



COLBY FREE PRESS

Good luck wishes

The Golden Plains Bulldogs will play in the first round of the Class 1A State Tournament tonight at Fort Hays State University's Gross Memorial Coliseum at 6:30 p.m. The 16-9 Bulldogs will face 22-3 Hanston. Golden Plains is on a 9-game winning streak. This morning at a pep rally and send off, the players had a victory line where they were greeted by students, parents and fans.

Michelle Hawkins/Colby Free Press



Heads up from county clerk on rising park fees

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

It's bargain time for the outdoors bunch.

Thomas County Clerk Tracey Perkins is reminding everyone that annual park fees through the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks will be going up in April and those planning to get permits might want to do so this month.

Perkins said today that permits will be substantially higher come April 1.

For example, the annual vehicle permit is \$29.50 before April 1, and after that date will go up to \$44.50 between April and September of 2003.

Other permit costs, if purchased now and prior to April 1, include daily vehicle rate of \$4.50 and \$5.50

between April and September; additional vehicle now is \$19.50 and after March 31 will be \$24.50; overnight camping is \$5 now and \$7 beginning in April; 14-night camping is \$60 now and \$75 after March 31; and annual camp permit is \$110 until the end of the month and after that is \$150 through September of 2003.

Other costs now that will not

change after April 1 include one and two or three utility hook-ups, duplicate permits and cabin rental. For those wanting a cabin rental, park officials said the charge is based on two people over 16 with an additional cost of \$5 for each person 16 and over after the initial cost.

There are a number of services offered through the state's wildlife and parks department, officials

said. Among those are nature trails, outdoor stores, hunting and fishing licenses, learning sites and more.

Campsites can be reserved from April through October depending on the weather, officials said, and when making campsite reservations, the department will accept telephone calls, mail or in person with all checks payable to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and

Parks. The department is administered by a secretary and advised by a seven-member Wildlife and Parks Commission.

Commission meetings are held throughout the year in various locations across the state with the June meeting planned in Atwood.

For questions about permits, campsites or other services, call 462-3367.

•Wichita campaign

Candidate says he didn't say he hated Wichita

WICHITA (AP) — Mayoral candidate Bill Warren on Wednesday denounced *The Wichita Eagle* and denied telling the newspaper he hated Wichita and regretted entering the mayor's race.

The newspaper, in its Wednesday editions, also quoted Warren as saying he plans to sell his movie theaters because his opponent in the April 1 election, Carlos Mayans, has threatened his business.

Warren called a news conference

Wednesday afternoon to deny those remarks, which reportedly were made in a series of phone calls Tuesday to *The Eagle* newsroom.

Warren also said he would not speak to the paper through the remainder of the campaign — and beyond, if he is elected.

The newspaper's editor, Rick Thames, said he stands by the story.

Warren allegedly made the comments about hating Wichita when an *Eagle* reporter asked him about

a film clip that runs at his theater chain. The clip compliments Wichita for its entrepreneurship and for being part of "America's heartland."

It briefly shows Warren, sitting in an empty theater, saying, "I'm Bill Warren. It's time to believe again."

When asked about the video, Warren said he couldn't make any comment because he hadn't seen it. He said it has nothing to do with his campaign.

When the reporter pressed for details on it, the newspaper reported, Warren said he's running the video "because I hate Wichita."

"You have to understand, I no longer care what Wichita thinks," the newspaper reported Warren as saying. "I no longer care what the paper thinks. How's that?"

In a second phone interview with the *Wichita* newspaper on Tuesday, Warren denied making the comment.

Classes 'might' end early

In the event the Colby High School girls' basketball team wins tonight in the 4A State Tournament at Salina, school officials are advising parents and guardians that classes will be dismissed earlier on Friday.

Kirk Nielsen, superintendent, said school will dismiss at 2 p.m. and buses will run accordingly.

However, if the girls do not win, classes will dismiss at the regular time on Friday.

The reason for the early dismissal (should the Lady Eagles win) will be to allow those wanting to attend Friday night's games the opportunity to do so.

Senate panel opens two days of hearings on gambling

TOPEKA (AP) — With proponents hoping the state's budget problems will help their cause, a Senate panel opened two days of testimony Wednesday on proposals to expand legal gambling in Kansas.

Among the initiatives is a plan for a casino with Branson-style entertainment on the banks of the Kansas River in Wyandotte County.

In all, the Senate Federal and

State Affairs Committee is studying eight gambling-related bills.

They include proposals to allow video gambling machines at Kansas Lottery retailers, such as convenience stores; slot machines at the state's five pari-mutuel racetracks; and slot machines at an unspecified, at-large location.

Supporters estimate that any of the gambling options would raise at least \$60 million for the state in the

fiscal year that starts July 1, in which Kansas faces a projected budget shortfall approaching \$1 billion.

"Revenue is the key issue," said Tom Palace, lobbyist for the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius supports a bill that would let voters in racetracks' home counties decide whether to allow slot machines at

the tracks. The tracks are located in Wichita, Frontenac, Kansas City, Anthony and Harper.

Wednesday's hearing focused on the bills affecting lottery retailers and racetracks.

Committee Chairwoman Nancy Harrington, R-Goddard, assigned the two bills to a subcommittee made up of two gambling opponents and one supporter.

Plans for the River Falls Casino

in Wyandotte County were outlined by Dallas, Texas developer Larry Waldrop.

Waldrop said the proposal envisions a 200-room hotel, an 80,000-square-foot casino, five restaurants and convention space.

The complex would be located at the intersection of Interstates 435 and 70, south of Kansas Speedway and the Village West tourism district.



Enjoy it

Tonight...Mostly clear and mild. Lows in the lower 40s. South wind 10 to 15 mph. Friday...Mostly sunny and continued warm. Highs near 80. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph. Friday night...Partly cloudy and mild. Lows in the lower 40s. Saturday...Partly sunny and continued warm. Highs in the upper 70s. Saturday night...Mostly cloudy. Lows in the lower 40s. Sunday...Cloudy. A slight chance of rain during the evening. Highs in the lower 70s.

The numbers

Monday's high, 74
Low this morning, 26
Soil temperature, 44
Year ago, 59 and 26
Month's snowfall, trace
Month's precipitation, 0.03
Records, 78 in 1946 and +2 in 1951

Briefly

Walk Kansas starts Saturday

Those registered for the Walk Kansas program need to begin recording their miles walked on Saturday. Any aerobic activity may be used in place of walking using the formula of 15 minutes of activity equals one mile. If you planned on participating and missed the registration deadline, call the Thomas County Extension office at 462-4582 to enroll.

Chamber luncheon Friday

The Oasis Travel Center managers, Jason and Tara Woofert, will be speaking at the monthly Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce luncheon at noon, Friday, at Quality Inn. All chamber members and their guests are welcome to attend. For questions, call 462-3401.

Bluegrass pancake feed planned

The Colby Bluegrass Committee is sponsoring a pancake and sausage feed on Saturday, March 29 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

at the Colby Community Building. Free-will donations will be accepted and all proceeds will go to defray costs of the annual Bluegrass Festival, said Leilani Thomas, one of the coordinators of the event.

Amusement meeting next week

The Thomas County Amusement Association will hold its regular meeting on Monday, March 17, at 7 p.m. in the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range, Colby. Anyone interested in helping on various committees is urged to attend. For questions, call Kerry Wark, president, 462-6403.

Enrollment is still open

Enrollment for next year's Colby public school kindergarteners has been held, but for those who missed this pre-enrollment, Terrel Harrison, principal, is asking parents and/or guardians to stop by the school office, 210 N. Grant, as soon as possible to enroll your child. Harrison said to bring the child's immunization records, birth certificate and social

security number for the enrollment. Any children residing in the Colby School District and who will be five years old on or before Aug. 31, 2003 is eligible to enroll. It is not necessary to bring children for the pre-enrollment, she said.

Help available with form filings

Free assistance in filling out the Low Income Energy Assistance Program applications is available to individuals with disabilities until March 31. Free assistance in completing the Homestead Food Sales Tax Returns will be available until April 15. For information, or to set up an appointment, call (785) 625-6942 or (800) 569-5926.

Childbirth education series to begin

The next Colby Childbirth Education series will start on Thursday with subsequent classes scheduled March 20 and 27, and April 3. They will be held in the Health Science Building on the Colby Community College Campus. More information is available at 462-6845, ask for Tina Schrick.

