



COLBY FREE PRESS

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Students return to school this week

Julie James (above left) and Margaret Ellis (above right) took Layla Lundgren home Thursday, the first day of school for Colby Public Schools, from Colby Grade School. Pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teacher Susan Schmidt (right) looked after Brewster students Wednesday during recess at the Brewster Schools. Wednesday was the first day of school for Brewster. Teacher LeAnn Ostmeyer (below left) motioned to her husband Jason's classroom on the other side of a doorway while giving directions to Jaime Liudahl (below right) at the grade school. Liudahl and her kids were at the school Tuesday evening for the sneak peek, where parents and kids got to meet the teachers before the first day of school.

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press



AUDREY SCHNURR/Brewster Schools

College discusses contracts

By Kayla Cornett

Colby Free Press
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The Colby Community College trustees decided Monday night during a regular meeting that they want to approve employee contracts at the beginning of the process rather than after an employee has started working for the college.

Vice Chair Cindy Black had brought up this problem earlier in the meeting, noting that the date of a contract the board was to approve was from May, but the board didn't see it until now.

Dr. Stephen Vacik, college president, said this is one of those situations where you're "damned if you do, damned if you don't."

"On the one hand, we want to get the contracts to you to approve as early as possible," he said, "on the other hand, (there are) other factors sometimes that are outside of our control."

Vacik said the college isn't paying the people whose contracts have yet to be approved, but said

if it would make the board feel more comfortable, they are more than willing to bring the contracts to the trustees at the very beginning.

"They just wouldn't have contract amounts at that point until we had numbers for those classes," he said.

Alan Waites, vice president of business affairs and chief financial officer, said another issue that might come up with approving contracts "up front" is that some contracts will be absolved if a class being developed doesn't get any students.

Chairman Arlen Leiker said his concern was with course development contracts, saying that an employee might do half the work and then walk away, but the college will still have to pay him. Joyce Washburn, dean of academic affairs, said that has never happened in the past, but even so, the college won't pay him until the class is fully developed.

John Gatz, college attorney.

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Nine wounded in shooting

By Colleen Long and Tom Hays

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A disgruntled former women's accessories designer shot a former colleague to death today and then was killed in a shootout with police near the Empire State Building that left nine others wounded, officials said.

The nine people wounded in the gunfire after 9 a.m. on the Fifth Avenue side of the building were expected to survive, police said.

After the shootout, crowds of tourists and people on their way to work gathered along 34th Street,

which was shut down by police. Police helicopters buzzed overhead and swarms of officers were gathered around the crime scene.

Jeffrey Johnson, 53, was laid off about a year ago at Hazan Imports and targeted a 41-year-old former colleague, shooting the man in the head, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said.

A construction worker followed Johnson, then spoke to police nearby. Johnson turned his .45-caliber pistol on officers and they returned fire, Kelly said. Johnson was shot and killed by police.

It's not clear if Johnson opened

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Music instructors update college trustees

By Kayla Cornett

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The Colby Community College trustees heard a program report for the music department Monday night from band instructor Tony Schroer and new vocal instructor Randy Berls during a regular meeting.

Schroer started by talking about the number of students signed up for concert band, saying the preliminary numbers are a little down right now.

"I'm gonna beat the bushes, we'll get the numbers up in concert band," he said.

As far as jazz band and pep band go, Schroer

said, they will be the same as they have been in the past, but he won't know total numbers until September.

He said he recruited some good freshmen for pep band, so it's going to be a young group, but thinks the band will have a lot of fun.

Schroer said they already have a gig lined up with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Thomas County in September. He said it will be a family-oriented concert in Fike Park, but doesn't have any other details about it yet.

He also talked about how excited he is about the four-day class week.

"Fridays we're gonna use for recruiting when we don't have meetings and that sort of thing," Schroer said. "Also, I'm gonna use

them for rehearsals ... so I really think this is going to be a good thing, just kind of free up some time and do some other things that we had to do at night or on weekends."

Berls then took over the report, telling the board about himself. He said he graduated from Colby Community College in 1992 and went to Florida State University to receive his bachelor's and master's degrees. Berls said he will also be starting his doctorate soon.

He said it's exciting to be taking over for one of his mentors, Phil Shuman, who recently retired.

"Phil's been telling me for the last 10 years

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College lecture series features Colby native

A native of Colby and the son of John and Joyce Hansen of Colby, Dr. Mark Hansen will be the first presenter of this year's Dr. Max Pickerill Lecture Series at Colby Community College.

He is the Senior Advisor to the President of the University of Chicago and one of the nation's leading scholars of American politics.

The public is invited to hear his free presentation, called "Coming Together or Coming Apart:

America and the 2012 Election" at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 5, at the Northwest Kansas Cultural Arts Center.

This speech has been delivered in nine countries on three continents, said Debbie Schwanke, public information director for the college.

According to Hansen, American politics today is polarized between Democrats and Republicans, between liberals and conservatives, as never before, said Schwanke.

"Looking beyond the heated rhetoric, political scientist Dr.

Hansen will trace the extent and origins of American political divisions, analyze the effect they will have on the 2012 elections and assess the prospects for effective governance in the future," said Schwanke.

A 1977 graduate of Colby High School and a former student of Colby Community College, Hansen received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1981 from the University of Kansas, a master's in Philosophy in 1983 and a doctorate from Yale University in 1987.

Hansen is a Charles L. Hutchin-

son Distinguished Service Professor who focuses his research on interest groups, citizen activism, public opinion, public budgeting and politicians' inferences from the outcomes of elections.

In addition to his distinguished scholarship, said Schwanke, he is an experienced administrator. In the 1990's, he served terms as Chairman of the Political Science Department and as Associate Provost for Education Research.

In 1986, he joined the Univer-

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Playing in the rain



HEATHER GOODWIN

Chisum Annie Goodwin, 7, (right) and Ellie Goodwin, 6, played in rainwater Tuesday evening while they picked corn with their mom, Heather Goodwin, at the Answer Plot just east of Brewster. Heather Goodwin of Goodland said they were hoping to get a rain shower at home, and her wish came true last night when northwest Kansas was hit by a thunderstorm.



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