



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## The man and his partner

### Cop, dog are on the beat

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS

Colby Free Press

Colby Police Officer Bob Herron took a promotion to K-9 handler last December. His partner, Capone, has been working for the police department since the Spring of 2001.

Herron had worked for the Colby Police Department for several years, and had started out as a dispatcher in 1998. Waiting for an opening as an officer, Herron got his wish in January of 2000.

When asked as to why he wanted to be a police officer, Herron said, "The different aspects of the job. There are few jobs you can get where you can do something different every day."

After being an officer for nearly two years Herron took over the K-9 unit in December of 2001 after the resignation of K-9 officer Scott Sitton.

Sitton had initiated the creation of a K-9 unit in Colby in 1995. Colby purchased the first K-9, Blitz, who worked on patrol until the Spring of 2001, when his successor, Capone, took the streets.

Capone was brought over from Germany and was originally someone's pet, but then was purchased for the police department, through a broker, said Herron.

Herron worked with Sitton for approximately two months in training with Capone, and will be leaving for Junction City in October to participate in his first certification with the dog.

Capone has been certified already in the areas of patrol dog and narcotics work, so this will be his second certification. His area of certification covers the areas of evidence recovery, tracking, handler protection, suspect retention and narcotic detection. They are members of the Heart of America Police Dog Association.

Herron and Capone work with officer Ron Alexander and other officers to do their training throughout the week. Alexander plays the "agitator" role during training. Herron said he is very important to Capone's training. "The agitator's part is just as important as the dog handler," said Herron.

Since working with Herron, Capone has been an integral part of seizing 700 pounds of marijuana and 60 kilos of cocaine. He has also assisted in the seizure of \$900,000 in illegal drug currency. Herron said he is looking forward to getting a chance to compete with some of the state's leading K-9 handlers while at certification.

"I am hoping to hold true to the long lasting tradition of outstanding K-9 that comes from the department here in Colby," said Herron.



MICHELLE L. HAWKINS/Colby Free Press

Working together to find drugs that were stashed in the vehicle, officer Bob Herron and Capone demonstrated how an actual search would take place.

## Something is missing at the games

By DARREL PATTILLO

Colby Free Press

If you've been trying to find the cheerleaders at Colby High School sporting events, they aren't there, but they may be back in time for basketball season.

This year, only three girls expressed any interest in becoming cheerleaders, so the program was dropped from the activities list.

"With all of the other activities going on, there just weren't enough girls for it," Jeff Quenzer, activities director, told the Colby School board at the start of the school year. "There's not a whole lot we can do about it, if no one goes out."

Stan Molstad, board president, said, "I can understand not wanting to take it on. Cheerleaders have a pretty tough schedule. But it's going to be a little embarrassing, not having any cheerleaders."

Don Barta, the high school's new principal, wasn't overly alarmed about the situation at a recent home football game.

"I'm actually happy that there is so much going on for the kids," he said. "It would be nice to have cheerleaders, but I'm not too worried about it."

But school spirit is apparently kicking in, as renewed interest has been expressed.

"A few girls have told me that they want to cheer," Quenzer said this morning. "I put a sign-up sheet out, and if the interest and commitment is there, and we can find a sponsor, we're going to do it."

## State Water Office chief is arrested

TOPEKA (AP) — The director of the Kansas Water Office was arrested Tuesday on suspicion of entering a sleeping woman's home in May and raping her, the Shawnee County prosecutor said.

Alan L. LeDoux, 55, who has served two governors and is well known in northeast Kansas politics, was being held in lieu of \$500,000 bond, Shawnee County District Attorney Robert Hecht said in a news release.

Hecht said LeDoux, who lives in rural Holton in Jackson County, was charged with aggravated kidnapping, rape by fear of force, aggravated criminal sodomy and aggravated burglary.

LeDoux is accused of entering an undisclosed residence between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. on May 23 while the victim was asleep.

"The assailant was wearing a ski mask and assaulted the victim, bound her arms together with tape, blindfolded her, forcibly moved from the bedroom into the bathroom, cut her night shirt off and committed the offenses charged," Hecht said in the release.

Hecht's office has requested that LeDoux be detained until a preliminary hearing, unless he posts a "\$500,000 bond with professional surety."

LeDoux served as chief legislative liaison for former Gov. Mike Hayden and later for Gov. Bill Graves, who named him to his current post.

## Republicans expect to retain control of the Kansas House

By CARL MANNING

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA (AP) — A decade ago, Republicans regained their traditional control over the Kansas House and have ruled it ever since.

This year's legislative races likely won't change that, but there's always an outside chance that political lightning could strike and put Democrats in charge.

"It's highly unlikely that the Democrats will take the majority. The only real question is what the majority will be," said GOP State Chairman Mark Parkinson.

Democratic State Chairman Tom Sawyer agreed, but added, "We will make some gains. It is a good year for Democrats."

The question is how many House seats Democrats can pick up. Republicans hold a 79-46 edge in the chamber. Contests for four-year terms in the

Senate will be in two years. Republicans control that chamber 30-10.

All 125 House districts were redrawn this year to reflect population shifts based on the 2000 census. In most cases, the shifting boundaries meant incumbents gained some new constituents while losing old supporters.

The only district in which two incumbents face each other in the general election is the 62nd, where Bruce Larkin, D-Baileyville, is running against Dennis Pyle, R-Hiawatha.

In 63 of the 125 districts, the races are uncontested, with 40 Republicans and 23 Democrats guaranteed victory. All but three Republicans and two Democrats are incumbents.

That leaves 62 contested races involving 30 Republican and 15 Democratic incumbents, with 17 open seats, including one held by Majority Leader Shari Weber, R-Herington.

Weber, a conservative, lost the Aug. 6 primary to moderate Bill Kassebaum, of Burdick, son of former U.S. Sen. Nancy Kassebaum. He's expected to defeat his Democratic opponent, Susan Mulryan, of Dwight.

Another open seat is in Wichita where Sawyer, a House member from 1987-98, faces token opposition from Libertarian Robert Loop.

Factors beyond the candidates' control could set the stage for a longshot chance for Democrats to take control of the chamber.

One is the gubernatorial race between Democrat Kathleen Sebelius and Republican Tim Shallenburger and how much pulling power each might have on the legislative races.

The last time Democrats controlled the House was in 1991-92, following Democrat Joan Finney's gubernatorial victory. They've previously had a majority in 1913-14 and 1977-78.

One recent media poll gave Sebelius a double-digit lead over her conservative Republican challenger. But that appears likely to change as Election Day gets closer.

"That is the real uncertainty out there," Parkinson said. "When Finney got elected, very surprisingly, she swept in a Democratic House. So it's possible that the governor's race can have coattails."

While conceding it's a longshot, Sawyer said there's always a possibility his party could pull an upset.

"Kathleen's coattails will extend. Democrats are excited. The more who get out to vote, the more it will help us up and down the ticket," Sawyer said.

Another factor is the state's economy.

Last month, Republican Gov. Bill Graves cut \$41 million from the \$4.4 billion state budget because revenues weren't living up to expectations. That

meant less money for public schools and social services.

Those cuts came after the Legislature, led by Republicans in both chambers, passed a \$252 million tax increase to balance the spending plan to finance state government after July 1.

"Some may be thrown out who are good but are in the wrong place at the wrong time," Parkinson said.

If Republicans retain control, as is likely, the next question is whether the moderate or conservative wing will prevail.

"A fair analysis is the current Republican delegation is fairly evenly split, and I think the election won't change that all that much," Parkinson said.

The closeness of the moderate-conservative split showed in the speaker's race two years ago, when moderate Kent Glasscock of Manhattan defeated conservative Doug Mays of Topeka by just two votes.

## Hurricane Isidore swirling toward Mississippi and Louisiana

HOUMA, La. (AP) — Schools were closed, hospitals were asked to postpone some surgeries and coastal residents were urged to evacuate as hurricane Isidore swirled toward Louisiana and Mississippi.

Wind and rain from the fringe of the storm slapped at both states' coasts late Tuesday and Isidore was expected to hit with hurricane force as early as tonight.

In southwest Terrebonne Parish,

which stands right in the middle of Isidore's anticipated path, officials opened an emergency shelter and said they expected around 2,000 people to show up.

"Once it gets here, we don't want it

to stay and visit us," Terrebonne Parish President Bobby Bergeron said. "This hurricane is not next door. It is on our back door."

Isidore is about 355 miles south of Louisiana and heading north at around

13 mph. Its sustained winds rose to 60 mph and were expected to strengthen.

A hurricane watch stretched some 300 miles from Cameron in southwestern Louisiana to Pascagoula in Mississippi.

## Briefly

### Two soup suppers slated to benefit baby

Two soup supper dates have been set to benefit Braden Beims, infant son of Mitch and Courtney Beims of Colby. The Colby United Methodist Church will hold a soup supper on Sunday from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Church. The other will be held in the Colby High School commons area before the Oct. 1 Colby High School girls volleyball game from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Soups will be chili and chicken noodle, with relishes, dessert, and tea. Both are free-will donations to help the family with medical costs. Braden was born on Sept. 16, and had heart surgery this past week in Kansas City. He is expected to have two more surgeries in the next two years.

### Food delivery scheduled

SHARE delivery is set for Saturday at 9 a.m. at the Sacred Heart School gym in Colby. The September menu includes beef sandwich steaks, ring bologna, chicken thighs, pork chops, hamburger patties, carrots, celery, potatoes, peppers, cabbage, onions, apples, red grapes and spaghetti. If you would like to get in on the Sep-

tember order, call 462-3579 or 462-3733. A share is \$16.50 plus

two hours of volunteer community service.

### 'Fly-In' planned Oct. 5

The third annual Colby Fly-In will be Saturday, Oct. 5, from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Colby Municipal airport. A variety of aircraft will be on hand. Plane rides will be available to the first 100 people who register. Breakfast will be served for \$3 per person. Two rides in a WWII fighter trainer will also be raffled off. For tickets and more information, contact Mark Ostmeyer, airport manager, at 462-4438.

### Foundation seeks board members

The Thomas County Community Foundation is expanding its board of directors and is compiling names of those who might be interested in finding out more about the roles and responsibilities of board members. Adding your name is not a commitment to serve. If you would like to be considered, or if you would like

to nominate someone, please contact Becky Donelan at 465-9152.

### Speech contest deadline Thursday

Entries are being sought for the 24th annual *Speech Contest* sponsored by the Thomas County Conservation District and the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts. The entry deadline is Thursday, and the topic is, "Aquifer Management—What's in it for Me?" The contest is for all students in grades 9 through 12. The district contest will be held in Colby at 1 p.m. on Sept. 30 at the USDA building, 915 E. Walnut. District winners advance to the area contest and those winners move on to the state contest. Please contact Lynette Koon, Thomas County Conversation District, 915 E. Walnut, Colby, or call her at (785) 462-7482, ext. 39 for more details.

### Auxiliary needs items

Donations of good new or used holiday items are needed for the *Recycled Holidays Sale* sponsored by the Citizens Medical Center Auxiliary.

### WeatherWatch

**The numbers**  
Tuesday's high, 83  
Low this morning, 46  
Year ago today, 74 and 37  
Temperature at 11:30 a.m. today, 69  
Soil temp at the 4-inch depth, 66  
Records for Sept. 24, 95 in 19379 and 29 in 1989  
**The forecast**  
Tonight, cloudy with a 30 percent chance for showers, lows in the lower 40s. Thursday, cloudy early, then partly cloudy, highs around 60, north winds 10-15 mph. Thursday night, very cool with the lows expected to drop to around 35. Friday, sunny, high in the 60s.  
**Colby Water Usage**  
• Sept. 24 = 1.800 million gal.

