

# A former Colbyite meets Bush

One former Colbyite received happy birthday greetings from President George Bush during a luncheon in North Carolina recently.

Sgt. Jesse C. Doze, with the U.S. Marine Corp, was one of many Marines to have lunch with Bush and the First Lady, Laura Bush, as part of the president's visit to Camp LeJeune, N.C., where he spoke to families of soldiers serving in Kuwait and Iraq. a happy birthday during a luncheon in North Carolina recently.

According to Doze mother, Vicki, now living in Wichita, she said her son leaned towards the President and asked if he would sing "Happy Birthday."

Apparently, a staff sergeant had told Doze that he would give him \$50 if he could get the President to sing happy birthday to him.

In recounting the event, Doze mother said the President leaned in towards her son and whispered,



President George Bush wishes Sgt. Jesse C. Doze a happy birthday.

"Who's birthday is it?" with Doze leaning in towards the President and whispering, "It's mine, Sir."

The President slapped Doze on the arm, shook his hand and said, "Well, happy birthday, how old are you today?"

Doze is with the Camp Geiger School of Infantry and is a small weapons instructor. His parents are Vicki and Kent Doze, who lived in Colby and Brewster for many years before moving to Wichita.

"It was a unique experience for Jesse," his mother said.

"It was an honor for Jesse and the other Marines to have their picture taken with the president and his wife — something most of us can never claim in our lifetime."

# State continues to suffer from drought

MANHATTAN — Kansas still is suffering from drought, despite the rains that came at the end of February and are likely to fall in above-average amounts through much of March.

"The rains are welcome, of course — except when they cause flooding problems," said Mary Knapp, Kansas, state climatologist.

"They've also been much more widespread than previously. Even northwest Kansas has gotten some moisture.

In drought-troubled Colby, for example, March 1 brought almost one-half inch of rainfall. That was more moisture than Colby had received this year in December, January and February ... combined.

"But our current drought was a long time in the making, and it won't disappear overnight. In fact, by late spring we could lose all of the recovery we're making now."

Thus far, long-term predictions are suggesting that after March, the state has even odds. It's as likely to be drier than normal as it is to be wetter than normal, she said.

"Unfortunately, the outlook for summer's temperatures isn't that favorable. They're expected to be

## A drought that floods?

To help Kansans understand how their state can be in a drought while experiencing drift-building snowfalls and then flooding rains, state climatologist Mary Knapp explains the moisture situation in terms of a financial budget:

"Several years ago, your boss starting cutting your pay by irregular, but significant amounts. You haven't been able to live on your monthly salary. You've had to dip into your savings time and again. "So, now your (rainy day) fund is gone. You haven't even got enough buried in the back yard to meet the big bills, such as

taxes and insurance, that just come at certain times of year.

"Like a single big rainfall, a Christmas bonus won't immediately get you back to where you used to be. A Christmas, Valentine's and Easter bonus won't do the job.

"You need your salary to return to its normal level and stay there. At that, building up your savings again will take a long time, though; so, your regular salary plus a raise would be even better.

"And the same holds true when recovering from a drought," she said.

above normal — which translates into a greater demand for water. Moisture evaporates more quickly when it's unusually hot. Plants need more irrigating. People tend to take more showers, wash more clothes and play in the water more," Knapp said.

So, odds are, those who plan on planting this spring should do so as early as possible. That will give plants a better chance of getting es-

tablished or starting to mature before the temperatures soar. Two long-term trends that Knapp's analyses have uncovered may also affect the state, s chances this summer.

Overall, the rainfall was higher than the long-term average. But, just as important, we started getting more moisture than normal in late winter and less than normal in July-August.

"That has had important implications for Kansas crops," she said.

Historically, Kansas gets the lion's share of its yearly moisture from late spring through early fall.

But, 2004's late-winter moisture could very well be an example of the 1971-2000 shift Knapp found in annual distribution.

"The change between seasons is usually significant, and for farmers, in particular, how moisture is distributed can be everything.

"Even during a drought, if enough rain falls at the right times, farmers still may be able to harvest a crop," Knapp said.

"This doesn't mean they only need one big storm at planting or any other time. Southwest Kansas has been doing much better than the northwest on moisture, but it got 70 to 80 percent of it from a single storm. That kind of distribution creates more problems than it solves."

Through early March, the western half of Kansas was getting 50 to 75 percent of typical precipitation for the year, she said. The east was running close to or above normal.

As part of that, western Kansas had gotten "dry" winter snows with a very low moisture content. In contrast, Manhattan in February alone had received a record 18.8 inches of snow, and the fluffy stuff had above-average moisture.

The Kansas Weather Data Library posts daily updates for the records and analyses it maintains on K-State Research and Extension, s Website at <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/wdl/>.

# Gay marriage ban divides state's Democrats

TOPEKA (AP) — Although Kansas Democrats deny a split exists in their political party, not everyone at the party's state committee meeting were opposed to a proposed amendment to the Kansas Constitution that would ban gay marriage.

The division struck an awkward tone in a two-day affair sponsored by the Kansas Democratic Party.

The gay marriage issue came up Saturday, toward the end of a largely uneventful business meeting of the state committee.

A proposed amendment to the Kansas Constitution passed the House 88-36 on Friday. The mea-

sure would ban gay marriages and civil contracts in Kansas, defining marriage as between "one man and one woman."

The issue evenly divided Democrats on the House floor, where about half voted for the measure and half against.

Steve Brown, chairman of the Kansas Democratic Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Caucus read the names of the 21 Democrats who voted against the proposed gay marriage ban at the party's committee meeting.

But Brown stopped short of denouncing the proposed amendment to the committee. Instead, he and

others denounced the effort to stop gays from marrying, saying Democrats "should fight any and all attempts to define marriage in a bigoted and biased way."

"We do not want to take the bait of the Republicans and focus our time, manpower and money on the possible disharmony that could be caused by the differing convictions of all of us within the party," Brown said.

The display garnered a standing ovation from all but a handful in the crowd.

House Minority Leader Dennis McKinney supported the gay marriage ban.

McKinney said the "vast majority" of constituents who contacted him were in favor of the amendment.

He added that he "believes that marriage is a fundamental institution."

Rep. Tom Sawyer, a Democrat from Wichita, voted against the amendment.

"Obviously, there's disagreement on the issue, but I don't think it's going to cause a split," he said.

# Identification program raises some questions

INGALLS (AP) — In western Kansas, where feedlots are so vast that one even rates its own scenic overlook along U.S. 50, cattlemen see mandated livestock identification as inevitable.

But some say a bill in the Kansas Legislature that would start a statewide program — which could be folded into a national program if one is created — is an overreaction to a minor threat.

"I don't know if mad cow is the only thing driving this," said Ken Winter, owner of Winter Feed Yard west of Dodge City.

The livestock identification bill, which passed in the House, gives state Livestock Commissioner George Teagarden the authority to start taking inventory of cattle and feedlots across the state.

Teagarden proposed the program to help track farm animals with diseases such as bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow, after the first U.S. case was confirmed in December in Washington state, in a Canadian-born cow.

Federal officials are working on an identification plan and have encouraged states to prepare for participation. Winter believes the goal of proposed livestock ID programs, whether state or federal, is to create a 48-hour "traceback" of livestock if a contagious disease is detected.

## March is National Women's History Month

When she was a child, Cheryl Brown lived four blocks from a school. But the school was all-white and she and her sister, Linda, were black. Their father challenged segregation in the famous 1954 Supreme Court case of Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education.

But the case wasn't just about going to school with white children, it was about opportunity. With opportunity, Cheryl went on to a career in education.

In 1996 she was the first African American to run for the U.S. House of Representatives from Kansas. She also spearheaded the preservation efforts of the Monroe school, a former segregated school in Topeka. Today, Cheryl and her sister operate an educational consulting firm and direct the Brown Foundation.

*Recognition of Cheryl Brown Henderson was brought to you by this newspaper and the local committee for the Kansas Chautauqua, which is hosting "Bleeding Kansas: Where the Civil War Began" June 11-15 in Colby.*

## ~DAILY SPECIALS~

**Monday - 99¢ Arby's Q's**  
**Tuesday - 99¢ Arby's Melts**  
**Wednesday - Any 2 Chicken Sandwiches for \$4.00**



2005 S. Range



*The Thomas County Interagency Coalition and the Regional Prevention Center would like to thank all parents who returned a Parent Survey.*

**Winners of Colby Chamber Bucks:**

**\$100 ~ Kristy Rubio**

**\$50 ~ Sharon Funk**

**\$25 ~ Jeff Krzycki**

**\$10 ~ Melinda Harold**

**\$10 ~ Kenny Withington**

**\$10 ~ ticket number 203193**

*Children of these parents are winners too of \$50, \$25, \$15 or \$10.*

Information from the Parent Survey will be used to create a campaign to reduce underage drinking in our community. For information call 462-8152.

This project is funded by a Drug-Free Communities Support Program grant from the U.S. Department of Justice/Office of National Drug Control Policy/Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

## Report on Education

### We must demand excellence from legislators as well as from students

Tomorrow morning more than half a million Kansas students will walk through the doors of our schools and universities. Will we be ready to meet their unique needs and prepare them for their futures?

All of these students must learn and experience new ideas and information in a way that helps them grow to their highest academic potential. Despite their differences, they also have much in common.

Visiting the classroom of first grader Ben will allow you to see students learning to read. However, Ben is not using the simple primers of the past. He is preparing to read both literature and technical materials. Because of Ben's technical reading skills, he will never struggle to set the clock on his video recorder, nor will the rapid pace of technological change ever set him back. Technical reading will be a commonplace requirement for the citizens of tomorrow. As a first grader Ben already has more computer experience than many adults in his community, and he is eager to do more to expand his reading experiences.

Sixth grader Luisa, who speaks and reads two languages, is a talented student off to an excellent start for a twelve year-old. She already has more language study in her short years than most Kansas adults will ever be able to complete. Luisa will be prepared for the diversity of the Kansas population of 2020. She will be ready to lead in the global business and trade environment in which our state must compete. Her understanding of other languages and cultures will make her a business leader in the Kansas of tomorrow.

If you follow high school senior LaKeesha through just one academic day, the pace will leave you exhausted and amazed. This talented student not only carries a full load of advanced classes but also has a special cell biology project she is researching with her teacher. An honor student, she manages this research around a full complement of activities including sports and the fine arts. The strong science background she has experienced since

**Investing in our schools today will ensure a healthy economic future for Kansas.**

elementary school has made her eager to advance biotechnology in Kansas.

LaKeesha wants to continue her education in Kansas but needs a university with outstanding science laboratory facilities.

Our Kansas classrooms are filled with thousands of students like Ben, Luisa and LaKeesha. They need a strong educational system to prepare them for the future – for our future. They need elected policymakers who understand the need to support our students and schools. They need elected policymakers who won't deprive them of an educational system worthy of the state of Kansas.

We must demand that our legislature address:

- Unstable funding that has not kept up with rising costs and inflation for nearly 10 years.
- Inadequate funding that has allowed class sizes to increase for our most at-risk students.
- The lack of resources to meet the needs of all students and address the growing demands for technology.
- Kansas teacher salaries that have dropped to 41st in the nation making it difficult to attract and retain quality teachers.
- The lack of adequate and affordable health care for all educational employees.

By investing in our schools today, the legislature will ensure a healthy economic future for Kansas. The vitality and strength of our state is at risk if they fail to act. Our legislators are accountable and responsible for our future.

Many elected officials talk about how hard these decisions will be, and how the time is not right. But the children who walked through those doors this morning have only one chance to get an education, and we cannot afford to let that chance slip away.

For students like Ben, Luisa and LaKeesha, the time to act is now.

**Kansas National Education Association**

# American Profile

Celebrating Hometown Life  
(available in trade area only)

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Christy Levings, an elementary classroom teacher in Olathe, is the elected President of the 25,000 teaching, support and retired staff members of the Kansas National Education Association. kneanews@knea.org.