



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Districts say, 'no' to state

TOPEKA (AP) — Attorneys for two school districts that sued the state say their clients will return to court unless the Legislature approves an additional \$1 billion for schools and rewrites the aid distribution formula.

Both elements are critical to satisfying a judge's finding that Kansas' method of funding elementary and secondary education is constitutionally flawed, attorneys Alan Rupe and John Robb told the Senate Education Committee on Wednesday. Rupe and Robb represent the Salina and Dodge City districts in the lawsuit that led to last month's preliminary order by Shawnee County District Judge Terry Bullock giving the state until July 1 to rework the funding formula.

Bullock also found that state aid to public schools — about \$2.6 billion — was as much as \$1 billion below what would be needed to fund education adequately.

The attorneys said Wednesday that any legislation that raised school aid but left the distribution formula untouched would violate Bullock's order and send the plaintiffs back into court.

The formula must make provision for the costs to districts of educating poor, minority or disabled students, they said.

The attorneys said the current formula provides extra aid to small districts regardless of their demonstrated needs while some large districts with high numbers of poor and minority students struggle to help such pupils improve their performance. Rupe and Robb, of Newton, also said Gov. Kathleen Sebelius' proposal to raise school funding by \$304 million over three years is inadequate, although they praised her for offering a plan.

## Happy Birthday!



Third grader Molly Tolle worked on a sunflower mosaic in Mrs. Bange's room at Colby Grade school this morning. The third graders worked on several different projects to celebrate Kansas Day, including learning about cattle branding, Kansas trivia and games.

TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

## Many taking in Kansas Day museum events

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Kansas Day activities at the Prairie Museum of Art and History in Colby are attracting large crowds.

Judy Kleinsorge, museum education director, said the Kansas box socials on Tuesday and Wednesday brought in a large group each day to enjoy lunch and video presentations. "We're averaging about 50 people a day," she said. "Most of them are bringing a lunch with them." The final box social was held today. This is the third year the museum has featured Kansas Day programming. Kleinsorge said for that many people to turn out for a half-hour event once a year is nothing short of impressive.

The programs are also free to the public.

Most are Colby and Thomas County residents but there have been a few museum visitors who have stuck around for the presentations.

Tuesday, "The Expedition of Lewis and Clark" was shown in conjunction with the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Corps of Discovery's journey to explore the West. Wednesday dealt with Bleeding Kansas and the topic continued today to help preview the Chautauqua coming to Colby June 11-15.

Kleinsorge said it's the 150th anniversary of that event where there were skirmishes along the eastern border of territorial Kansas with Missourians who wanted to try to make Kansas a slave state.

Along with the videos, the museum has spotlighted Kansas food items from the museum store. She said visitors have been able to sample soup, scones and cookies.

Kleinsorge said the Kansas Day activities are just the beginning. More Chautauqua preview events are scheduled at Pioneer Memorial Library in February, March and April.

## Sheep incentives offered

WICHITA (AP) — Lower farm income and extreme drought in sheep-producing areas have taken a toll on the nation's sheep flocks, prompting the U.S. Department of Agriculture to offer \$18.8 million in incentives to encourage producers to keep their ewe lambs for breeding stock.

The program, announced this week by Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman, comes as the nation's sheep numbers dwindle.

The most recent July inventory numbers peg the nation's lamb crop at 4.13 million, down 5 percent

from the previous year.

"This new, one-year program will give these producers a final opportunity to enhance the genetics of their ewe lamb breeding stock," Veneman said in a news release.

This would make it the third year that the USDA has offered a similar program to encourage retention of ewes, said John Drach, price support program specialist at USDA's Farm Service Agency in Manhattan. "The reason it initially started was to give producers an opportunity to get better quality sheep into their herds," Drach said.

## 'Dr. Laura' figures in needs of Thomas County children

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Children in Thomas County who are forced into a crisis where they can't take any of their belongings with them will now have help.

Sue Evans, director of the Regional Prevention Center, said the Drug Endangered Childrens Task Force of Thomas County received 90 "My Stuff" bags from the Dr. Laura Schlessinger Foundation.

They found the bags on the Internet, she said, and decided to try to get some for the task force.

"We thought it would apply to drug endangered children," Evans said. "So we applied for them."

They were provided by the foundation and didn't cost the prevention center or task force anything. The bags will be given to children

**"We thought it would apply to drug endangered children."**

Sue Evans,  
director of Regional Prevention

in situations where they are forced to leave behind their clothing, toys and other items because of a meth lab or other circumstance.

Evans said the duffel bags contain personal items like a toothbrush, comb, soap and brush, a blanket or quilt, small stuffed animal, crayons and coloring book, water bottle, school supplies, and clothing such as a T-shirt, sweatshirt, socks, and more.

She said the bags will be pro-

vided to the task force, which is made up of local law enforcement, Colby schools, attorneys, prevention center staff, Social and Rehabilitative Services, substance abuse counseling and mental health professionals. Thomas County Emergency Medical Services and the Colby Police Department will also get some of the bags.

"We want to take care of kids when they're in dangerous situations," Evans said.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Sue Evans, director of the Regional Prevention Center, looked at "My Stuff" bags with staff members Vicki Beiser and Diane Stithem this morning.

## Briefly

### County commissioners to meet

The Thomas County Commissioners will hold their end of month meeting at 9 a.m. Friday at the courthouse. Items on the agenda include Undersheriff Mike Baughn discussing jail maintenance, Jim Oliver from the Red Cross and a landfill expansion update from Larry Jumper, supervisor.

### School surplus auction Friday

Colby Public Schools is holding a surplus auction on the southeast corner of Dennen Football Field starting at noon, Friday, with the public viewing and the auction beginning at 1 p.m., said Kirk Nielsen, superintendent. Items at the auction will range from cabinets, chairs, desks, doors and scrap metal to trash cans, fans and more.

All items are "as is" and payment must be made the day of the sale. For a complete list, call 460-5000 or stop by the administration building at the corner of Third and Grant Streets.

### Pheasants Forever banquet Saturday

The Pheasants Forever banquet and auction begins at 5 p.m., Saturday, at the Colby Comfort Inn Convention Center. The dinner will begin at 6 p.m. followed by the auction and drawings. Ticket information is available by calling Tom Redmond, 462-7343 or Gabe Stanley, 462-2063 or 460-9193.

### Benefit lunch Sunday

A benefit pasta lunch for Christopher Eteeyan, infant

grandson of Larry and Mary Maxwell, born with liver and heart complications, is planned from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sunday, in the Sacred Heart Church basement. Admission is free-will donation and everyone is welcome.

Call Amanda Wahlmeier, 465-9145 or Terry and Linda Stover, 626-9068 with questions.

### Brewster bake sale Saturday

The Brewster Community Church will be having a bake sale on Saturday at the Frontier Equity Co-op in Brewster starting at 8 a.m. The event will continue until the bake goods are gone. The proceeds will be used for many mission projects. For questions, call Janet Pinkelman, (785) 694-2720.

### Dennen Field fund raiser planned

The Colby Booster Club is sponsoring a soup supper beginning at 5 p.m., Friday at the Colby Community Building. All proceeds from the event will benefit the Dennen Field project, said Shawn Stephens, committee member.

### Girl Scouts to begin selling cookies

The Colby Girl Scouts are taking orders for cookies, said Shannon Koon, service unit manager. The annual cookie drive will continue now through Friday, Feb. 6, she said, and many of the favorites will be available, along with a new type of cookie this year, Pinatas.

No money will be collected until delivery, which will be

announced at a later date. This is one of the scouts largest fund-raising events with nearly one-quarter of the profits staying with the local troops to finance girl-activities, Koon said. In case a scout misses someone, call (785) 460-6662.

### Obedience school Tuesdays

The Thomas County Trackers 4-H Dog Club will once again be offering obedience training this winter and spring. Although the orientation meeting was already held, interested persons can still attend this Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the 4-H building. For questions, call (785) 460-3816.



Happy 143rd  
Birthday!

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### Teens and 30s

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area

Tonight...Partly cloudy.

Lows around 14. Southwest winds 5 to 10 mph.

Friday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s. West winds 5 to 10 mph shifting to the south around 5 mph in the afternoon.

Friday night...Partly cloudy in the evening then becoming mostly cloudy. Lows around 20. Southeast winds 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday...Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid 30s. Southwest winds around 5 mph shifting to the north around 10 mph in the afternoon.

Saturday night...Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow. Lows around 13. Sunday...Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of snow showers. Highs in the upper 20s.

The numbers

Wednesday's high, 22

Low this morning, +1

Records for Jan. 29, 72 in 1920 and -13 in 1951

Year ago today, 50 and 21

Month's precipitation, 0.07

Month's snowfall, 1.5 inches

2003 precipitation to date, trace

Soil temperature, 30

The sources:

The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

