



# Thompson hearing set Monday in district court

By **PATTY DECKER**

*Free Press Editor*

A Colby youth involved in the deaths of two other teenagers, which stemmed from a fatal accident in January of 2000 will appear at a hearing, Monday, at 9 a.m. in the Thomas County District Court.

Michael Thompson, 18, is charged with two counts of second degree murder with alternate charges of involuntary manslaughter while under the influence of alcohol, two counts of aggravated battery and driving under the influence and reckless driving.

In a pre-trial hearing held March 27 for the purpose of hearing motions from Thompson and his attorney, Cal Williams, District Judge Glenn Schiffner ruled on two motions. The motions included suppressing blood alcohol examinations for Thompson and a motion to introduce a toxicology test on the two deceased teenagers, Angela Duden and Justin Shaw, both of Colby and both 17 at the time of the accident.

After hearing witnesses for both sides, Schiffner denied Thompson's motion to exclude the blood alcohol and further ruled to deny the introduction of toxicology tests for the

two deceased until the state's case was concluded.

"The defendant's motion (Thompson) to allow introduction of toxicology test results for Shaw and Duden is fact driven and cannot be ruled upon by the court until the plaintiff (State of Kansas) has finished presenting its evidence at the trial of the matter," Schiffner said.

The charges resulted from a two-vehicle collision on Jan. 29, 2000 on U.S. 24 about eight miles east of Colby. At that time, the Kansas Highway Patrol reported that Thompson was driving a 1976 Cadillac northbound on

Thomas County Road 27 and failed to stop at the intersection of U.S. 24 and struck a 1995 Probe driven by Angela Duden. Shaw died at the scene and Duden was flown to St. Anthony's Hospital in Denver where she later died from injuries associated with the mishap.

Thompson and William Pederson, another youth in the accident, were both flown to Denver and remained in critical condition for many months. Brice Reynolds, a passenger in Duden's vehicle, was also flown to Denver in fair condition, but was later released.

Thompson faces second degree murder

charges, which means that he is alleged to have unlawfully and feloniously killed another human being which was done unintentionally, but recklessly under circumstances manifesting extreme indifference to the value of human life, according to the state's definition.

The definition of involuntary manslaughter while under the influence, which is the alternate charge, alleges that Thompson unlawfully and feloniously killed a human being and it was done while in the commission of the crime of driving a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol.

## House reviews former budget bills

TOPEKA (AP) — A proposed state budget that the House spent two days creating — and then rejected — is back in play.

House members voted Thursday to reconsider their rejection of the plan, then voted 66-55 to tentatively approve a bill containing the state's spending plans for the budget year beginning July 1. All 44 of the minority Democrats who were present voted against advancing the measure, which contains no requirement for tax increases.

If approved on a second House vote, scheduled for today, the bill would go to the Senate, which has yet to debate a proposed budget.

The final version will be drafted by House and Senate negotiators.

The bill would increase aid to public schools by \$10 per pupil, to \$3,880, and protect some social services from cuts.

But it would leave a shortfall estimated by legislative staff Thursday at \$128 million.

Legislators are trying to cover a \$700 million gap between expected revenues and required spending over the next 15 months.

Speaker Kent Glasscock said Thursday's vote was designed to keep work on a budget bill progressing as the 90-day session hit Day 74.

"I don't like this budget bill any bet-

ter than yesterday," said Glasscock, R-Manhattan.

On Wednesday, the chamber voted 76-46 against the same plan. Glasscock voted against it.

Glasscock said he would not vote for a budget that comes back to the House that looked anything like the current bill. Democrats said they were caught off-guard by the vote, only learning of plans to reconsider after the House concluded a lengthy day of debate on other issues.

"It's very clear that there's no one in charge of this House," said Minority Leader Jim Garner.

Garner said Democrats, outnumbered 79-46 by Republicans, received assurances Wednesday that they would have other opportunities to offer amendments later this session — and didn't offer some ideas.

Looking toward the Republican side of the House, Rep. Bill Reardon, D-Kansas City, said: "Don't tell us to go along and that we'll get our chance later if there isn't one."

Glasscock said a bill had to keep moving, or legislators might be in session for an extra month.

He denied that Republicans broke any agreements with Democrats, then noted that any House-Senate budget conference committee will have four Republicans and two Democrats.

House Appropriations Committee Chairman Kenny Wilk, R-Lansing, said: "It is not our intent to box anyone out."

Gov. Bill Graves has proposed raising taxes by \$364 million, but many House members oppose any increase.

The House's budget bill was a heavily amended version of a no-new-taxes plan drafted by the Appropriations Committee.

"It's not a perfect budget, but it's the only budget," said Rep. Doug Mays, R-Topeka.

In other action:<

— Three weeks after Gov. Bill Graves vetoed a proposed new map of the state Senate, a slightly revised version won a committee's endorsement.

— The Senate tentatively approved a bill increasing court fees to raise \$200,000 for the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center in Hutchinson and \$280,000 for the Judicial Council.

— The House tentatively approved a bill granting local school boards more authority and providing more state aid to districts with declining enrollments.

— The House gave tentative approval to a bill to protect consumers against profiteering during time of disaster.

— A bill requiring the registration of all beer kegs sold by retail liquor stores won first-round approval in the House.

## Gas price hike at 10-year high

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Caps on oil production and the traditional spring rise in gasoline demand have pushed up prices at the pump 23 cents per gallon over the last month — the most dramatic change in more than a decade.

The jump also is attributed to the bargain gas prices that prevailed in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, which hampered travel and slowed the

economy. In some areas, gas was selling for less than \$1 a gallon after the attacks.

"Now that the economy has started to recover, and we're starting to head into the summer driving season, the industry is really having to come from behind a little bit," AAA spokesman Geoff Sundstrom said in Orlando, Fla. The average price for unleaded gas

on Thursday was \$1.35, according to a AAA national survey.

Californians, who shoulder the added costs of reformulated gasoline mandated by pollution restrictions, are facing the highest prices in the continental United States.

Bay Area motorists have seen average prices rise to \$1.68 from \$1.42 a month ago.

## Israel enters Arafat's West Bank compound; buildings under heavy attack

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Israel declared Yasser Arafat an enemy Friday and troops and tanks broke into his West Bank compound, battling his security forces and shelling the building where Arafat took refuge in a windowless, ground-floor room. Five Palestinians and an Israeli soldier were killed in fighting, part of a large-scale military operation launched in response to Palestinian attacks.

Aides said the building where Arafat's office is located came under heavy tank and machine gun fire, but the Palestinian leader was unhurt. "They want me under arrest or in exile or dead, but I am telling them, I prefer to be martyred," Arafat said in a telephone interview with Al-Jazeera, the Arab satellite television channel. "May God make us martyrs."

After a string of attacks that killed at

least 27 Israeli civilians in three days, Israel's Cabinet approved an extended military operation and agreed to call up thousands of reserve troops. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Israel had sought a cease-fire in good faith, "but all Israel got in return was terrorism, terrorism and more terrorism."

In the latest Palestinian attack, a woman suicide bomber blew herself up at the entrance of a Jerusalem supermarket, killing herself and two shoppers and wounding about 20 others. The attack was claimed by the Al-Aqsa Brigades, a militia linked to Arafat's Fatah movement.

Police also stormed the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem, using stun grenades to disperse stone-throwing Muslim worshippers.

Friday's assault in Ramallah marked the first time Arafat's office building

**“They want me under arrest or in exile or dead, but I am telling them, I prefer to be martyred.”**

Yasser Arafat  
Palestinian leader

has been targeted. In the past 18 months of fighting, Israel has repeatedly shelled other buildings in the sprawling compound. Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said there was no intention to harm Arafat, but the fire on his building made the situation volatile.

Israeli troops stormed Arafat's com-

pound early Friday. Tank shells punched holes in the wall ringing the complex, and troops took over two buildings. Snipers set up positions on rooftops, giving them a clear view of Arafat's third-floor office. Soldiers exchanged fire with the Palestinian leader's guards, killing one and wounding 25.

In the afternoon, Israeli tanks moved close to the office building and began firing shells and machine guns at the building, Arafat's aides said. The violence appeared to doom the latest U.S. truce mission, though U.S. envoy Anthony Zinni was to remain in the region. Zinni met Friday with Palestinian Cabinet Minister Saeb Erekat in the West Bank town of Jericho, Palestinian officials said. The fighting came as an Arab summit in Beirut on Thursday approved a plan that offers Israel peace and normal relations with the Arab world in exchange for its withdrawal from territory captured in the 1967 Mideast war, creation of a Palestinian state and a "just solution" for refugees. The plan marked the first time in more than a half-century of Mideast conflict that Arab states have made

such an offer. Israel said it would study the plan, but its top priority was responding to Palestinian attacks.

Palestinians in Lebanon's Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp burned tires in protest, while Arab politicians decried the assault on Arafat as Israel's answer to their call for peace.

The latest escalation began with a suicide bombing by the Islamic militant group Hamas on Wednesday in a hotel in the Israeli resort of Netanya. The bomber blew himself up in the hotel's banquet hall, among 250 Israelis gathered for the Passover Seder, the ritual meal ushering in the Jewish holiday. Twenty-two diners were killed — one died of wounds Friday — and more than 130 were hurt, putting the attack on par with a suicide bombing outside a Tel Aviv disco last June that also killed 22 Israelis.



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

Doris Reed and her son Tanner of Colby enjoyed the spring weather at Fike Park today. Temperatures expected in the mid 70s for the weekend. Most children were out of school today in observance of Good Friday and for the Easter weekend.

## Briefly

### Weather: Pleasant

The Colby area weather continues to lack moisture but will be pleasant for the foreseeable future, reports the National Weather Service. Tonight, mostly clear, lows 25-30 and variable winds 5-10 mph. Saturday, mostly sunny, highs in the lower 60s and southwest winds 10-15 mph. Saturday night, clear, lows in the lower 30s. Easter Sunday, all sun and warmer with highs in the lower 70s. Sunday night and Monday, partly cloudy to cloudy, lows in the mid-30s and highs near 70, with a slight chance for showers on Monday. Tuesday, at this point, looks like showers during the day and snow showers at night. Colby's high Thursday was 72 and the overnight low this morning was 30. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 45 degrees. Precipitation remains at 0.16 inches for the month. The records for March 29: 90 in 1943 and 4 in 1987. (The temperatures and precipitation are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

### Colby College board to meet

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees will meet at 5 p.m. Monday in the board room of the Thomas Hall Administration Building. The agenda will include a program review, approval of contracts, and dorm contract. The trustees will consider tuition and fees, authorize the state health insurance plan for the college, and discuss any other items any member wishes to address. The meeting is open to the public.

### Puddle Duck sets enrollment

Enrollment for Puddle Duck Preschool will be Wednesday and Thursday, April 3-4, from 4-6 p.m., at 520 W. 5th, Colby. For more information call Amy Jennings at 462-2603 or 462-8388.

### Commissioners schedule meeting

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m.

Monday in the commissioners room of the courthouse. Lynette Koon will bring a proposal for a multi-county recycling grant at 9 a.m., and Sheriff Tom Jones will discuss a back-up generation for the Law Enforcement Center at 9:30 a.m. The meeting is open to the public.

### Blood drive next week

The Thomas County Chapter of the American Red Cross is hosting a blood drive in Colby from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Thursday, April 4, at the American Legion, 1850 W. 4th St. Eligibility requires only that people be in general good health, at least 17 years of age and weigh 110 lbs. or more. For questions or to make an appointment, call Stephens at 462-8122, Frahm at 462-2082, or 1-800-GIVE-LIFE.

### Landfill to close Easter Sunday

The Thomas County landfill will be closed Easter Sunday, said Larry Jumper, landfill director.

### Corn growers to gather in Colby

The Northwest Kansas Corn Growers' 9th annual informational meeting will be Thursday, April 4, 7 p.m. at the Ramada Inn in Colby. Registration starts at 6:30. The meeting topic will be "Ethanol Production in Western Kansas."

The supper is sponsored by area agricultural business supporters. For information contact Julie Saddler, 462-2237, or at the Ramada Inn, 462-3933.

### Commodity distribution announced

USDA Commodity distribution will be held Monday from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Senior Progress Center in Colby. Expected commodities include cranberry juice, potato flakes, peanut butter, cherries, apricots, plums, navy beans and canned potatoes.

Eligible persons may receive them according to income guidelines on that date only. For questions, contact the RSVP office at 462-6744.

