



# Counties decide to share costs evenly

By Kevin Bottrell

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Representatives of the Sherman and Thomas County rural fire boards decided Wednesday to share the costs of maintaining the Brewster Fire Department more evenly.

A public meeting held in Brewster on Wednesday brought together representatives from Brewster, the Sherman County Rural Fire District board, the boards of Thomas County Fire districts 3 and 5, the Brewster Fire Department and Thomas County Emergency Management, along with the Sherman and Thomas County commissioners.

Since 1985, officials said, the Brewster department has been under the auspices of the Sherman County Rural fire board, with Brewster providing the firefighters and Thomas County District 5 contributing \$5,000 a year. Commissioner Cynthia Strnad said that Sherman County brought in experts to evaluate the system, and one suggestion they made was to find a more equitable agreement since \$5,000 was nowhere near half the operating cost.

About 85 percent of the population served by the Brewster Fire Department is in Thomas County, said Rex Jamison, who sits on the Brewster City Council and the Thomas County Fire District 5 board, but more than half the area served is in Sherman County.

Sherman County Rural Fire board member Daryl Cloyd said he had put together

some average costs to try and figure out how much it takes to run the department. While equipment repairs and fuel costs fluctuate, he said, training, education and salaries stay fairly constant. Cloyd estimated the annual operating cost at \$9,000 to \$10,000.

He said there is also a 35-year apparatus replacement plan for the four vehicles in the department's fleet. A 1978 Ford pumper is set to be replaced next year, which will cost about \$45,000. A 1981 Ford tanker is set to be replaced in 2016, a 2004 F550 rescue truck in 2039 and a 2010 International pumper in 2045. Keeping to this schedule requires the department to set aside about \$34,000 a year, making the total cost of the Brewster department around \$43,000 a year.

The Brewster Fire Station, valued at \$175,000, is owned by District 5, Jamison said; everything else belongs to either the city of Brewster or the Sherman County Rural District.

Cloyd proposed that District 5 and Sherman County Rural each contribute about \$18,000 a year, with a cap on spending at \$36,000 a year. The Sherman County Clerk would keep Brewster fire expenses on a line item so they could be tracked. If there are any major unanticipated repairs, Sherman County Rural would pay for the first \$5,000 and then split any further cost with District 5.

Sherman County would provide the vehicles, management, insurance, equipment and training. Brewster would provide the firefighters themselves and any

personal safety equipment they need such as helmets, boots, gloves, air packs, etc. Brewster would also be responsible for half the cost of communications equipment and supplies.

Cloyd said it should be a two-to-three-year agreement instead of open-ended, so the districts could evaluate how it is working.

Jamison said the Brewster department has looked into some other options, but their first choice would be to stay with Sherman County Rural. Jamison said he wouldn't have a problem with the proposals. Brewster has historically contributed about half the personal equipment, but Brewster Fire Chief Willard Crumrine

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# City council to choose firm for job search

By Kayla Cornett

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The Colby City Council heard a presentation from the League of Kansas Municipalities on Tuesday on how the statewide association could help Colby find a new city manager.

Michael Koss was sent by the league to give the council information about the process and to answer questions. He started by talking about how important it is to have a third party help with the process, adding that the league has helped more than 100 cities throughout the state.

"We take a lot of pride in making sure that our cities are healthy," he said, "and we're going to do our best, if you choose us, to make sure that you get the best city manager possible."

He said he wanted to stress that the league wouldn't be forcing anything down the council's throat. It's just their role to facilitate the process.

The league's fee for this service is \$4,846.75, which was in the contract Koss gave to the council.

The council is holding a special meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday to hear from another search company, Austin Peters Group, and will make its decision between the two after that presentation.

Koss then reviewed the entire process of finding candidates. He said the league will start by giving each council member three position surveys.

The first is a characteristic profile, in which the members will each write the 10 most important characteristics they want to see in a city manager.

"You'll give a brief description of the ideal candidate in your eyes," Koss said, "and you're also going to tell us who is responsible for certain civic duties."

From those surveys, Koss said the league will create a job description that it will use for the posted across the country.

Next is a salary survey, where the league compares cities of similar size in the region to give an idea of how much city managers are earning. Koss said they will also take into account factors about city operations, such as Colby having an electric utility system.

After that, the league will begin placing ads in magazines and websites in Colorado, Nebraska or even nationwide, depending on where the council wants to look.

"We're going to let you decide that," Koss said. "We're going to give you a list of locations where you can place ads, along with the cost of each of those locations. Then we'll just advise you (about) what's been most effective for cities in the past, but that'll ultimately be up to the council to decide."

Councilman Tim Hutfles asked if the contracts Koss provided the council did not reflect those costs, and Koss said that was correct.

After the ads are placed, Koss

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# Workout facility plans two programs

By Christina Beringer

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The Movement Connection in Colby is planning for a busy month, with two special walking programs to encourage people to get fit set for April.

Brenda Mazanec, owner of the fitness facility at 430 N. Franklin, said she plans to organize an Arthritis Foundation Walk With Ease program and a more intense Walk Fit program.

She said people do not have to be a member of her facility to participate.

In addition to other certifications Mazanec holds, she said, she is a certified instructor for the Arthritis Foundation. And, she added, although the program was developed by the foundation, participants do not have to have arthritis to join.

Two times are being offered for the Walk With Ease class, she

said. Both will start on Monday and continue every Monday and Wednesday for six weeks. The morning class starts at 10:30 a.m. and the evening class at 5:30 p.m. Registration is \$35.

Mazanec said pre-registration is not required, but she encourages people to call her so she can plan accordingly.

"The Arthritis Foundation Walk With Ease class starts at the Movement Connection for instructor-led, warm-up activities for stretching and toning," Mazanec said. "Then, we'll go 'Anklin' Down Franklin' for a maximum of 10 minutes on mapped walking trails on the nicer sidewalks...."

Mazanec said the Walk Fit program is a more intense opportunity that she developed to include using resistance bands for a more powerful exercise.

Again, it will start with warm-up stretching and toning before

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KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press



# Teachers help with enrollment

Puddle Duck Preschool teacher Liz Stover (above right) entertained a future student with a karaoke machine Thursday while his mom filled out enrollment papers at the school for Enrollment Day. Teacher Amy Jennings (left) helped a mom and her daughter with their enrollment papers.

# Award-winning author to give Max Pickerell lecture

Richard Horan, an award-winning fiction writer and educator, will speak in Colby Community College's Dr. Max Pickerell Lecture Series at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Northwest Kansas Cultural Arts Center on campus.

Horan, who has lived and taught all over the world, most recently was a writing instructor at the State University of New York at Oswego. Before that, he taught English in the Wisconsin public schools and overseas with the Department of Defense.

He was stationed in Belgium and South Korea. Horan has been a sports information director

and an adjunct instructor of English as a second language, writing and journalism at colleges in New England. He taught for two years in a private school in Parma, Italy.

After graduating from Boston University in 1981, he traveled throughout the U.S. before settling in Milwaukee. While living there, he wrote and worked as a nurse's aide in a mental hospital. That gave him the material to write his first published novel, "Life in the Rainbow."

During college, he worked as a night orderly at a Boston hospital and fought professionally

throughout the U.S. and Canada as a middleweight boxer.

He is married with two daughters, 22 and 18. He and his wife were family-care providers for mentally disabled adults who lived with them in their home.

His first novel, published by Steerforth Press in 1996, was lauded by reviewers as "a moving book written by an original voice." His recent work, "Seeds: One Man's Serendipitous Journey to Find the Trees that Inspired Famous American Writers from Faulkner to Kerouac, Welty to Wharton," was published by Harper Collins.

Horan says he's completing his latest book, "Harvest: One Man's Journey to Discover America's Great Farms."

He received his bachelor's degree from Boston University and a Master of Arts in teaching from the University of Pittsburgh.

He will be available to sign copies of his books following the free lecture. The Max Pickerell Lecture Series is paid for by anonymous donors. For information, call Dr. Linda Davis-Stephens at (785) 460-5528.

