



75¢



COLBY FREE PRESS

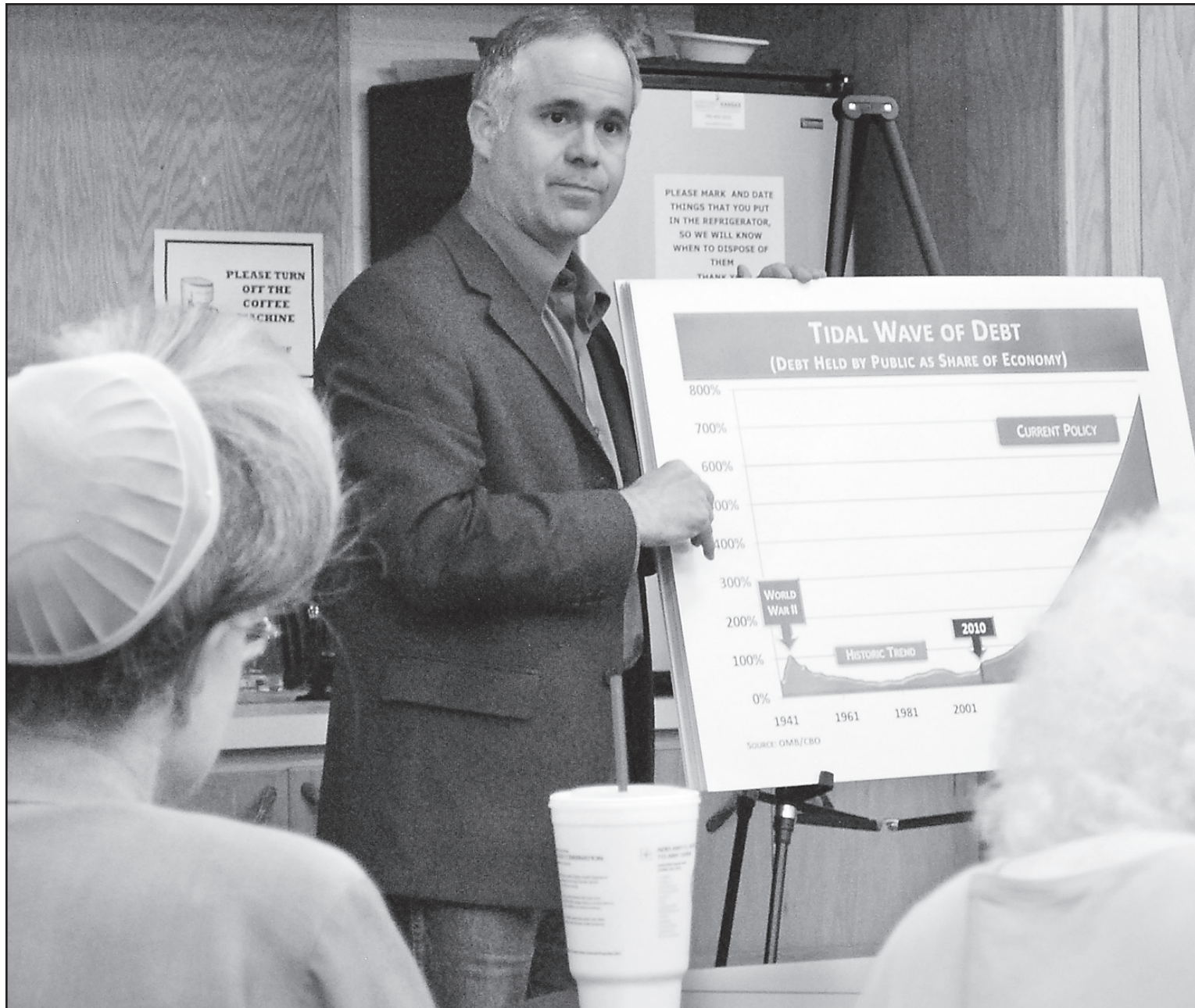
Friday

April 29, 2011

Volume 122, Number 68

Serving Thomas County since 1888

10 pages



Congressman meets public at town hall

By Kevin Bottrell
Colby Free Press
kbottrell@nwkansas.com

U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp paid his first visit to Colby on Tuesday meeting in the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce meeting room. He said the meeting was one of a series he has been holding throughout the 1st District, trying to continue the tradition of meeting in each county at least once a year. Huelskamp said he is part of a very large freshman legislator class that is trying to change the way Washington works. In the first week, he said, the House cut its own budget by 5 percent. The House has even reduced the military budget, he said, something unusual for a Republican Congress. It also changed the schedule during the legislative session to give one week off every month. Huelskamp said he has been using that time to hold town halls.

Huelskamp brought charts with him showing national debt as a share of the economy. Right after World War II, he said, federal debt exceeded the size of the nation's economy, but was paid down very quickly. Huelskamp said that under both President George Bush and President Barack Obama, the U.S. has had four straight years of trillion dollar deficits. National debt stayed level for decades, he said, but with those deficits it has increased and is going to hit 100 percent of the economy within the next few years. Huelskamp serves on the House Budget Committee. He said he asked five economists how long the U.S. has left to solve its debt problem, and they each told him to "act like you have no time left." Entitlements such as Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security are part of the problem and will make up the entirety of the federal budget if left unchecked. Social Security spending is fairly steady. See "TOWN HALL," Page 3

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

U.S. Rep Tim Huelskamp explained the national debt crisis using a chart at a town hall meeting Thursday in the Thomas County Office Complex. Huelskamp met with about 30 constituents, who asked questions on health care, regulations and spending.

Forensics team to send 24 competitors to state tourney

By Tomi Miller
Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkansas.com

The Colby High School forensics team is not only growing in size, but in skill as well. This year, the forensics team qualified 24 students in 34 events for the Class 4A state competition. "I'm sort of amazed and impressed at how far our team has come in such a short time," said coach Paige Gawith. The forensics team has done well this

season, they have placed first in tournaments at Quinter, Hugoton, Smith Center and Norton. They have also placed second or third at many other tournaments across northwest Kansas. "I think we will do fairly well (at state), but there is a lot of competition back east," said junior Michael Tubbs, who qualified in extemporaneous speaking and original oration. Tubbs has qualified for state all three years of his high school career. This year, he hopes to break semi-finals, finals and

hopefully bring home some hardware. "I'm really excited to compete and watch all the other performances," said Gabby Browne, a sophomore state qualifier in serious solo, prose, and poetry. Browne also qualified last year in poetry and said she doesn't want to "psych herself out" to much, so she tries not to think about how well she will do. Just like any sport or activity, in order to do well in forensics the students have to practice. "Madison Gawith and I would run

through our skit a lot during the beginning of the season, we practiced everywhere; from hotel lobbies to hallways," said sophomore Blake McNinch, a qualifier in duet. This is McNinch's first time qualifying for the state competition. "My goal is to do well, see how far I can take duo and maybe watch some serious solo," said McNinch. "In IDA (improvised duet acting), Christina Ostmeier and I will practice by getting together and practicing funny

accents and thinking of funny situations that we can do in a round," said Cameron McLaughlin, a sophomore who also qualified in serious solo. McLaughlin said she is excited for the state competition this year. She feels she really stepped up this year and her confidence level improved. She hopes that she and Ostmeier can place well. She said she also hopes she can place higher in serious solo than she did the previous year. See "FORENSICS," Page 3

Governor asks federal agency for drought disaster declaration

TOPEKA (AP) – Gov. Sam Brownback is asking the U.S. Department of Agriculture to declare a drought disaster for 21 counties in western Kansas. The governor made the request in a letter Wednesday to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. The declaration would make affected farmers eligible for emergency loans from USDA's Farm Service Agency, and for other kinds of aid.

The 21 counties in Brownback's request are Finney, Gove, Grant, Greeley, Hamilton, Haskell, Kearny, Lane, Logan, Meade, Morton, Ness, Scott, Seward, Sheridan, Sherman, Stanton, Stevens, Thomas, Wallace, and Wichita. Brownback said farmers in those counties are coping with production losses caused by drought, wildfires and high winds.

New publisher joins newspaper staff

The Colby Free Press had a news and sports coverage very change in leadership this week seriously, and said community newspapers can do a lot to help charitable organizations with fundraising and publicity.



S. Friedlander

Friedlander took over for Steve Haynes, who is stepping back to focus more on the Free Press' parent company, Haynes Publishing, which owns six papers in northwest Kansas. Friedlander said she takes the newspaper's mission of providing the best representative," she said. "Even if

you might not agree with them." Friedlander comes to Colby from the Sweetwater Reporter in Sweetwater, Texas. She had been publisher there for two years. Sweetwater, a city of 11,000 in west Texas, is know for having the worlds' largest rattlesnake roundup. Before working there, Friedlander spent seven years as ad director for the Sterling Journal Advocate in Colorado. Friedlander said she and her

See "PUBLISHER," Page 3

Community players



Adult and youth musicians alike joined forces in the Pride of the Prairie Orchestra's concert Thursday at Colby Community College. The orchestra features players from all around northwest Kansas, eastern Colorado and southwest Nebraska.

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Briefly

Start separating clippings, trash
The City of Colby has started picking up grass separate from household trash. City officials ask that everyone leave grass clippings unbagged in a tipper can marked "Grass." Have cans to the curb by 8 a.m. on trash day. For information, call the Public Works office at (785) 460-4420.

Buy old stuff to help students
A multi-family garage sale will help raise money for the Colby High School forensics team from 7 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday at 405 N. Franklin Ave. The proceeds will help the students, parents and friends traveling to Washington in May for national competition. For information, call Katherine Kersenbrock-Ostmeier at 443-2479.

Foundation plans fun shoot
The Citizens Foundation will hold a benefit fun

shoot at 11:30 a.m. Sunday at the Colby Trap Club west of town, with competition for all skill levels. Registration includes food, 125 "rocks," prizes and gifts. Proceeds will be split between purchase of medical equipment for Citizens Medical Center and to the club. For information, call Tama Unger at 460-1214 or Bob Luck at 462-0686.

Piano students plan recital
Piano students of Pat Ziegelmeier will present a spring recital at 7 p.m. Sunday in the sanctuary of Colby United Methodist Church. The program will be a variety of piano solos and duets. There is no admission for the program, and everyone is invited. For information, call Ziegelmeier at 462-5518.

County to test sirens early
Thomas County will test its tornado sirens at 10 a.m. Monday instead of noon. Emergency Manage-

ment Director Susan McMahan said the county will test the sirens in conjunction with a Colby Community College tornado drill. For information, call McMahan at 460-4516.

Reception to honor retired dean
The public is invited to a reception honoring Gracemary Melvin as the Colby Community College 2011 Honorary Associate Degree recipient at 3 p.m. Monday in the Student Union. Melvin was an instructor and dean of instruction at the college for 35 years. For information, call Debbie Schwanke at (785) 460-5411.

Population discussion moved
Colby Community College's discussion on Dr. Patrick Carr's presentation on his book, "Hollowing out the Middle," has been rescheduled for 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday at the Davis Library on campus. The discussion was postponed because of the lockdown April 14. For information, call Linda Davis-Stephens at 460-5528.

City offers 3-on-3 basketball
The Colby Recreation Department will hold its first 3-on-3 Youth Basketball Tournament on Saturday, May 7. Deadline to register is Tuesday<m3>. Information and registration forms can be found at www.cityofcolby.com under the recreation department. For questions, call Recreation Director Stacy Lee at 460-4440.



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 8 9 8 3