



Police chief to retire in August



Randy Jones

Randy Jones, the Police Chief for Colby, said he will retire at the start of August.

Jones announced his retirement effective Aug. 1, at the City Council meeting on Tuesday night. The council members gave him round of applause, and City Manager Tyson McGreer said he would immediately begin looking for a replacement.

Near the end of his career, Jones served as the interim city manager for the city when Carolyn Armstrong retired June 15, until McGreer was hired as the new city manager on Aug. 21.

County begins budget process

By Heather Alwin

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Harms also presented proposed budgets for the clerk's department, election department and transportation driver. While the proposed clerk's department budget increased just \$840, this amount did not include the cost of Harms' proposed 8 percent salary increases for her personnel. The raises would represent a cost of living increase, Harms said.

Harms proposed increasing the election budget by \$23,650, primarily because the department may have to replace a voting machine this year, she said.

The commissioners did not take action on the budget proposals at this meeting and will continue to receive proposals from other department heads over the coming months. After all proposals are received, the commissioners will compile a county-wide budget.

"There have been precious little

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SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

Firemen sprayed water into a burning garage Friday afternoon through an overhead door being held open by a forklift. Flames were not visible outside the building, but smoke billowed out from the open doors and under the roof.

Western Sprinkler building catches fire

By Sam Dieter

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A fire broke out Friday afternoon at Western Sprinkler on Range Ave., damaging one of the company's buildings.

While police directed traffic around the west lane of Range, firemen pried open an overhead door on the west side of the building with a forklift as smoke came out through cracks near the roof. They went in with a fire hose through a door on the east end of the building.

Fire Chief Bob McLemore said the call came to the fire station at about 5:40 p.m. and the fire department had finished up by about 7:30.

Sean Hankin, the assistant fire chief, said the fire was started by a portable generator on the back of a truck in the building. The generator had a starter cable leading to the truck battery,



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

A door to the garage was held open Friday evening by firemen so they could pump water and fresh air into the burning building.

which wore away and then started arcing.

"Something basically shorted

and was smoldering," he said Tuesday afternoon, shortly after meeting with investigators.

He added that the investigators had to pick through pieces of insulation that fell off the roof of the building.

The vehicle was at the west end of the four-bay building, he said, which is where the worst damage was. But there was smoke and heat damage throughout, including melted plastic in the building's sprinkler system.

Hankin said the fire department used one of Western Sprinkler's forklifts to pry open a door to relieve heat, and also tried to saw a hole in a door. Firemen then went in through the small door on the east side and sprayed the truck with a hose from there.

A structural engineer looked at the damage Tuesday, he said, and was not sure of the extent of the damage to the structure itself or to property inside. The building is badly charred inside, but some supplies appeared to be intact on the east end of the building.

Letter carriers to collect food Saturday

The Stamp Out Hunger food drive, sponsored by the National Association of Letter Carriers and Campbell Soup Company, is scheduled for Saturday.

Local donations will go to Genesis of Thomas County, said Eileen Harris, the Colby letter carrier who is in charge of the local drive. Items most needed include meals in a can such as soup or chili, tuna and other canned meat, peanut butter and cereal.

Special blue collection bags will be used

in communities across Kansas this year, said Brian Walker, president of the Kansas Food Bank. In Colby, the bags are available for pickup at the post office. Residents should leave the filled bags at their mailbox for letter carriers to pick up on Saturday, said Walker.

Harris said the Colby carriers will pick up food left near residential mailboxes even if it is not in a blue bag. Donations will also be accepted at the post office, said Harris.

Last year, Colby-area letter carriers col-

lected about 1,180 pounds of food, but they have collected up to 2,000 pounds in years past. "We'd like to get it back up there," said Harris.

According to the association, this is the country's largest single-day food drive, collecting over one billion pounds of food since it began in 1993. In 2012, Americans donated more than 70 million pounds of food.

Retired instructor to receive honorary degree

Recognizing his years of dedicated service and contributions to the success of Colby Community

College, retired instructor Roger Hale will receive the college's 2013 Honorary Associate Degree.

Hale began his career here in 1966 teaching psychology, history, government and sociology. In addition to teaching on campus, he traveled to outreach locations to teach courses during the evening hours and conducted many weekend classes, workshops and seminars.

Hale also served for years as the division chair and was the college counselor. He began his career teaching in the basement of the old Cooper Hotel before the

permanent campus was built. He retired in 2001.

"I began teaching at the college the same year they hired Dr. Richard Mosier," said Hale. "We only had a few instructors, so many of us taught several subjects. I worked for Dr. Mosier, Dr. James Tangeman and Dr. Mikel Ary."

In his book about the college, "Against All Odds," Dr. Mosier wrote, "Donald Mildrexler, mathematics, was appointed as chair of the Faculty Advisory Board to assist the president in the overall planning and development of the Colby Community Junior College. W.D. McNeely, newly appointed chemistry and physics instructor, and Betty Fitzsimmons, speech and drama, were also appointed as members of the board. New faculty members were Sherry Stosikpof, Lawrence Mahoney, Roger Hale, W.D.



Roger Hale

McNeely and Ruth Lowenthal as head librarian.

Hale is quoted saying, "I remember one Friday afternoon when Dr. Mosier came over to the faculty offices in the Morrison Building. We were all gathering around talking about the new campus. Someone made the suggestion to go look at the site.

"We all loaded up in cars. I rode out to that wheat field and visualized what might be to come. I still have thought many times about the warm fall day when we all went out to that wheat field and visualized what might be to come. I still have that vision of buildings in the wheat field that Dr. Mosier painted for us. An unplanned event, or

maybe it was planned unknown to the faculty, certainly made a change in my life."

Hale received bachelor's and master's degree in psychology from Fort Hays State University.

He won the Tangeman Award for teaching excellence in 1994. That same year, his son Ryan graduated from the college.

Prior to coming here, he taught for a year at the high school in Schoenchen, south of Hays.

"The biggest change I experienced during my years at CCC was the growth of technology," said Hale. "Everything changed, including grading, enrolling and other services."

Hale lives in Colby with his mother Junia, who recently had her 95th birthday.

He has two adult children. Ryan and his wife Paula have two children and live in Colby. Ryan is a psychology instructor and coun-

First diploma



MARIAN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

The first diplomas awarded this spring went to the youngest class, as Sacred Heart Principal Laura Krejci handed one to kindergartner Miah Ortner Friday afternoon.

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