



# COLBY FREE PRESS

## Blockage of order sought

By JOHN MILBURN

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA (AP) — Attorneys for the state have asked the Kansas Supreme Court to block a district judge's order that public schools close this fall unless legislators revise the state's education funding system.

The request Wednesday came a day after a final order issued by Shawnee County District Judge Terry Bullock, who said Kansas needs to fix what he has identified as unconstitutional flaws in the state's school finance formula.

Attorneys representing the state called Bullock's order "disruptive and damaging" to the public school system.

"There is absolutely no legitimate reason why such an order must be entered before this court reviews the interim order," the attorneys wrote.

The Supreme Court will consider whether to grant the stay within two weeks, said court spokesman Ron Keefover.

Whitney Watson, spokesman for Attorney General Phill Kline, said the request for a stay of Bullock's order would be followed by an appeal of the final ruling.

The Kansas Supreme Court is expected to hear the appeal in September.

Meanwhile, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius planned to discuss school finance issues during a news conference earlier today.

A December ruling from Bullock that the existing school finance system is "inadequate and inequitable" and therefore unconstitutional already has been appealed to the state Supreme Court.

In his ruling Tuesday, Bullock said he contemplates issuing another order requiring state and local officials to "cease and desist the expenditure of funds" for public elementary and secondary schools after June 30.

Thus, the judge's actions would not affect schools' current academic year.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Travis Egbert and Lottie Gartland of Grinnell looked for names of loved ones on the Moving Wall yesterday in Oakley. The wall, a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.,

bears the name of the more than 58,000 Americans who lost their lives in Southeast Asia. The wall is on display at Annie Oakley Park until Sunday.

## Moving Wall arrives in Oakley

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

A piece of history is on display in Oakley.

The replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. with more than 58,000 names of Americans who died in Southeast Asia is on display until Sunday. The wall is standing at the Annie Oakley Park.

Larry Rowilson with Oakley VFW Post 2981 helped bring the wall to the community. A Vietnam veteran himself, he said he hopes it's a moving experience for people who see it.

"Northwest Kansas is good about supporting all the veterans," he said. "This is a way of saying thank you."

He said soldiers returning home from Vietnam didn't get

the same treatment when they came home, unlike soldiers coming back from WW I and II and Korea.

"They were not welcomed home at all," Rowilson said. "This is a way of healing all the wounds and bringing us all together as a group."

He said bringing the wall to Oakley was a community and county-wide effort.

The Oakley Fire Department helped by holding a street dance and also a spaghetti supper to raise money. Also, they've sold t-shirts, mugs and license plates and are taking donations.

Rowilson said they made a commitment to raise all the money inside the county and they managed to accomplish that goal.

He said the wall was last in the area 14 years ago when it was displayed in Atwood and hopes it's

second appearance in northwest Kansas brings in many people.

"We've had people from Nebraska already and there's going to be more," Rowilson said.

The wall isn't the only thing on display.

The Living Memorial Museum ran by curator Dennis Brown of Inman and his brother Kent Dible of Colby is set up on the ball fields not far from the wall.

One exhibit are many artifacts collected by Brown or donated to the museum, including many examples of items used in Vietnam or representative of what soldiers used. Brown said he also has many items from WW I and II, Korea and the last two Persian Gulf conflicts, although the emphasis is on Vietnam.

Gear, clothing and weapons are part of the exhibit and Brown said

there are also some civilian items included.

Rowilson said another display is "Faces on the Wall," which features pictures of some of the soldiers who died in Vietnam. He said it's the first time that exhibit has been in western Kansas.

There also is a display at the Fick Fossil Museum related to the wall and other exhibits going on.

Rowilson said everyone is invited to take part in the festivities and view the exhibits, including school and church organizations, families and anyone else who wants to come.

"For Oakley, this is going to be once in a lifetime," he said.

For information, call (785) 672-0030.

## New Colby city ordinance undergoes tests

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

One of the newer ordinances recently approved by the city council had its first application at last week's meeting when two residential properties were cited as being in violation of code.

The goal of the new environmental code is to make sure properties appear better kept, said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager. It was also necessary to change the city's ordinance to meet the state statutes for dealing with these types of problems, she said.

The two structures were at 775 S. Lincoln, owned by Joan Griggs, and at 405 W. Ash, which is owned by Norman and Betty Behring.

After talking with the owners or representative of both properties, the council voted unanimously to move forward on the process at the S. Lincoln property and tabled any further action at the W. Ash location until a later meeting.

Armstrong said both properties fit the criteria of being in violation

of the ordinance and when the council determines a property is in violation, Mayor Warren Hixson will then sign an order of violation. That order gives the owner 15 days to fix an exterior yard violation, 45 days to alleviate an exterior structure violation and if requested 15 days to request a hearing with the governing body to include council members, the mayor, city manager and city attorney.

Prompted by complaints, Doug Lewis, the city's code enforcement officer, visited both locations and filled out a report noting deterioration and the lack of any aesthetic value.

At the 775 S. Lincoln property, Lewis said there was an abandoned vehicle, along with a bicycle, and various other larger personal property items scattered and accumulating in the backyard with no particular order. Structurally, he noticed boarded up windows and the outside stairs were in need of repair.

The property at 405 W. Ash, while not riddled with junk-type

deposits in the yard, Lewis did note in his report that there are some structural concerns identifying visible holes cut in the roof and side walls, along with the fence and steps to the building in disrepair.

He also noted that the building at one time had also been used by the fire department for training with the understanding that it was to be torn down by the Behrings not long after those exercises.

Although Griggs was not present at the meeting, she did have a representative speak on her behalf.

"Mrs. Griggs is in the process of purchasing another home and hopes to know more next week," said her son, Gerald Griggs. Once she moves out, he said, it is her intention to either sell or destroy the existing structure.

The council approved the order of violation on the S. Lincoln property, but Mayor Warren Hixson told Gerald Griggs to supply the council with any new information or if Griggs does enter into a new contract to buy a different house.

The storage-type building on W. Ash was not as cut and dry as the other location. Armstrong said there had been a misunderstanding between the owners and the fire department as to the fate of the structure.

The fire department was under the impression that the Behrings were planning to destroy the building sometime after the training session. However, from what the Behrings said at the council meeting, the idea of tearing the structure down was not an option.

The Behrings explained that after the fire department had completed their fire safety extraction training almost a year ago, the place "was a total disaster."

Betty said she was under the impression that no holes would be cut in the roof and the training would not require them to knock out side walls, which was done.

Since that time, Betty said, they have made many repairs to include a new roof, new interior heat and electrical system and stucco work

as their donation after the fire department completed its training.

"We are not complaining about repairing this building," she said. "We allowed the fire department to use the house for training in case someday it could save someone's life."

As for the reason why the Behrings said they didn't ever plan on destroying the building, Betty told the council it would have been too expensive to tear down the shingle roof.

"We now use the building strictly for storage," she said.

Fire Chief Bob McLemore said it was a regional fire safety training and he really couldn't say which of the fire departments in the area was responsible for cutting holes in the roof or sidewalls.

McLemore also said he must have misunderstood the arrangement. "We were under the impression that the Behrings planned to tear down the structure," he said.

Following the discussion, the council agreed to postpone action.

### Scouts seeking donations

Two Colby girl scouts from Troop 162 are making hygiene and comfort disaster relief packages to benefit the Thomas County Red Cross.

Jessica Kennedy and Sarah Oesterreich, girl scouts, have left boxes at Colby Photo, Pioneer Memorial Library, College Drive Assembly, the Berean Church or the *Colby Free Press*, for donations until Friday, May 21. For questions, call Deanna Oesterreich, 462-3267.

### Fair board meeting tonight

The Thomas County Fair Board will meet at 8 p.m. tonight at the 4-H Building at the fairgrounds. There are many old and new business items on the agenda. The meeting is open to the public.

## A 1996 grad will give talk

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Colby High School commencement ceremonies will be held at 3 p.m., Sunday, in the Colby Community Building. This year's speaker, said Brian Kraus, high school principal, will be Michael Schwanke, who graduated from Colby in 1996 and now is a news anchor on Channel 11 at Wichita.

Some 77 students are eligible for graduation, Kraus said, with the ceremony to include a performance by the high school band and choir, speeches from the valedictorian and salutatorian and presenting diplomas.

Prior to graduation, there will be a Baccalaureate Service, sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, at 1:30 p.m. Sunday in the Little Theater at the Colby Community Building.

All Colby High School seniors and their families are invited and encouraged to attend this event, said Colby Wesleyan Pastor Gene Rothfuss, who will be delivering the message.

"This service is a time of encouragement," he said, "and a free Bible will be available to the graduates."

As for the eligible graduates, Superintendent Kirk Nielsen said it takes hard work for students to complete high school.

Colby students, he said, need to earn 24 credits for graduation.

"It's been that way for a lot of years," he said. "That's two more than most districts require."

The seniors were in classes through Wednesday and after school went through a practice ceremony. All other high school students will be in school through Friday, May 21.

For questions, call 460-5300.



Schwanke



### Warming trend

**Colby, Oakley, Hoxie area**  
**Tonight...**Becoming partly cloudy. Lows in the 30s. North winds 5 to 15 mph and gusty.  
**Friday...**Partly cloudy. Warmer. Highs in the mid 60s. West winds around 5 mph shifting to the southeast 5 to 15 mph in the afternoon.  
**Friday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 40s. Southeast winds 10 to 20 mph.  
**Saturday...**Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms in the afternoon. Breezy. Highs in the upper 70s. South winds 15 to 25 mph.  
**Saturday night through Sunday night...**Partly cloudy. Windy. Highs near 80. Lows in the upper 40s.

**The numbers**  
Wednesday's high, 70  
Low this morning, 35  
Records for May 13, 99 in 1962 and 26 in 1966  
Year ago today, 82 and 46  
Precipitation past 24 hours, 0.18  
May total, 0.27  
Soil temperature, 70

**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.

## Briefly

### Amusement meeting Monday

The Thomas County Amusement Association will meet at 8 p.m., Monday, at the Thomas County Office Complex. With 2 1/2 months left before fair time, preparations will be among agenda items. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### Flea market donations needed

The Thomas County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council is sponsoring its annual flea market. As in years past, organizers are taking donations, which will be tax deductible. Anyone who would like to contribute can do so by dropping items off Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the old Taylor Motors Building (next to Service Oil) 445 N. Lake, Colby. Larger or bulkier items can be picked up on request by calling the

ADAC office. This year's flea market will be held Saturday, May 22, at 8 a.m. For other questions, or to request a pickup, call 462-6111.

### Colby College commencement nears

The Colby Community College will celebrate its 39th annual commencement starting at 2 p.m., Saturday, in the Colby Community Building. This year's commencement speaker is Sen. Stephen Morris of Hugoton. In addition to degrees and certificates being presented to students, the honorary associate degree will be given to Kenton and Sheila Krehbiel. Other awards include the Mosier Award to the year's outstanding graduate and the Tangeman Award to the college's distinguished teacher in 2004. For questions, call Debbie Schwanke, 462-3984, ext. 249.

