the seventh question first.

for several programs, she said she has been disappointed to see classes half full.

McMahan said she wanted the college to be here for her children.

Leiker said he brings a different perspective to the board. He said he tried community college but it wasn't right for him. Instead went to a technical school. While there, he said, he learned what schools like Colby should be about, serving "nontraditional" and retired students.

Leiker said he may disagree sometimes with the other board members, but he doesn't see it as a bad thing.

"A consensus board will get you bad decisions," he said. "A discussion will get you good decisions."

McDonald said his experience on the board makes him an ideal candidate. It takes about a year to get up to speed on the issues, he said, and with his experience, he could step in for another term eas-

ily. Herschberger said he wanted to do something for the community. The college needs the support of everyone around it, he said, and will take hard work, dedication and positive attitudes to help it weather the current hard times.

*What are the most important goals for next 10 years?*

Wells said that with the declining population in northwest Kansas, the college will have to focus on quality to attract students from outside the area. Wells said Colby is a sincere and wholesome place and people will want to come to school here if the curriculum is worth their money.

Rogers said the key would be to get both money and students into the college. The board and administration should come up with better recruitment goals, she said, and they should start with Colby first, then Thomas County and

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## Former Rep. Jim Morrison honored on House floor

By Vera Sloan

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For faithful service to the people of the 121st District, Rep. Rick Billinger and Speaker of the House Mike O'Neal requested a resolution to honor the memory of former state Rep. Jim Morrison of Colby.

The resolution was read and presented to Morrison's widow Karen and their family March 17 at the Statehouse in Topeka.

It said in part that he had served in the Kansas House of Representatives from 1992 to 2010. He was remembered for his commitment to his constituency from House District 121, for serving as chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, and as a member of many other committees.



J. Morrison



R. Billinger

Rep. Morrison was remembered for his role in community and civic organizations, including the Kansas Association for Children with Learning Disabilities.

The resolution acknowledged his marriage to his grade school friend and high school sweetheart, Karen Jean Carr, on Aug. 25, 1963, recognizing their children, Mike, Jeff, Scott and Lisa Morrison, and

the couple's 11 grandchildren.

It acknowledged his 41 years of dedicated service to the Colby area as an optometrist.

The resolution says the state "has lost a valiant leader... Dr. Morrison worked tirelessly for his constituents not only in representing their needs but also by communicating to them of the issues covered in the day's session."

It acknowledged him as being instrumental in passing Senate Bill 5, which created oversight for all state agency information technology purchases, saving the state millions of dollars.

The resolution ended by extending the deepest sympathy of members of the Kansas House to his family, with thanks for the years of public service he gave to his state and community.

Monday, Mrs. Morrison said it was good to attend the presentation of the

resolution, where she got to see many familiar faces she had gotten to know over the couple's years in Topeka.

She expressed appreciation to Rep. Billinger, former Goodland mayor, who replaced her husband in the House and was instrumental in creating the resolution. She said she appreciated his comments after the presentation as they broke to go into a tax session, that he would be voting as Jim would have voted, because he was sent there to finish what Jim would have done.

Mrs. Morrison recalled that years ago when Jim was being rushed into making a decision about running for office, he told the people who were encouraging him to make a run for the House seat that he would have to talk it over with his wife.

"You know what we think of politicians," she said. "My, the Lord has a good sense of humor, because that's what we

did for the next chunk of our lives."

She said when they were new in Topeka, she would drive to the Capitol grounds to watch the sessions.

"When parking got to be such an issue," she said, "it was more difficult to go. One time when I did go, Jim looked up and saw me standing in the doorway, and his first words were, 'Where did you park? Don't you know you could get towed?'"

After that, she said, she wasn't such a frequent a visitor.

She said she looked forward to Tuesdays, which were spouses' day, where they would meet for devotions or a book review. She said she looked forward to doing tours of Cedar Crest (the governor's mansion) with visitors before Kathleen Sebelius became governor. Since the new governor couldn't be at the governor's

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## Briefly

### Scouts invite girls to bowl

All girls in fourth through sixth grades are invited to spend Friday night with area Girl Scouts as Girls Go Extreme - Bowling from 10:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Friday at the Colby Bowl and Fun Center, 1175 S. Range. Girls will join in bowling, games, dancing and pizza. Parents are welcome, too. Cost is \$5. For information, call Becky Ayers, membership services manager, at (785) 259-6743.

### Seniors planning potato bar

The Senior Progress Center will have a potato bar, bake sale and coin raffle fund raiser from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday. For information, call Kaila DeBoer at 460-2901.

### Pilots to talk safety Saturday

The Federal Aviation Administration will sponsor the 2011 National Safety Stand Down, a full day

of discussion for pilots on accident factors and approach-landing reviews, starting at 8:30 a.m. Saturday at the Colby Municipal Airport. For information, call Mark Ostmeyer at 460-4438.

### Supper, auction to help man

Help raise money for John Morgan at a benefit supper and silent auction from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday in the Colby High School commons. The proceeds will help with medical bills from a motorcycle accident Feb. 16. For information, or to donate, call Mandy Focke at 462-2120.

### Church offers concert on video

The Colby Berean Church will have a free Gaither Homecoming video concert at 6 p.m. Sunday at the church, featuring a group called Alaskan Homecoming. For information, call the church at 460-2863.

### School plans scrapbooking day

Heartland Christian School is planning a free scrapbooking day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday in the school commons. Supplies won't be available, so buy them ahead of time. For information, or to reserve a table, call Lucy Wood at 460-2721.

### Dance team tryouts Monday

The Colby High School dance team will hold tryouts for the 2011-2012 squad at 6:30 p.m. Monday and Thursday, April 7, in the high school gym. Tryout packets are available in the middle and high school offices. For information, call sponsor Denita Rodgers at 460-1325.

### Class focuses on better health

A six-week class on self management of chronic disease will be offered Mondays from 2 to 4:30 p.m. beginning next week at Fairview Estates, 1630 Sewell

Ave. Sessions will address healthful behavior and improving health status. The workshop is limited to the first 20 people who register. Call Jeanene Brown at Citizens Medical Center at (785) 460-4850.

### Churches offer Lenten series

Soup and Scripture, sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, is offered at noon each Wednesday through Easter at Smoffee's in downtown Colby. Speaker for next week on "Who is This Jesus?" will be Jarrod Spencer, minister of the Church of Christ in Colby. Cost for lunch is \$5. For information, call Spencer at (785) 443-2403 or your pastor.



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