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Veterans invited to be grand marshals

By Sam Dieter

Colby Free Press
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Thomas County veterans will be grand marshals for the county fair parade Tuesday, July 31, but they need to sign up soon, because the deadline to register with the Chamber office is Friday. Check-in for entries will start at 4 p.m., and the parade will begin at 5:30 p.m. at

Franklin Avenue and Eighth Street.

Participants will march or drive south on Franklin, then turn right on Cedar and cross Range to the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Holly Whitaker, executive director for the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce, says that she expects 60 or more entries for floats.

Veterans, who will ride on a float leading the parade, are encouraged to wear their uniforms or hats, Whitaker said.

“We sent out over 200 invitations to the veterans,” she added. “We ask them to wear their uniform or hat; that way, we know what section of the service they were in.”

Veterans should meet at the Senior Progress Center between 4:45 and 5:15 p.m., she said.

Anyone who wants to have an entry in the parade needs to have a registration form turned in by 5 p.m. Friday, July 27,

to the Chamber office. Registration categories include community organizations, kids 12 and under, businesses, antique vehicles, dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles, horses and riders, musical organizations, implement dealers and nonjudged vehicles.

The float that wins first place from the parade will get a \$50 gift certificate from the Chamber, Whitaker said. First place from each category will get a \$40 gift

certificate, and second-place winners will get a \$20 gift certificate.

Participants need to have a legible description on their float for the announcer to read and remember not to throw candy out of their floats.

Registrations should be sent to the chamber, 350 S. Range Suite 10, Colby, Kan., 67701. Call 460-3401 to register as a grand marshal.

County OKs resolutions for jail project

By Christina Beringer

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Thomas County commissioners approved and signed two resolutions to move forward with the jail project Monday after voting to create a public building commission and define its powers and duties.

The first resolution created the Thomas County Public Building Commission. The second requests the commission to “issue revenue bonds ... not to exceed \$2 million ... to construct and equip a jail/detention facility improvement.”

The commission was one of four financing options suggested by John Haast with Ransom Financial Consultants on June 18. After further discussion during a phone conference on June

25, commissioners agreed that it would be the best way to pay for the jail project.

Commissioners were especially attracted to possible low interest rates for the bonds. The commission is not subject to the county’s debt limit and a lease between the county and the new agency would not be subject to annual appropriations. Haast said the jail rent can be paid from any available source of county money, including taxes.

One-year terms on the five-member building commission were approved for County Commission Chairman Ken Christiansen, Commissioner Paul Steele, Brewster Mayor (and commissioner candidate) Mike Baughn, Colby Mayor Gary Adrian and Chief of Police Randy Jones, now

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College trustees discuss contracts

By Kayla Cornett

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Colby Community College trustees discussed issues with employee contracts Monday during their monthly meeting, eventually approving the list of “outside,” or extra pay, contracts as presented.

Treasurer Nick Wells asked Chairman Kenton Krehbiel to separate the contracts from other items of the consent agenda so he could ask some questions.

Wells said he had concerns with the supplemental contracts, including ones for Dr. Beth Fenton, veterinarian technology distance instructor, for \$800; Charles Keefer, director of residence and campus life, for \$27,000; Brad Bennett, business instructor, for \$1,050; and Dr. Jennifer Martin, veterinarian technology program director, for \$1,440.

Wells noted that the college was still paying Dr. Paige Ayers, equine science instructor, as well, and wondered why these instructors were being paid extra before the school year has even started.

“We’re paying a lot of vets,” Wells said. “I’ve brought it up before.”

Joyce Washburn, dean of academic affairs, said the veterinarians have supplemental contracts because they are developing online classes under a federal Title III grant.

Wells asked what Keefer’s job entails. Dr. Keegan Nichols, vice president of student affairs and marketing, said the campus life part of his job means he will work to improve student retention by programming campus activities.

“He has experience in campus life,” Nichols said. “He has lots of

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Prairie Museum holds history camp

Rich Hawkins (above) interpreted “Colt .44” as Walter Pratt, son of a former Thomas County sheriff, on Friday, beginning the tour of performances for “Night at the Museum” at the Prairie Museum of Art and History. Linda Garrett (right) was a night watchman for the event and Drew Starbuck (below) fiddled with a Philco radio as John Eller, whose 1930s-era home is preserved at the museum. Eleven adults and kids attended an afternoon camp Monday to Friday last week to prepare their performances, and shared their portrayals with the public Friday night.

KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press



Investigators move to seize disgraced executive’s assets

By Ryan J. Foley

The Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa – Investigators are moving quickly to identify and seize the wide-ranging personal assets of the disgraced founder of an Iowa brokerage who learned today he will be jailed until at least next week while the probe into his alleged \$200 million fraud continues.

Russ Wasendorf Sr., former chief executive of Peregrine Financial Group, had been set to appear today in U.S. District Court in Cedar Rapids for a detention hearing, where prosecutors were expected to argue that he is a flight risk. But a judge delayed the hearing until July 27 at Wasendorf’s request to give his newly appointed public defender time to prepare. He is being held in an undisclosed location in the meantime.

Some of the estimated 250 Iowa workers who lost their jobs when Wasendorf’s network of companies collapsed are expected to meet this afternoon with state officials to begin applying for unemployment benefits and filling out paperwork seeking unpaid wages and commissions.

Wasendorf’s business career came to a shocking end last week after he was found unresponsive in his car outside Peregrine’s headquarters in Cedar Falls following a suicide attempt. He left a suicide note in which investigators say he detailed how he embezzled customer funds for nearly 20 years and falsified bank records to fool regulators.

Federal regulators shut down his firm, which was missing more than \$200 million in customer accounts that it claimed to have, and it filed for bankruptcy the same day.

Airport scrutinized after breach

By Brian Skoloff

The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY – Pilot and murder suspect Brian Hedglin knew how to fly planes. He just needed access to one.

Turns out, it was as easy as using a rug to scale a razor wire-topped security fence at a small Utah airport in the middle of night, slipping past security, boarding an idle, empty, 50-passenger Sky-West Airlines jet and revving up the engines.

He crashed the plane in a parking lot and shot himself in the head, never getting off the ground. But the incident has raised concerns that the nation’s airports may not be as safe as they should be.

The Transportation Security Administration doesn’t require

airports to maintain full-time surveillance of their perimeter fences, leaving airport security largely in the hands of individual facilities.

At least one aviation security expert says it might be time to revisit those protocols.

“Maybe we need to implement some more levels of perimeter security because any type of security incident like this is a lesson to both the good guys and the bad guys. They read the papers just as much as we do,” said Jeff Price, an aviation security expert and aviation professor at the Metropolitan State University of Denver.

The former assistant security director at Denver International Airport said that even after Hedglin gained access to the airfield early Tuesday, he shouldn’t have been able to get aboard the plane.

“It should have been locked and secured if it wasn’t in use,” Price said.

TSA spokeswoman Jonella Culmer said the agency is “currently reviewing perimeter compliance” at the St. George Municipal Airport, which is about 120 miles northeast of Las Vegas.

City spokesman Marc Mortenson noted the airport is surrounded by six miles of perimeter fencing.

Local authorities were investigating the breach, but Mortenson said the facility meets all Federal Aviation Administration and TSA security requirements. He said, however, the entire perimeter isn’t

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