



COLBY FREE PRESS

Internet filtering has drawbacks, Sunderman says

By **PATTY DECKER**
Free Press Editor

A three-judge panel in federal court recently rejected an attempt by the government to censor the Internet at public libraries, which would have forced them to block materials deemed objectionable, according to a decision handed down in Philadelphia.

At issue was the Children's Internet Protection Act, a federal law passed in December of 2000 that tied library funding to the mandated use of blocking programs on Internet terminals used by adults and minors in public libraries.

In the event the district court would have agreed with the federal government, libraries would have either had to install blocking software or go without funding.

JoAnne Sunderman, the librarian at Pioneer Memorial Library in Colby, said the facility here has never had commercial filters, but has had a policy in place since 1999.

The reason the board did not go for commercial filtering was based on the idea that public libraries have books on the shelves for adults and children to review, she said.

"The board, which consists of reasonable individuals, doesn't believe in offensive materials for minors either, but they also didn't believe in censorship — it was a tough decision, but we thought our policy was appropriate for Internet use," she said.

However, Sunderman did say that if the protection act had not been ruled unconstitutional and the federal government had required libraries use the filtering programs, she said the board and staff would have complied.

"Filtering has its good points," Sunderman said, "but the problem is that blocking programs aren't always reliable."

For example, Sunderman said that if a patron was interested in a chicken breast recipe, the filtering program might deny access based on the word "breast."

Another scenario might be someone wanting to find out more about diseases, such as herpes.

"It could be very embarrassing for a person to walk up to the librarian and ask where to find this information," she said, "and more than likely with filtering, the word 'herpes' might also be

denied."

In another hypothetical situation, Sunderman said that same filtering system might also deny a farmer access for wanting to find out more information on "rape seed."

Sunderman said that in bigger cities it's probably a real fight to monitor children at libraries, but in Colby she doesn't see the same horrible problems.

Yet for public schools, the court's decision doesn't count.

Phil De Young, technology director at Colby Public Schools, said that there will be filtering software installed at all grade levels.

"We have been mandated by the federal government to have this software in place or lose federal funding," De Young said.

The initial cost for adding the software is expected to cost \$8,000 and will mean that every student will have a password and identification number assigned.

"We plan on having usage reports that will be distributed to the building principals showing activity by students and there will be places that they cannot access," he said.

For example, there will be basic settings that block game sites or hotmail accounts, he said, but because this is all new next fall, De Young reiterated it would be a learning experience for everyone — administrators, teachers and students.

"The type of filtering software will be in line with our mission statement," he said, "in that we want our students to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens."

As for the U.S. District Court's decision on May 31, the case will be going directly to the U.S. Supreme Court, which is required to hear challenges to this law.

"The court's decision affirms the importance of local control in determining library Internet policies," said Ginner Cooper, director of the Multnomah County Library in Oregon, which was the facility that took the U.S. Government to court over censorship.

"No one wants children to be exposed to pornography on the Internet, television or anyplace else. What's important is finding effective solutions to the problem."

Metal roof for Colby College library approved by board of trustees

By **MAXINE NELSON**

Colby Free Press

The Colby Community College Board of Trustees voted to put a new metal roof on the college library, approving a bid of \$58,861 from Stephens Construction. Curt Stephens, owner of the company and a member of the board, abstained from voting.

The board rejected three other bids, after deciding a metal roof would be better than an asphalt roof.

Two bids were received for a metal roof — Roofmasters for \$65,875, and Stephens Construction for \$58,861; and two bids were received for a rock/asphalt roof — Roofmasters for \$47,575, and Jayhawk Roofing for \$49,224.

In other business at their early June meeting:

- The board considered a proposal to allow the college to be the administrating entity for a \$11,500 grant from the SmartStart Northwest Kansas Project to the Northwest Kansas Coun-

cil on Substance Abuse. The funds will be used to employ personnel at the child care facility known as Kids Port, explained Joe Mildrexler, dean of community services.

The child care personnel will actually be employees of the college for the purpose of the grant.

The board was concerned about liability and asked what insurance coverage the college had in this situation.

Mildrexler will contact insurance agent Darvin Strutt and report back at the next board meeting.

- The board approved supplemental, Edu-Kan, outreach and new instructor contracts. Mildrexler reviewed the qualifications of new math instructors John Olson, Kristen Bishop and Kim Davis.

Davis will teach outreach on the Goodland site, and the others will be on the Colby campus.

- The following mission statement was approved: Colby Community College provides lifelong learning experiences for the optimal development of individuals.

The vision statement, also approved, reads: Colby Community College will provide quality academic and technical education, work force retraining and outreach opportunities while promoting a dedication to lifelong learning in a rapidly changing and culturally diverse society. It will combine entrepreneurial spirit with fiscal responsibility.

The statements are essential for the upcoming Higher Learning Commission accreditation, said Dr. Mikel Ary, college president.

- Curt Stephens read a letter from Endowment Association President Larry Arehart saying the association has agreed to increase the scholarship funds for 2002-2003 from \$150,000 to \$175,000.

This is a one-year increase and will be re-

viewed in May, 2003.

- The board voted to issue contracts to the summer part-time outreach instructors based on the outreach payment schedule of the master agreement.

This was because of a problem inherent in summer school contracts. There is a delay in approving contracts and issuing paychecks because the dates of the board meetings.

Attorney Dave Starkey suggested changing the supplemental contract form to state the intent to employ the faculty member for a specified class with the rate of compensation "according to the master agreement," which will allow the contract to be approved by the board before class certification occurs.

- Trustee Don Kready said there were two areas of moisture found under the surface of the north parking lot by Venture Corporation, which is resurfacing the lot, but thought the cost would not exceed the amount authorized by the

board at the May 20 meeting.

Work needed on the entrance area to the parking lot has not been determined.

- Dean of Instruction Gracemary Melvin said there were four college catalog pages which had not been counted when securing a price for printing the new booklet.

Therefore, the net total for the printing would be \$362 more than the \$6,829 bid approved at the Feb. 18 meeting. The board approved the additional amount.

- Dean of Fiscal Affairs Ken Johnson reported on a meeting of Kansas community college business officers.

He said they were told that a rollback of 3 or 4 percent was expected.

He recommended the college budget a 2-4 percent decrease in the projected \$2.9 million state operating grant.

The next meeting will be at 5 p.m. June 17 in the board room of the administration building.

Summer reading program adds magic



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

Eight-year old Nick Larmer of Colby assisted Glenda and Mike Mann of Hutchinson as they performed their magic show at the Pioneer Memorial Library Tuesday afternoon for 110 children and parents. Glenda is the magician, and she has studied with some of the greatests of our time, including Harry Blackstone Jr. Mike performs ventriloquism

with a variety of puppets. The Manns have appeared at state fairs, community festivals, grade school assemblies, libraries, churches, and business meetings. According to Rosa Lee Waterman, of the library, kids can come and get packets for the summer reading program. The program is for toddlers through fifth grade and packets are available.

Elkhart area abandons wheat crop

WICHITA (AP) — Nearly 90 percent of the wheat acres planted in Elkhart have been abandoned as drought and wind takes a heavy toll on the 2002 wheat crop in southwest Kansas.

Larry Dunn, general manager of the Elkhart Equity Exchange, said Wednesday nearly all of the dryland wheat is gone, and few farmers irrigate wheat in that part of the state.

He estimated there was 85 to 90 percent abandonment of wheat acres.

"The drought has impacted us severely," he said Wednesday. "The farmers don't have any money to

spend. The cattlemen are having to sell their cattle because they do not have pasture."

His elevator normally takes in 3.5 million to 4 million bushels of wheat each year, he said. This year they are expecting to harvest just 260,000 bushels.

Some farmers have started cutting in the northeast corner of Morton County, and are getting yields of 10 to 12 bushels per acre on dryland fields, Dunn said.

Harvest of irrigated fields is not expected to begin until Tuesday or Wednesday.

The Elkhart elevator typically hires five to six people to help during wheat harvest time, he said. This year they have hired no summer help. And farmers aren't hiring any extra help either.

Test cutting has also started around Liberal. The Perryton Equity Exchange there said producers have brought in 15,000 bushels since Saturday.

Rich Balman, branch manager at Perryton Equity, described the wheat crop as "slim pickings."

"Nobody has spoken about yields — it is just dry," he said.

Test weights of harvested acres are

running between 58 and 60 pounds per bushel.

The Protection Co-Op Supply Co. has gotten about 20,000 bushels so far, and is reporting test weights around 60 pounds per bushel. It reports abandonment around Protection is high — about 60 percent of the acres in the area will not be cut.

Meanwhile in Kiowa, where the harvest started, the OK Co-Op reported it brought in 1 million bushels by Tuesday, with yields running from 18 to 30 bushels an acre.

Rains are slowing the harvest elsewhere in southern Kansas.

Briefly

Noisy but welcome rain

This morning's noisy rain left 0.66 inches of moisture at the Northwest Research-Extension Center in Colby, bringing the month's total to 1.24 inches. The thunderstorm moved into the immediate Colby area around 5 a.m. Thunderstorms continue to appear in the Colby region's forecast through the middle of next week. Here is the forecast through the weekend: tonight, partly cloudy, slight chance for thunderstorms, lows around 50 and northeast winds 5-10 mph; Friday, partly sunny, highs around 80 and light southeast winds; Friday night, slight chance for thunderstorms, lows 50-55 and light and variable winds; Saturday, afternoon thunderstorms likely, highs in the lower 80s and southerly winds; Saturday night and Sunday, thunderstorms possible, lows upper 50s to lower 60s and highs in the middle 70s. Colby's high Wednesday was 91 and the over-

night low this morning was 53. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth continues to average 81 degrees. The records for June 13: 103 in 1952 and 37 in 1947. *(The temperatures and precipitation are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)*

Taxes due next week

The second half of the 2001 real estate and personal property taxes are due by Thursday, June 20, in the Thomas County Treasurer's office, said Donita Applebury, treasurer. For questions or information, call 462-4520.

Archery tournament Sunday

The Northwest Kansas Bowhunters are sponsoring a 3-D archery tournament on Sunday, June 16, at the archery range in Colby. The range is located just north of the rail-

road tracks off Franklin Ave. and members, guests or those interested in the sport are encouraged to attend. For questions or information, call Gordon Rasmussen, 462-6524.

Fair board meets tonight

The Thomas County Fair Board will meet at 8 p.m., today in the 4-H Building at the fairgrounds. Everyone interested in a Thomas County home-owned carnival is invited to attend, with the intent of getting a carnival in place for next year. The board will discuss plans for this year's carnival. The meeting is open to the public.

Barbershop cook-out tonight

The Tumbleweed Chorus of Northwest Kansas and Eastern Colorado is looking for men of all ages who would like

to sing. In an effort to raise awareness about the singing group, chorus members are sponsoring a cook-out tonight at 6:30 p.m., at the Colby United Methodist Church. "This will be a good opportunity for people to find out what barbershop harmony is all about," said John Collett, president of the chorus. "We have a great time and would like you to be included," he said.

City revisits parking restrictions

The City of Colby is reminding its citizens that no truck, motor vehicle, camper, trailer, machinery or equipment can be parked on any street or alley within the city in excess of 48 hours, officials said. The police department is authorized to remove and impound any of these types of vehicles that would be in violation of this regulation, said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager.

