

Assisting U.S. military veterans in need is a labor of love

Topeka, round trip, is more than 600 miles from Colby. The last two weeks I have made that trip twice and paid my own way. The trips were to respond to a request from a veteran's organization and to meet legislators in Kansas who hold the keys to adequate appropriations to operate veterans' homes and veterans' cemeteries in Kansas.

February 12 at 3:45 a.m., I left Colby and chased fog, freezing drizzle and snow eastward, arriving in Topeka at 11 a.m. Waiting was a Kansas volunteer that represents the American Legion committees for veterans assistance and rehabilitation at both the state and national level. We pushed on to the Kansas City airport in heavy wind driven snow and met the leading candidate to become the next national commander of the American Legion.

Tom Cadmus, a retired Ford

Phil Finley

• An Advocate Speaks Out

Motor Co. executive from Michigan had just finished hosting a reception of Congressional people and members of the Department of Defense and had an interest in Operation Eagle in the Kosovo Bosnia areas of Europe. We could arrange a briefing from members of the 35th National Guard Division stationed at Fort Leavenworth, who had operated Operation Eagle in Kosovo and returned home from a six-month tour in October 2003.

While on active service in Kosovo, the 35th Division had continued to locate and open mass graves from the ethnic atrocities in that region some years before. The

evidence indicated mass roundups and executions in old factory buildings. The international community and service organizations with worldwide credentials continue to watch what took place with interest. The flow of arms and ammunition into the region from adjacent countries makes it necessary to continue to patrol and control a dangerous ethnic conflict. New military veterans are serving every day in the dangerous region and we should not forget their service.

Veterans care and assistance has been a part of what I do every day for many years. Early in life my father, a World War I veteran, showed

me the record of my great-grandfather who was wounded at Shiloh in the Civil War and came to Kansas from Ohio and homesteaded in Rawlins County. The combination of age, drought and disabilities from the war forced him into the Soldiers' Home at Fort Dodge. He is buried in the post cemetery there.

Long before I served as Adjutant General in Kansas, I had worked veterans issues with First District Congressman Keith G. Sebelius. It was rewarding then and still is.

Christmas 2003 was made more complete when M.K., a war disabled friend, called from Ellsworth. M.K. was a promising pre-law student who enlisted in the United States Marines, rather than be drafted. He survived two long-range patrols where the number of survivors was less than two in one patrol and about six in the other.

While leading a section of Marines in the Tiet Offensive in Vietnam, he was wounded, taken prisoner by the North Vietnamese Army and was beaten and abused until when finally repatriated he had useless legs and psychiatric problems. He left a Kansas veterans hospital and located near relatives at Ellsworth. His legs were gone from the beatings, and wheelchair-bound he had neither a ramp at his mobile home nor a vehicle into which he could be transported in his wheelchair.

When he called we passed the situation onto Congressman Jerry Moran and he personally interceded with his personal friend, Mr. Tony Principi, head of the Veterans Administration. The improvements for M.K. were completed and he has been mobile since that time. Veterans have a true red, white and blue friend in Congressman Moran.

Thursday, Feb. 19 in Topeka, veterans care advocates were invited to a meeting with Kansas legislators. We learned that the governor has introduced a bill for veterans and it does include video lottery machines for fraternal organizations.

When the legislative session last year in 2003 provided less than adequate appropriations to operate state veterans' homes and cemeteries, a late amendment allowed a six-month one-dollar sale of a special lottery ticket earmarked to raise revenue for state veterans' facilities. It only raised about \$250,000, but it tied appropriations for veterans to the lottery. It has been recommended for continuation in 2004.

Legislators more interested in reelection than veterans appropriations recognize gaming in the legislation and stay away from involvement.

This is very unfortunate and should never have happened, but veterans are not to blame for this drastic effort to supplement insufficient appropriations. Adequate appropriations to operate state veterans' facilities without resorting to gaming is a legislative responsibility.

Thursday evening I walked among friends who are legislators.

Sen. Jackson, chairman of the committee that will recommend a bill out of committee to the full House and Senate for veterans, indicated he is two votes short for a committee recommendation of the governor's bill.

When I encountered Rep. John Faber of Brewster, who is not a member of the committee for veterans appropriations, he was as usual well informed, a great listener and willing to make contacts to support legislation for veterans.

We continued to meet legislators for two hours who were interested in having meaningful appropriations for veterans, veterans' homes and veterans' service organizations. Sen. Clark from Oakley had sent his regrets and Rep. Jim Morrison of Colby was tied up elsewhere.

The vote for the bill out of committee for veterans needs two additional votes. They could come from Sen. Clark or a senator from Emporia who is a physician, they said.

I left for home and my mind rolled to my friend when I was a K-State student who lives in Texas who had asked for help to get his brother into a veterans' hospital recently.

The brother had been partially buried alive in a building in the Battle of The Bulge in World War II. He lived his remaining years on a farm in Dickinson County night after night reliving the terror of being almost buried alive for eight hours before they found him. Thanks again to Congressional assistance, he was placed in a veterans' hospital and only lived a few months, but was treated with dignity.

Anyway, I enjoy being a volunteer advocate for veterans whenever they need help. We owe them so much and it's the best job I ever had.

God bless the U.S.A., its armed services personnel and the U.S. veterans who come out of those ranks.

Phil Finley is a veteran, retired military, member of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Colby. He is an occasional contributor to the Opinion Page.

Food safety is your responsibility, too

Where do you think the most significant food safety problems occur, on the farm or in the kitchen?

If you guessed the kitchen, you're probably one of those wise consumers who may already be well on your way to a wholesome, health eating lifestyle. On the other hand if you guessed the farm or ranch, chances are your kitchen may be a place where food may be mishandled or poorly prepared.

Like the food industry and our government, we have an obligation to keep food safe. The way we handle, store and cook food can mean the difference between a satisfying meal or a bout with E. coli or salmonella.

Purchasing, storing and preparing food, especially traditional and new meat and poultry products, presents many challenges to consumers. As a wise and safety-conscious shopper, it is our responsibility to

John Schlageck

• Insight

keep food safe once it leaves our local grocery store or meat market.

Always buy food from a reputable dealer, with a known record for safe handling. If you don't know if the meat is fresh inquire about operating policy with the store manager. You also may want to ask a neighbor or friend who's shopped there before.

U.S. Department of Agriculture advises to buy dated products only if the "sell by" or "use by" date has not expired. While these dates are helpful, they are reliable only if the food has been kept at the proper temperature during storage and handling. Although many products

bear "sell by" and "use by" dates, product dating is not a federal requirement.

When we purchase products labeled "keep refrigerated," do so only if they are stored in a refrigerated case and cold to the touch, USDA advises. Buy frozen products only if they are frozen solid. Never buy something that feels mushy.

Buy packaged precooked foods only if the package is sound — not damaged or torn.

Avoid cross contamination. To prevent raw meat and poultry from contaminating foods that will be eaten without further cooking, en-

close individual packages of raw meat or poultry in plastic bags. Position packages of raw meat or poultry in your shopping cart so their juices cannot drip on other food.

Always shop for perishables last. Keep refrigerated and frozen items together so they will remain cold. Place perishables in the coolest part of your car during the trip home. Pack them in an ice chest if the time from store to home refrigerator will be more than one hour.

While most of these tips sound simple, a common-sense approach the next time you shop could ensure a safer food product for your family.

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Check each issue of the Free Press for additional TV Listings

TV LISTINGS sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

WEEKDAYS FEBRUARY 24 - MARCH 1

	6 AM	6:30	7 AM	7:30	8 AM	8:30	9 AM	9:30	10 AM	10:30	11 AM	11:30
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	News		Good Morning America				The John Walsh Show		The View		Holly-wood	News
KSNK/NBC (8) (9)	News Cont'd		Today						Live With Regis and Kelly		Martha Stewart Living	
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News				Early Show		The 700 Club		The Price Is Right		The Young and the Restless	
K15CG (3)	World News	Priscilla-Yoga	Body Electric	Caillou	Boohbah	Barney-Friends	Dragon Tales	Lions	Sesame Street		Clifford-Red	Teletubies
WGN (13)	Creflo A. Dollar Jr.	Believer Voice	Celebrity Justice	Hillbil-lies	Hillbil-lies	Happy Days	Matlock		In the Heat of the Night		Rockford Files	
NICK (29)	Oddpar-ents	Rocket Power	Rugrats	SpongeBob	Max & Ruby	Rubba-dubbers	Dora the Explorer	Blue's Clues	Dora the Explorer	Blue's Clues	Little Bill	Maggie-Beast
FAM (30)	Digimon	Bey-blade	Power Rangers	Digimon	Growing Pains	Living the Life	The 700 Club		7th Heaven		Full House	Growing Pains
USA (31)	JAG		Varied Programs									
TBS (37)	Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell	Movie				Dawson's Creek		Dawson's Creek		Saved by Bell	Saved by Bell
TNT (38)	The Lost World		The Pretender		Charmed		ER		ER		Judging Amy	
DSC (42)	Paid Program	Paid Program	Paid Program	Paid Program	Assignment Discovery		The Christopher Lowell Show		It's Christopher Lowell!		Rally Round the House	
A&E (47)	Varied Programs		Movie				Murder, She Wrote		Murder, She Wrote		City Confidential	
ESPN (49)	Sports-Center	Sports-Center	Varied	Sports-Center	Varied	Sports-Center	Varied	Sports-Center	Varied	Sports-Center	Varied	Sports-Center
HBO (7)	Movie Cont'd	Varied Programs										
DISN (17)	JoJo's Circus	Stanley	The Wiggles	JoJo's Circus	The Wiggles	Stanley	Rolie Polie	Rolie Polie	Out of the Box	PB&J Otter	Koala Brothers	The Wiggles
MAX (21)	Movie Cont'd	Varied Programs										Movie

WEEKDAYS FEBRUARY 24 - MARCH 1

	12 PM	12:30	1 PM	1:30	2 PM	2:30	3 PM	3:30	4 PM	4:30	5 PM	5:30
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	All My Children		One Life to Live		General Hospital		Dr. Phil		Judge Judy	Judge Judy	News	ABC Wild News
KSNK/NBC (8) (9)	News	Family Feud	Days of Our Lives		Passions		Inside Edition	Family Feud	Millionaire	Jeopardy!	News	NBC News
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News	Bold, Beautiful	As the World Turns		Guiding Light		The People's Court		Oprah Winfrey		News	CBS News
K15CG (3)	Reading Rainbow	Mister Rogers	Varied Programs			George Shrinks	Beren. Bears	Liberty's Kids	Cyberchase	Arthur	Zoom	Business
WGN (13)	News		In the Heat of the Night		Street Smarts	Street Smarts	Cosby Show	Cosby Show	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince	Home Improve.	Will & Grace
NICK (29)	Max & Ruby	Dora the Explorer	Rugrats	Rugrats	Hey Arnold!	Yakkity Yak	Oddparents	U-Pick	SpongeBob	Amanda	U-Pick	Hey Arnold!
FAM (30)	Family Matters	Family Matters	Step by Step	Step by Step	So Little Time	Full House	7th Heaven		Switched!	Knock First	Full House	Full House
USA (31)	JAG	Varied	Texas Ranger	Varied	Movie				Walker, Texas Ranger		Walker, Texas Ranger	
TBS (37)	Cosby	Cosby Show	Cosby Show	Fresh Prince	Fresh Prince	Steve Harvey	Steve Harvey	Drew Carey	Drew Carey	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Seinfeld
TNT (38)	Law & Order	NYPD Blue			NYPD Blue		Judging Amy		Angel	Charmed		
DSC (42)	Surprise by Design	Surprise by Design			Rally Round the House		Double Agents		Varied Programs			
A&E (47)	American Justice		Movie				Murder, She Wrote		Murder, She Wrote		City Confidential	
ESPN (49)	Sports-Center	Sports-Center	PGA Golf	Varied Programs								SportsCenter
HBO (7)	Movie Cont'd	Varied Programs										
DISN (17)	JoJo's Circus	Stanley	Winnie-Pooh	House of Mouse	House of Mouse	Recess	Lilo & Stitch	Recess	Kim Possible	Proud Family	Even Stevens	Sister, Sister
MAX (21)	Movie Cont'd	Varied Programs										
												Movie

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26

	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	(5:59) News	Ent. Tonight	The Bachelor: Battle After the Final Rose		Extreme Makeover: Night Four of the Budge		Super Millionaire: Night Four (N) (CC)		N-ws (CC)	Nightline (CC)	Jimmy Kimmel: Live (N) (CC)		
KSNK/NBC (8) (9)	News	Wheel of Fortune	Friends (N) (CC)		Will & Grace		The Apprentice: Ice Escapades (N) (CC)		ER Forgive and Forget (N) (CC)	N-ws (CC)	The Tonight Show (N) (CC)	Late Night (N)	
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	N-ws (CC)	Friends (N) (CC)	Survivor: All-Stars (N) (CC)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (N)		Without a Trace: Gung-Ho (N) (CC)		N-ws (CC)	Late Show (CC)	Late Late		
K15CG (3)	The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer		Sun- flower		Kansas Arts		The New This Old House: Hour (CC)		Frontline: Recounting strategies, battles and turning points of the Iraqi War. (CC)			Charlie Rose: (N) (CC)	
WGN (13)	Will & Grace	Home Improve.	Movie: Taps (1981) Military cadets secure their campus from condo developers. (CC)				N-ws (CC)		Be-cker (CC)	Be-cker (CC)	Elimi- date: (N)	The 5th Wheel	
NICK (29)	Rugrats (CC)	Spon- ge-Bob	Oddpar- ents		Sabrina- Witch		Full House		Full House		Cosby Show	Cosby Show	
FAM (30)	7th Heaven Smoking (CC)		Movie: Girls Just Want to Have Fun ** (1985, Comedy) Sarah Jessica Parker.				Whose Line?		Whose Line?		The 700 Club (CC)		America's Funniest Home Videos (CC)
USA (31)	PGA Golf: Chrysler Classic of Tucson		Law & Order: Special Victims				Movie: Dirty Dancing *** (1987) A sheltered teen falls for a street-wise dance instructor. Jennifer Grey.				Movie: Ducts ** (2000) Gwyneth Paltrow. (CC)		
TBS (37)	Seinfeld (CC)	Friends (CC)	Movie: Jerry Maguire ***½ (1996, Comedy-Drama) A crisis of conscience costs a sports agent his job. Tom Cruise. (CC)				Movie: It Could Happen to You *** (1994, Comedy-Drama) Nicolas Cage.						
TNT (38)	Law & Order: Monster (CC) (DVS)		NBA Basketball: San Antonio Spurs at Dallas Mavericks. American Airlines Center. (Live) (CC)				NBA Basketball: Sacramento Kings at Los Angeles Lakers. Staples Center. (Live) (CC)						
DSC (42)	New Detectives: Forensic Science		HALO: Freefall Warriors Part 1 (N)		HALO: Freefall Warriors Part 2 (N)		More: Than Human (CC)		HALO: Freefall Warriors Part 1		HALO: Freefall Warriors Part 2		
A&E (47)	American Justice: Vigilante Dad (CC)		Cold Case: Files The Cuff Link; Graveyard Shift A tool mark solves a murder. (CC)				With Malice: Rubbish (N) (CC)		Third Watch True Love (CC)		Cold Case: Files (CC)		
ESPN (49)	Sports- Center		Baseball Tonight		NHL Hockey: St. Louis Blues at Colorado Avalanche. Pepsi Center. (Live) (CC)				SportsCenter (Live) (CC)		Rome Is Burning (N) (CC)		
HBO (7)	(5:15) Movie: Digging to China		Real Sports (CC)		Movie: Daredevil ** (2003, Action) Ben Affleck. (CC)				Starsky & Hutch:		Pimps Up, Ho's Down (CC)		
DISN (17)	Sister, Sister		Lizzie McGuire		Movie: Get a Clue (2002, Comedy) Lindsay Lohan. (CC)		Kim Possible		Sister, Sister	Boy Mts. World	Kim Possible	Proud Family	
MAX (21)	(5:30) Movie: Anaconda *		Movie: Enough (2002) A woman takes her daughter and flees her abusive husband.				Movie: The Rules of Attraction ** (2002, Drama) James Van Der Beek. (CC)				Movie: McRy *½ (1999) Ellen Barkin.		

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27

	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30
KLBY/ABC (4) (6)	(5:59) News	Ent. Tonight	George Lopez	Married-Kellys	Hope & Faith (N)	Life With Bonnie	Super Millionaire Night Five (N) (CC)		News (CC)	Nightline (CC)	Jimmy Kimmel Live Diane Sawyer (CC)	
KSNK/NBC (8) (9)	News	Wheel of Fortune	Dateline NBC (CC)				Third Watch Family Ties (N) (CC)		News	The Tonight Show (N) (CC)	Late Night (N)	
KBSL/CBS (12) (11)	News (CC)	Friends (CC)	Joan of Arcadia No Bad Guy (N) (CC)			JAG Take it Like a Man (N) (CC) (DVS)		48 Hours Investigates (CC)		News (CC)	Late Show Jim Gaffigan (N) (CC)	Late Late
K15CG (3)	High School Wrestling: 321A Quarter Finals. (Live)						Wall-Fortune	Market-Market	Wash. Week	Red Green	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)	
WGN (13)	Will & Grace	Movie: The Game *** (1997) A businessman takes part in an unusual form of recreation. Michael Douglas.					News (CC)	Alaska: Winters	Becker (CC)	Becker (CC)	Eliminate (N)	The 5th Wheel
NICK (29)	Rugrats (CC)	SpongeBob	Oddparents	Teenage Robot	Jimmy Neutron	Chalk-Zone	Cosby Show	Cosby Show	Roseanne	Roseanne	Cosby Show	Cosby Show
FAM (30)	7th Heaven Stand Up (CC)	Movie: Hope Floats * 1/2 (1998, Romance) Sandra Bullock, Harry Connick Jr. (CC)					Whose Line?	Whose Line?	The 700 Club (CC)		Paid Program	Paid Program
USA (31)	PGA Golf: Chrysler Classic of Tucson	Law & Order: Special Victims		Law & Order: Special Victims			Monk Mr. Monk Gets Married (CC)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Monk Mr. Monk Gets Married (CC)	
TBS (37)	Seinfeld (CC)	Friends (CC)	Movie: Deep Rising * 1/2 (1998, Horror) (PA) Treat Williams, Famke Janssen. (CC)			Movie: Ghosts of Mars * 1/2 (2001, Science Fiction) (PA) Ice Cube. (CC)			Movie: Deep Rising * 1/2 (1998) (CC)			
TNT (38)	Law & Order Shadow (CC) (DVS)	Law & Order	Law & Order		Movie: Exit Wounds * (2001, Action) Steven Seagal, DMX. (Premiere) (CC)		Movie: Out for Justice * 1/2 (1991, Drama) Steven Seagal. (CC)		American Chopper			
DISC (42)	Monster House	Dead Biker Build-Off 4: Lane-Larry		American Chopper Leno Bike 1			American Hot Rod Alummatub 1 (N)		Dead Biker Build-Off 4: Lane-Larry		American Chopper Leno Bike 1	
A&E (47)	American Justice Driven to Kill (CC)	Movie: Plateau (1986) A soldier embarks on a yearlong tour of duty in Vietnam. (CC)					Airline (CC)	Third Watch To Protect... (CC)		Movie: Platoon *** (1986) (CC)		
ESPN (49)	NBA Basketball: Toronto Raptors at Boston Celtics. FleetCenter. (Live) (CC)					NBA Basketball: Phoenix Suns at Seattle Sonics. KeyArena. (Live) (CC)					SportsCenter (Live) (CC)	
HBO (7)	(5:00) Movie: Overtin Dumbo		Real Time (Live)		Movie: Femme Fatale (2002) A sexy jewel thief double-crosses her violent partners.				Curb-Enthsm	Real Time (CC)		Movie: Firetrap
DISN (17)	That's Raven	Lizzie McGuire	Movie: Bug's Life *** (1998) Animated. A misfit ant seeks to save his colony. (CC)				Movie: Bug's Life *** (1998) Animated. A misfit ant seeks to save his colony. (CC)				Even Stevens	Sister, Sister
MAX (21)	(5:15) Movie: Deliver Us-Eva		Movie: Collateral Damage * 1/2 (2002, Action) Arnold Schwarzenegger. (CC)				Movie: Spider-Man (2002) A bite from a mutant spider gives a teen unusual powers.				Best Sex Ever	Naked Tales