



Performers show off their talent at college

Melia Clark, who works at KXXX radio, interviewed two members of the Trojan Stage Band (above) as the Master of Ceremonies for a talent show Thursday night at Colby Community College.

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press



Old hospital recognized by register

By Sam Dieter Colby Free Press sdieter@nwkansan.com

The old St. Thomas Hospital building in Colby has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The hospital building, located on South Range, was entered into the register Jan. 2 at the recommendation of the Kansas Historical Society.

Tim Quigley, a development partner for Cohen Esery, said his company plans to build 30 affordable housing units in the hospital building, a project which will cost about \$7 million.

building from Brenda Hildyard of Colby, he said, and should close the deal by March.

"Our business model is to work with rural communities," Quigley said.

That model includes remodeling unused and little-used buildings for apartments.

"You preserve a building of historical significance to the community, and at the same time you provide affordable housing to that community," he said.

Quigley said the company needed the hospital to be on the register in order to make the remodeling project available for state and federal tax credits to help with the construction costs.

A state credit covers up to 25 percent of construction costs for projects that cost at least \$5,000.

See "HOSPITAL," Page 2

County holds special meeting

By Sam Dieter Colby Free Press sdieter@nwkansan.com

Payrolls and accounts payable for the county were the main order of business at a special meeting of the Thomas County Commissioners Wednesday afternoon.

A special commissioners' meeting was originally planned for Thursday, but commissioners Mike Baughn and Byron Sowers called a new meeting because Commission Chairman Paul Steele could not be at the Thursday meeting due to his wife's death.

Sowers, who acted as the temporary chairman, briefly flipped through the papers that listed the payroll and accounts. County Clerk Shelly Harms said they had already been proofed by Steele, Baughn and County Attorney Kevin Berens.

The commissioners approved an account of \$469,337.88 for all departments except the road and bridge and noxious weed departments. They also approved \$24,621 for bills from 2012 in

See "COUNTY," Page 2

One college board trustee did not file for re-election

By Sam Dieter Colby Free Press sdieter@nwkansan.com

One of the six members of the board of trustees at Colby Community College will be handing her seat over to a new board member.

The election for the trustees will be Tuesday, April 2, but only three people filed to run by the deadline, at noon Jan. 22.

On the board of for Colby Community College, Kenton Krehbiel, Bill Shields and Audrey Hines filed for the three open seats. Krehbiel and Shields were already trustees, but Hines is a newcomer who, if elected, will take the place of Cindy Black, the office manager at Homeland Realty and Auction.

Hines said that she heard there was an opening on the board and thought she had some spare time.

"Well I just care about the college and felt like maybe everybody at some point needs to get on these

boards and try to be part of the community," she said. She went to the college from 1977 to 1979 for accounting before specializing in ag business at Fort Hays State University. Since graduating there 30 years ago, she has been working at Cornerstone Ag. Hines said she has been on the fair board for about 10 years and grew up on a farm about 30 miles from Colby.

Krehbiel said he has been a trustee for 24 years. "The college is a very vital part of Colby and northwest Kansas and I just want to see it continue," he said.

Although he did not graduate from the college, his daughters Sharon and Brenda did. Krehbiel is retired, having left his job last year as the postmaster in Colby after 36 years. He has been living in Colby since 1973, when he purchased a restaurant called Murphy's Cafe on Fourth St.

Shields, a manager at Crop Production Services, could not be reached for comment.

Bill to allow religious symbols

TOPEKA (AP) - The Kansas House is considering a bill that would allow the display of religious symbols on public lands, if the symbols are considered part of a community's history or heritage.

The bill, which was discussed Thursday before the Federal and State Affairs Committee in the Kansas House, was introduced in response to a controversy last summer when the Mennonite community of Buhler was threatened with a lawsuit because its city symbol contained a cross.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation claimed the city's official design violated the U.S. Constitution by favoring Christianity over other religions. Despite pleas from some residents to fight the threat, Buhler leaders took down the city symbol and replaced it with two similar ones on private land.

Rep. Don Schroeder, R-Hess-ton, told the committee Thursday

that he believed religious displays like Buhler are constitutional.

"A lot of people talk about 'separation of church and state,'" Schroeder said. "That's not in the Constitution. However, there is an establishment clause, which says the government shall make no law regarding religion. It doesn't go the other way around; it doesn't say that religion cannot be involved in government."

A representative of the Great Plains chapter of the Americans

Business after 5



EVAN BARNUM/Colby Free Press

Don Morton, assistant director of Emergency Medical Services in Colby, explained how a new monitor works to Sandy Wilks at the monthly Business After 5 event Wednesday night at the Emergency Medical Services building.

See "BILL," Page 2

