



COLBY FREE PRESS

Owner of dog shot by officer confronts city council

By MICHELLE L. HAWKINS

Colby Free Press

After finishing routine business on Monday evening, the Colby City Council sat silent for nearly ten minutes listening to Kenneth Umberger present information about the shooting of his dog by Colby Police Sergeant Kent Dible on Sept. 24.

"Where is animal control?" questioned Umberger, and said that he was irritated with both Officer Dible and Chief of Police Randy Jones.

Umberger had information with him

which he had gathered from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, the Hays Humane Society, the American Humane Society, and the department of Animal Health and Humane Welfare. As well, he had the actual magazine the dog had taken from the mail carrier and had "destroyed" and signed statements by two eye witnesses from the event.

After consulting an out-of-town attorney concerning the death of his Australian Shepherd, Aussie, the law-

yer advised he approach the city council with the matter.

"My first reaction is to have Kent's job," said Umberger, "but I don't think you will fire him although it would be nice."

Umberger said that after returning home from vacation to find his "buddy" had been shot after allegedly attacking a mail carrier, he went to the Law Enforcement Center to speak with Officer Dible.

He told the council that the event told to him by Dible, the police report, the

account written in the Colby Free Press, and the eye witness reports did not match, and wanted to know what was the truth.

According to reports, four rounds were fired to put the dog down. Umberger said that the only blood found in the area was under a pickup trailer parked on his property.

He said that he felt if the dog was attacking, the blood would have been in other places, not just the one. Umberger showed pictures of where one of the bullets had also pierced

through the trailer.

After saying that he didn't want any more dogs to be shot in this town, Umberger said that he also had people who were willing to go on record citing that in the past Dible had threatened to shoot their dogs.

"I can take it to court if I have to...but I don't want to, I want to handle it locally," said Umberger.

City Manager Carolyn Armstrong was the first to speak up and address Umberger.

"I sympathize with the loss of your

dog," she told him, but continued on by saying that this would fall into a personnel matter and it would have to be directly handled by her and not the council.

Mayor Warren Hixson encouraged Umberger to set up an appointment with Armstrong and the city attorney, Joel Kriss.

Armstrong suggested that Jones also be involved in the meeting.

Other information from Tuesday night's meeting will appear in Thursday's Free Press.

Hospital is on the hunt to provide some needs

A temporary situation only

By DARREL PATTILLO

Colby Free Press

Citizens Medical Center is on the hunt to provide needed services now through Friday.

The hospital, according to Michael Boyles, administrator, is without the services of an anesthesiologist and obstetrician.

"Since Dr. Fercha left," he said, "we've had some difficulties at times keeping those positions staffed. We've been able to depend on Dr. Davis and Dr. Younger from Goodland, but they

are both out of town this weekend, so we are searching for someone right now."

Boyles said that he has been in contact with medical service contractors in Denver and Hays, but hasn't heard back from them yet.

"I just got off of the phone," he said this morning, "with a doctor in Nebraska who also has insurance in Kansas, and he may be able to come down this afternoon."

At presstime it was not known if Boyles was successful with his search.

Army planes will help with search for sniper

WASHINGTON (AP) — Army planes with high-tech surveillance equipment were preparing Wednesday to take to the skies around the nation's capital to help track a sniper who has eluded law enforcement officials for two weeks.

The planes were being flown to the region and were expected to join the hunt within days, a defense official said Wednesday, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Authorities called in the military Tuesday to help solve the baffling case that has left nine people dead and terrorized the capital area, leaving people afraid to go out of their homes. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld on Tuesday evening agreed to an FBI request for the help, approving use of the Army's Airborne Reconnaissance Low plane, which has surveillance capabilities beyond those of local police forces, defense officials said.

The plan calls for military pilots to fly reconnaissance flights accompanied by federal agents, who would relay any collected information to authorities on the ground, a senior defense official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. A main objective is to improve communications among investigators.

The military planes join a chase that already is using officers from more than a dozen law enforcement agencies, along with dragnets, roadblocks, bloodhounds, helicopters and other tactics. Among important features of the four-engine plane are that it provides high-resolution imagery and night vision and looks like a small commercial plane, making it easier to blend

in with local air traffic and avoid detection.

The Pentagon help will be given in a way meant to comply with the Posse Comitatus Act — a 19th century law that restricts the military's involvement in domestic law enforcement, said Pentagon spokesman Lt. Cmdr Jeff Davis.

That means the military will not be involved in action on the ground, will relay data to law enforcement and not decide on its own what targets to watch, officials said.

The move is highly unusual but not unheard of.

During the last Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, military helicopters flew federal law enforcement agents around so they could do surveillance from the air.

Using several of the Army aircraft for possible 24-hour coverage, pilots would perform general reconnaissance, such as looking for or tracking the light-colored van that authorities say was seen at one or more of the shooting sites. Infrared sensors that can detect flashes of gunfire on the ground also could be used, officials said.

An unknown sniper or snipers has launched a series of 11 random rifle attacks in 13 days that has killed nine people and seriously wounded two others. All but one of the attacks have been in neighboring suburbs in Maryland and Virginia. One was just inside Washington at the Maryland border.

In two recent killings, police threw up a dragnet near the shooting site, blocking off streets and expressway ramps and stopping traffic to check vehicles. The assailant slipped away.



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

EMS director Kathi Wright explained the workings of an ambulance to kindergarten students from Colby Grade School, who toured Citi-

zens Medical Center his morning on a field trip with teachers Vicki Nickols and Marcia Wagoner.

Shallenburger would increase school spending

TOPEKA (AP) — Republican gubernatorial candidate Tim Shallenburger says he's receptive to large spending increases for public schools.

Shallenburger said Tuesday that he would set a goal of having the state spend an additional \$400 million a year if legislators thought it necessary for a suitable education to each child.

He said the state might need several years to achieve such an increase.

Both Shallenburger and Democrat Kathleen Sebelius were to face more budget questions today.

They planned to discuss higher education funding with members of the state Board of Regents and university and community college presidents.

The Republican nominee has said he won't cut spending on elementary, junior high and high schools, despite the state's financial problems and his promise not to increase taxes.

He didn't offer specifics about where he would get the extra money.

He has been critical of Sebelius for endorsing a consultant study that suggested the state needs to spend another \$390 million a year on schools.

He also has questioned the need to hire outside consultants for a study, as legislators did and suggested the state needs to conduct its own review. But on Tuesday, he said the study was valuable.

Shallenburger spoke to about 100 superintendents and local school board members during a seminar sponsored by the Kansas Association of School Boards.

Later, Shallenburger told reporters he believes the state's current aid, \$3,863 per pupil, is reasonable and that, "I don't think we're off much" in

providing a suitable education.

Sebelius addressed the same seminar separately, saying she favors giving school districts more authority to increase local property taxes while the state increases its education funding.

State law allows school districts' spending to exceed the state aid they receive by up to 25 percent, if they increase local property taxes.

Sebelius said she would raise that limit to 30 percent.

"We really are in jeopardy of losing quality schools in this state," Sebelius said.

Kansan's goal is to visit every town in the state

INMAN (AP) — Marci Penner has been promoting Kansas to Kansans for almost 10 years. She thinks it's time she got out and saw all of the state — all of its 622 incorporated towns, that is.

The visits — "from Freeport to Wichita," Penner said, referring to the smallest and largest towns in the state — are for research on Penner's next

book.

"I plan to learn a lot about all towns," said Penner, who started the Kansas Sampler Foundation with her father, Mil, in 1993 as a way to preserve and promote rural culture.

Notevery town in the state will make it into her book, Penner said. She wants to focus on "those quirky things and those little-known things" that people

might not know about but are worth seeing.

"It sure is fun and interesting," she said. "I'm also excited just for the perspective of what's going on statewide."

Penner plans to publish the 250-page book late in 2003. The book will be available through the foundation, which is based outside of Inman in central Kansas.

People are still asking for copies of the Kansas guidebooks the Penners published years ago, so she is confident that interest in the newest book will be high — and that this book will be better than earlier guidebooks.

"I know the state better," she said. "I think I'm pretty aware of limits of people's tolerance. I don't want to get so obscure they'll dismiss it."

Briefly

Colby College announces play

The Colby Community College Theatre Department will present "Scapino!" on Nov. 7-8-9 at 7:30 p.m. in the Frahm Theater in the Northwest Kansas Cultural Arts Center. Performances are free to Colby College students, faculty and staff. Admission for adults is \$3, and children and non-Colby College students \$2. Tickets are available at the college bookstore, or at the door each performance. Call 462-3984, ext. 275 for more information. Additional details will appear later in the Free Press.

CPR course scheduled Oct. 24

The Thomas County Red Cross Chapter will be sponsoring a CPR course on Thursday, Oct. 24, Mary Smith, chapter manager, said today. The cost is \$25 and the class will be held in the basement of the Lutheran Church, 5th and Country Club Drive. Registration can be made by calling the office at 462-7161. The class time is 6 p.m.

School needs help with prizes

The Colby Grade School Parent Teacher Organization is still

seeking donations from area businesses for the raffle which will be held during the PTO Carnival on Oct. 26. Donations can either be mailed in or the PTO will pick them up. Contact Becky Butts at 462-2774 or Julie Price at 462-3506.

Sacred Heart auction is Saturday

Sacred Heart parish in Colby is having its annual charity action, "Underwater Safari," on Saturday at the Colby Community Building. Doors open with a silent auction at 6 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres will be served throughout the night. The oral auction will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets must be purchased in advance at the parish rectory, or call 462-2179. Fr. Galen Long, pastor, said Saturday's Mass would be at 4:30 p.m.

Hospice Auction approaching

The annual Hospice fund-raising auction will be held at the Comfort Inn Convention Center on Saturday, Oct. 26. Those wishing to contribute to the auction or would like tickets can contact the organization at 462-6710 or 1-800-315-5122. Keep an eye on the Free Press for more information. Proceeds from the auction

ensure that Hospice support is available to terminally ill individuals and their family members.

Flute, harp duo to perform

The Western Plains Arts Association will present the Flute and Harp Duo of Megan Meisenbach and Mary Golden at the Sharon Springs High School auditorium on Sunday, Oct. 20 at 3 p.m. (Central Time). They are highly acclaimed as among the finest touring artists today.

History group sets meeting

The family history group will meet from 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 20, at Pioneer Memorial Library. Emma Rogers will report on the genealogy meeting in Norton with Jim Swan. All are welcome. Come prepared to share if you wish.

Beims benefit at Atwood Oct. 20

A benefit for Braden Scott Beims, infant son of Mitch and Cortney Beims, Colby, will be held in Atwood at the Knights of Columbus Hall from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 20.

WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley area

The numbers
Tuesday's high, 60
Low this morning, 27
Year ago today, 70 and 25
Temperature at 11:45 today, 55
Records for Oct. 16, 94 in 1921, 21 in 1976
The forecast
Tonight, clear and cold, lows in the 20s, northwest winds 5-10 mph. Thursday, sunny, highs in the mid-60s, southwest winds 10-15 mph. Thursday night, clear, lows in the mid-30s. Friday, sunny and warmer, highs in the lower 70s.
Colby Water Usage
• Oct. 15 = (not available)

