



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Dinner honors retired judge

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

A Colby lawyer and retired judge was honored for 50 years of service by the Kansas Bar Association and late last week fellow attorneys held a special dinner and recognition ceremony to offer congratulations.



Willoughby

The Hon. Keith Willoughby, who was a judge in the Kansas 15th Judicial District for 15 years before retiring in 1993, received a certificate for his distinguished career.

At the dinner Thursday night in Colby, attorney Dave Starkey presented Willoughby with the certificate. "I think it is indicative of the kind of respect we (local attorneys) have for Keith to honor him in such a fashion tonight," Starkey said. "He is a very special man."

During his 15 years as a judge, Willoughby tried four murder cases, including the controversial Daniel Remeta case involving the killing of three northwest Kansans in 1985.

In his three other murder cases, one in Sherman County and two in Logan County, the convictions have been upheld after appeals.

Looking back over his years as judge, Willoughby said he's heard it all, having presided over personal injury jury trials, divorces, domestic relations cases and custody hearings.

As judge of the 15th Judicial District, Willoughby's coverage area included Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan, Thomas, Rawlins and Sheridan counties.

He shared that area with Judge Jack L. Burr of Goodland, who continues to serve in that capacity.

Born in Augusta in 1924,

Willoughby said he grew up around the Chanute area, graduating in 1942 from a high school in Wichita.

He is also a WWII veteran having served in the United States Army Air Force as a B-24 bomber pilot in Italy, completing 50 missions.

After military service, Willoughby said he wanted to complete his college education and considered both teaching and law.

He graduated from the University of Kansas in 1951 with a law degree and prior to that had obtained a bachelor's degree in political science with a minor in history and English.

He moved to Colby in 1952, practicing law with Sam Lowe until his appointment by then Gov. Robert Bennett in 1978.

Willoughby said his appointment as judge was not necessarily a normal occurrence now or even in those days, since he was a Democrat and Bennett was a Republican.

Prior to Willoughby's appointment, Ben Birney held the position, and he was a man that Willoughby said he respected very much.

One area that Willoughby said was a tremendous infraction of the law was possession of drugs because the person using was harming themselves. But, if the individual was caught selling, Willoughby said that he would prosecute them and even first offenders would face penitentiary time.

"I'm not sure if it (the judgment) worked or not," he said, "but there was a decrease in drug traffic."

Following his retirement, Glenn D. Schiffner, a Republican also from Colby, was elected district judge and holds that position today.

According to Starkey, there were some 20 people attending Willoughby's recognition dinner to include many of the local attorneys and their spouses, along with area judges to include Burr.



JAY KELLEY and PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Hundreds braved the heat at the Pickin' on the Plains Bluegrass Festival at Bourquin's RV Park over the weekend to hear local and area talent. **TOP:** The McLemores, a Colby group, opened the show Friday night and was one of many groups to perform all three days. **BOTTOM:** The large crowd enjoyed the cool areas provided by a canopy featuring water misters.

## Bluegrass festival draws from three-state area

By PATTY DECKER  
and JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

It was another great weekend in Colby for entertainers and spectators attending the sixth annual Pickin' on the Plains bluegrass festival.

"The festival just keeps getting bigger and better every year," said Leilani Thomas, facilitator of the

festival in her capacity as director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau. Near record-breaking temperatures didn't seem to deter people either, she said, who came from around the state, Colorado and Nebraska.

"We had really wonderful, enthusiastic crowds who kept calling the bands back for encore after encore," she said on Sunday.

Even though organizers said festival attendance was up from the previous years, gauging figures is difficult, Thomas said, but this year the main tent was enlarged by a third and it was filled to overflowing. "We also had some misters in place (creating a water mist to cool the air under the tents) and they worked very well," said Bob McLemore, one of the organizers of the

event. McLemore said the tent area stayed relatively cool even during the middle of the day. As for spectators, many found the weekend relaxing and peaceful. For Melanie Baalman of Grinnell, the festival has been something she's looked forward to for the past three years.

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## Pickup accident fatal to Goodland resident

By SHARON CORCORAN

The Goodland Daily News

GOODLAND — A young Goodland mother, who fell out of a pickup early Sunday morning hitting her head on the pavement, was pronounced brain dead at a Denver hospital this morning.

Sheriff Doug Whitson said at 3 a.m. Janice Calkins, 34, was in the passenger seat of a 1991 pickup George Bauman, 58, Goodland, was driving. He said Bauman was making a left turn off county road 21 onto Old U.S. 24 when the passenger's side door opened and Calkins fell out onto the pavement.

Bauman was wearing a seatbelt, the sheriff said, but Calkins was not and she received serious head injuries.

Leonard Calkins, Janice's father, said an ambulance crew stabilized his daughter and she was flown to the Denver hospital at about 6 a.m. Sunday.

Leonard Calkins said the doctor told him that his daughter's head had hit the ground so hard that her brain had immediately swollen, cutting off oxygen to the brain.

Janice was the mother of three, Shanea and Zack Calkins and Erica Gonzales. She had previously worked as a deputy for the sheriff's department in Goodland and had attended Fort Hays State University in Hays.

Janice spent two months working for The Goodland Daily News, and Zack and Erica now deliver the newspaper.

Leonard Calkins was a janitor for the Goodland school, but is now retired.

Leonard Calkins said Janice was kept on life support until 11 a.m., when her organs were harvested for donation. He said no funeral arrangements have been made yet.

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full-color weekly magazine

## Briefly

### Weather: Thunderstorms

Thunderstorms, producing possible heavy rain, high-light Colby's weather through Thursday, advises the National Weather Service forecast center. Lows are expected to range in the middle 60s with highs 85-95, and winds generally out of the east 5-15 mph, except in the area of the thunderstorms. Thunderstorm chances are rated anywhere from 30 percent to 70 percent throughout the period. Colby's weekend temperatures: highs, 99 on Friday, 102 on Saturday and 102 on Sunday; lows, 69 on Saturday, 66 on Sunday and 63 this morning. There was no weekend precipitation, leaving the month's total at 0.63 inches. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 90 degrees.

The records for July 23: 105 in 1940 and 51 in 1904. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

### Blood drive Thursday

The American Red Cross is again holding a blood drive at the Colby American Legion on Thursday from 7:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Officials expect to have a summer shortage and all types are needed. Donors must be at least 17 years old, weigh more than 110 pounds, be in general good health and have photo identification. For more information call 1-888-719-8929.

### Childhood testing offered

Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center, Oakley is offering early childhood intervention testing, including eyesight, hearing and learning disability testing. All test are free. For more information or an appointment, call 785-672-3125.

### Nine-Run-Run discounts continue

Now in its sixth year, the Thomas County Emergency Medical Services is again sponsoring its Nine-Run-Run beginning at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 4 in Colby. Early registration is underway, said Kathy Wright, one of the organizers with openings in all age groups for the 10K and

5K run, 2K fun run and 2K walk. The cost of the event for early registration is \$10 for walkers and \$13 for runners and after today, the cost will increase to \$12 and \$15 respectively, she said. All proceeds go to benefit the local service. To register, stop by the facility at 1245 S. Franklin or call any EMS member.

### College pool remains closed

The Colby Community College swimming pool continues to remain closed for repairs and renovations and could reopen by mid-August, according to Kipp Nelson, pool manager. The renovation, he said, will include roof and pool area repairs and painting.



**LEFT:** Hailey Woodcox, 10, of St. Francis took advantage of a lull in the action to do some coloring. Woodcox said her favorite band was Spontaneous Combustion. **RIGHT:** Cynthia Schwietzer and Chris



Unruh worked at a fund-raiser for the Kvasnicka family to help pay for bills if little Cutter, their 10-month-old son who required brain surgery after he was born.

