



Interviews for city manager complete

By Sam Dieter
Colby Free Press
sdieter@nwkans.com

The City Council has finished interviews for a new city manager, and officials are now looking into the candidates' backgrounds, Mayor Gary Adrian said this morning.

"As of today, we are on track to have our new city manager on the job as soon as possible," Adrian said. "The selection of a city manager is one of the most important decisions we will make as a governing body."

"We are performing our due diligence to make sure we select the right person for the job."

Candidates for the job were interviewed by city officials in four-hour ses-

sions Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon. Adrian said that the city is trying to move the hiring process along as quickly as possible.

"There's lots of options available until they make a decision," said interim City Manager Randy Jones.

For example, one or more candidates might be brought in for a second interview, or someone might not accept the

city's offer.

Candidates include Bret Grendening, a former city manager in Osawatomie, who now works for Kiewit Power Contractors; Lynne Ladner, city administrator in Hiawatha; Gary Bradley, a former city manager for Grain City, Mo., just east of Kansas City; and Dawn Jaeger, an assistant city manager in Great Bend.

Jones said that the mayor, the city at-

torney and the council members met with each candidate during the closed-door interviews. He and Jo Strange, administrative assistant in the city manager's office, sat outside through the process in case the council needed them.

Jones, the city's police chief, has been filling in since former City Manager Carolyn Armstrong retired June 15.

Top official from university to visit Colby

By Christina Beringer
Colby Free Press
colby.society@nwkans.com

The executive vice chancellor of public affairs plans to fly out to meet and greet alumni and others at a free reception planned by the University of Kansas Alumni Association from 7:30 to 9 a.m. next Thursday at the Prairie Museum.

Tim Caboni, who recently joined the university as head of its communications efforts, will be making his first official visit to western Kansas.

The association will serve doughnuts and coffee and plans to give away Jayhawk prizes. Make optional reservations with Kerri Wright at klwright@kualumni.org or (785) 864-9772.

"As part of our annual 'Hawk Days of Summer' tour, the KU Alumni Association will be in Colby for a reception to share news from KU and meet with area Jayhawks," said Brad Eland, assistant director of Kansas programs.

"We want to get out and engage and see as many places as we can," said Caboni, "and I look forward to meeting the people of Colby."

Caboni is in his first year as vice chancellor, said Tommie Cassen, legislative and communications manager, and this will be his first trip to see much of the state. She said this will be his first time to visit a lot of the cities on the tour schedule, especially in northwest Kansas.

"The Chancellor of KU says that we are the university of Kansas," Caboni said. "If that is so, that means we are to be the university of all of Kansas, and it's important that we get out and see where our students are from and where our graduates will spend their careers."

"On the tour, we'll be discussing many new programs at the university and sharing our solutions to things like physician shortages that are happening throughout the entire state. We want to make sure good family practitioners are keeping our towns healthy and ensure our graduates are stable and helping to keep communities strong."

Caboni said university representatives will also be talking about the new RedTire program, designed to help small business owners who are ready to retire but don't have a successor to take over.

"Small towns rely on their local businesses," said Caboni. "The program will help enable small communities to remain strong and build community connections."

In addition to Colby, the tour will travel through McPherson, Great Bend and Goodland, among others.

Alumni Association members can show their membership card at the reception and receive a free 5-by-7-inch KU print, said Eland. People can join the association at the event as well.

Out with the old...



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press
Danny Braun of Florida switched out an old electric meter for a new one Thursday at Thomas County Insurance on Fifth Street. Braun works for U.S. Bronco Services, which subcontracted to install the meters for Johnson Controls Inc. and the City of Colby. The new meters are electronic and send information automatically, which means they no longer have to be manually read by city employees.

Group plans free event

The Todd Becker Foundation plans to bring its "Blockstop Summer Tour" to Colby on Sunday, July 29, during the Thomas County Fair.

The presentation and concert will take place on Franklin Avenue between Fourth and Fifth streets. A free barbecue, provided by area churches, will start at 7 p.m. The presentation starts at 8.

The event will be presented mostly by Keith Becker, founder of the foundation. The group presented at Colby High School, bus- ing in Golden Plains students, in January 2011. The presentation will feature a message that includes live music from the foundation's touring band, Chye (pronounced shy), videos and audio.

The foundation was formed following the alcohol-related death of 18-year-old Todd Becker. Since 2005, the foundation has given its assembly program at more than 250 high schools and has reached close to 50,000 students across the central U.S.

For information, contact Chris McClemens, events coordinator, at (800) 983-2644 or at www.toddbecker.org.

College to throw block party

The traditional block party will kick off the fall semester at Colby Community College from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 21, the day fall classes start, on the lawn north of the Student Union.

The event will include a barbecue lunch and a live broadcast by the college radio station.

Representatives from area businesses, churches and other organizations will be there to welcome students. Holly Whitaker, executive director of the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, says about 40 organizations will set up booths to provide information to incoming students about the area and services they might use.

Graves returning to Kansas to support moderates

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Former Gov. Bill Graves will return to Kansas to support moderate Republicans facing tough primary fights that could determine the future of the state Senate.

Graves, who now lives in Virginia, will make stops next week in Johnson County, Wichita and Salina to stump for Senate incumbents who are battling conservative Republicans in the Aug. 7 primary, *The Kansas City Star* reported today (bit.ly/P2U4RV).

The visits come as current Gov. Sam Brownback has started endorsing conser-

vative Republicans as the two sides wage a battle for control of the Senate.

Brownback's agenda has largely won over the House, but skeptics in the Senate have blocked him on such issues as labor law, picking judges and education finance reform.

Derrick Sontag, state director of Americans for Prosperity, a Washington-based group that advocates for tax cuts and smaller government, said Graves' planned visits represent "the old guard."

"They may say it, but they don't really believe in a limited government," Sontag

said "Their actions don't back up their rhetoric at times."

Graves served as governor from 1995 to 2003, and political observers believe he brings political and fundraising credibility to moderates who are up against Brownback's conservative backers, which include Sontag's group and the Kansas Chamber of Commerce.

Despite earlier signs he would stay out of the primary elections, Brownback has quietly asserted himself by endorsing conservatives. He appeared at a fundraiser for several freshmen House candidates in John-

son County in June.

His return shows that moderate Republicans know the battle for the Senate has turned fierce.

"The moderates who once roamed the plains very freely are now down to a very limited amount of pasture," said Joe Aistrup, a political science professor at Kansas State University. "If they don't step it up and raise the money necessary to compete against the likes of Brownback, the chamber and Americans for Prosperity, their days are numbered."



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press
Gary Stewart (left), executive director of Fairview Estates, and residents Irene Kehlbeck and Dale Olson ate breakfast in the dining room last Thursday at the assisted-living center.

Fairview gets high marks during recent state inspection

By Sam Dieter
Colby Free Press
sdieter@nwkans.com

Fairview Estates Retirement Community in Colby scored zero deficiencies during an inspection in June by the Kansas Department on Aging.

Executive Director Gary Stewart said that the score exceeded the state average.

"It's not always that new facilities get zero deficiency ratings," he added.

The rating, Stewart said, meant the inspector found nothing wrong during a wide-ranging inspection of both the facility and its record keeping.

"It means the Kansas Department on Aging comes in and they review everything that we do," Stewart said. "They review the records, resident care.... They assess the building, make sure resident safety is not a concern, they also visit with residents, and there were no concerns when you get zero deficiencies."

He gave credit to the employees.

"We have good staff that are dedicated to our residents," Stewart said. "The zero deficiencies comes from the staff."

According to the nonprofit group Kansas Advocates for Better Care, assisted living facilities in Kansas average 2.2 deficiencies when being inspected by the state. Some facilities have recently received 10 or more deficiencies, but many have gone for up to three years without receiving a single deficiency during inspection.

Stewart said Fairview has offered assisted-living services for three years, though the facility has been open for 11. He said the assisted living operation did not have perfect scores the last two years, but still did well, with only "two or three deficiencies" for paperwork.

The facility has room for 34 assisted-living residents and 24 in independent-living apartments, he said.

