Picking the prize



Matt Hull, right, watched Chris Griggs pick a prize during the the sponsors for the event. Prizes included a DVD player, stereo, Community Awareness Team's free smoke-free bingo Saturday television, household items, DVDs and compact discs. Carla night. The event was at the Jaycee's Center, which was one of Sharp, director, said she was pleased with the turnout.

TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

GOP school plan shifts decisions to districts

<u>By JOHN HANNA</u>

AP Political Writer TOPEKA(AP)-House Republican leaders act these days like parents who are oblivious to the faults of their children.

Speaker Doug Mays and his colleagues won't acknowledge the flaws in their offspring, a \$92 million school finance plan, even though the defects seem obvious to others who examine the proposal. Most of the flaws involve the plan's heavy reliance — to the tune of up to \$64 million — on local property taxes to provide extra money for schools.

House GOP leaders have fashioned a plan that passes important state decisions about education spending to local school boards, letting them make the difficult choices.

Under the plan, school districts would be allowed to increase spending on special-education programs by up to \$40.5 million, but districts would have to reduce or eliminate a property tax break for homeowners to get some of the funds. Kansas currently exempts the first \$2,300 of a residential

Analysis

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and her fellow Democrats contend the high court is more likely to defer to the Legislature if it makes a good faith crease because the recovering effort to address Bullock's order.

Democrats have a plan to defend -Sebelius' proposal to raise sales, property and individual income taxes and phase in a \$304 million increase in education spending over funding schools." three years.

While higher property taxes would raise \$50 million over three would be imposing the increases, not local districts.

Meanwhile, GOP leaders must forge a majority from a diverse group that includes rural legislators who don't want their districts to lose derstand. any money, anti-tax conservatives, conservatives who are suspicious of public schools on principle and Johnson County moderates with ally is responsible and has to think sometimes stunningly parochial views.

Senate Republican leaders

to the Kansas Supreme Court, but higher liquor taxes — a deal-killer in the House, leaders there say.

House GOP leaders said they wanted to avoid a statewide tax ineconomy remains too fragile.

As for forcing local boards of education to raise local property taxes, Mays said in an interview, "That's the traditional means of

However, in a 1994 decision on school finance, the Supreme Court said the Kansas Constitution gives years under her plan, the state the state the responsibility to fund schools adequately enough to provide a "suitable" education to all children. Bullock's December ruling starts with that premise.

Even fairly green legislators un-

"The state needs to support education," said freshman Rep. Roger Reitz, R-Manhattan. "The state rein terms of what's best for all the kids in Kansas."

Yet Mays refused to concede the drafted a \$65.1 million plan that point. He said local boards of eduproperty's assessed value from the avoids local property taxes. But cation have been always been held

Mays said only in the past decade has the state become responsible for funding schools.

Then, Mays fell back on the rationale that parents often use to excuse a child's failings: It's a phase.

"This is likely not a permanent thing," he said of the House GOP's plan reliance on local property

taxes. Educators and other legislators aren't mollified by assurances that the House GOP represents only a phase in a multiyear school finance debate.

'They've completely forgotten the constitutional mandate that it's the state's responsibility to provide resources for a suitable education," said Senate Education Committee Chairman Dwayne Umbarger, R-Thayer.

University plans review of cadaver program

sity of Kansas officials say they are make sure that extra bodies are used according to donors' wishes.

The company that deals with the university's extra cadavers, National Anatomical Service, is accused of misusing seven cadavers obtained from Tulane University's medical school.

Officials have said the seven cadavers were sold to the Army and blown up in land mine experiments. Tulane has since suspended their relationship with National Anatomical Service, a New York-based company that distributes bodies nationwide.

Funeral director John Vincent Scalia, who owns National Anatomical Service, has assured the University of Kansas that its bodies were used as intended.

In a letter sent to school officials earlier this month, he wrote, " ...

Public Notice

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THOMAS COUNTY, KANSAS PROBATE DIVISION

In the Matter of the Estate of Marjorie I. Moos, Deceased No. 04-PR-8

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

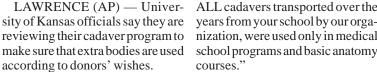
The State Of Kansas To All Persons Concerned:

You are hereby notified that on March 17 2004, a Petition for Probate of Will and Issuance of Letters Testamentary was filed in this Court by Larry Loftus, an heir, devisee and legatee and executor named in the "Last Will and Testament of Mariorie I. Moos." deceased. All creditors of the decedent are notified to exhibit their demands against the estate within four months from the date of the first publication of this notice, as provided by law, and if their demands are not thus exhibited, they shall be forever barred.

> LARRY LOFTUS PETITIONER

Submitted by: H. David Starkey, #8686 Starkey & Gatz, L.L.P. P. 0. Box 346 Colby, Kansas 67701 (785) 460-3383 Attorney for Petitioner

(Published in The Colby Free Press on March 22, 29, and April 5, 2004)



University officials said they believe Scalia's assurances, but are "doing everything humanly possible" to make sure the bodies were used as donors intended.

"As far as we can tell, there's been no breach of our understanding or contract with anyone who's dealt with our material," said Dale Abrahamson, who oversees the university's program and is chairman of its anatomy and cell biology department.

Public Notice

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THOMAS COUNTY, KANSAS

In the Matter of the Estate of Kerry M. Reilley aka Kerry Michael Reilley, Deceased

NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT

No. 03-P-11

The State of Kansas to All Persons Concerned

You are hereby notified that a petition has been filed on March 18, 2004, in this Court by Izetta M. Rummel, administrator of the estate of Kerry M. Reilley a/k/a Kerry Michael Reilley, deceased, praying for a final settlement of the estate, approval of her acts, pro ceedings and accounts as administrator, al lowance for attorneys' fees and expenses determination of the heirs, devisees, and lega tees entitled to the estate and assignment to them in accordance with the Will of Kerry M Reilley a/k/a Kerry Michael Reilley, deceased You are hereby required to file your written defenses thereto on or before April 13, 2004 at 10:00 o'clock AM, on such day, in such Court, in the City of Colby, in Thomas County, at which time and place such cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon said petition

> IZETTA M. RUMMEL PETITIONER

Submitted by: John D. Gatz, #10808 Starkey & Gatz, L.L.F P. 0. Box 346 Colby, Kansas 6770' (785) 460-3383 Attorney for Petitioner

(Published in the Colby Free Press on March 22, 29, and April 5, 2004)

785-877-3361



\$46 a year.

The levy is \$20 for every \$1,000 of a residential property's assessed value.

In addition, 16 school districts mostly in northeast Kansas would be able to raise their property taxes by up to \$23.5 million because in theory — the cost of living in those districts is higher than in the rest of the state and teachers need higher salaries.

Mays, R-Topeka, and other GOP leaders in the House give plenty of reasons why their plan is a good short-term fix, and with an 80-45 majority in their chamber, might see it pass.

However, the plan has gained no widespread bipartisan respect.

"This is the worst possible solution you could have to fund schools," Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, D-Topeka, said after reviewing the plan last week.

Pressure to pass a school finance plan comes from education officials.

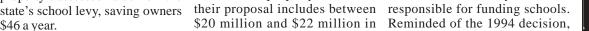
Tough financial times have left state aid to school districts stranded at \$3,863 for two years, as higher salaries and insurance costs have eaten into districts' budgets.

In Mays' home school district in Topeka, officials project that costs of current programs will outstrip revenues by \$7 million for the 2004-05 school year if the Legislature provides no additional funding. On Friday, in hopes of saving money, the district announced it would kill a summer school program that helps poor students who are struggling.

Pressure also comes from a lawsuit filed against the state in 1999 by the Dodge City and Salina school districts.

Shawnee County District Judge Terry Bullock ruled in December that the state's school finance formula is constitutionally flawed, hurting poor and minority students the most. Bullock also concluded that the state might need to increase its \$2.6 billion in aid by as much as \$1 billion.

The state has appealed the ruling





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