

COLBY FREE PRESS

10 pages

Retiring pastor sets record

Fran Harwerth served Berean Church 43 years

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

Colby's longest tenured pastor will be stepping down at the end of June. Fran Harwerth, of the Berean Church, and his wife Joan are retiring after more than 43 years with the church.

The Harwerths came to Colby and he gave his first service as Berean pastor on Sept. 17, 1961.

"The church was just a Bible class," Fran said.

"We started the first regular services."

Four families were all it started with and has since grown to an average attendance of about 165 people last year and its own church building.

"We had a baby son and baby church," Joan said.

They first met in the city hall basement and in 1962, the congregation purchased its first building at Second and Grant.

In 1973, they bought property

and in 1984, the present church was built. It was later finished in 1990.

Fran said the goal for the church was an attendance of 50 in 10 years of existence and 100 at 40 years. The church has exceeded that, and he said it could not have been done without the people and the grace of God.

He said he'll be 69 this summer and decided it was time to step down.

Fran said he thought about another year but chose this to be his last year.

Harwerth is originally from McDonald and Joan is a native of Indiana.

He came to Colby right out of college at 25 and his post at the Berean Church became his career.



J. Harwerth

The Harwerths came to the community before Colby Community College and I-70 were built and John F. Kennedy was president.

They raised both of their sons in the community, and watched the church and the community grow along with their family.

"We kind of grew with it," Joan said. "This community has been a real blessing to us."

Fran said a lot has changed through the years, both in the community and for churches.

The biggest change, he said, has been the issue of trust and church scandals.

Other changes he's seen in ministry are how services are done and how much music is used, along with the pastor's role.

At the beginning of his career, pastors were expected to visit more with people but that has also changed, and so has the amount of evangelical events churches hold.

Now, there are more children's

activities and smaller groups, and evening services are utilized more.

He said the Berean Church has embraced that niche with vacation Bible school and Awana for children.

However, one thing has not changed, Fran said, and that is the message of God's word.

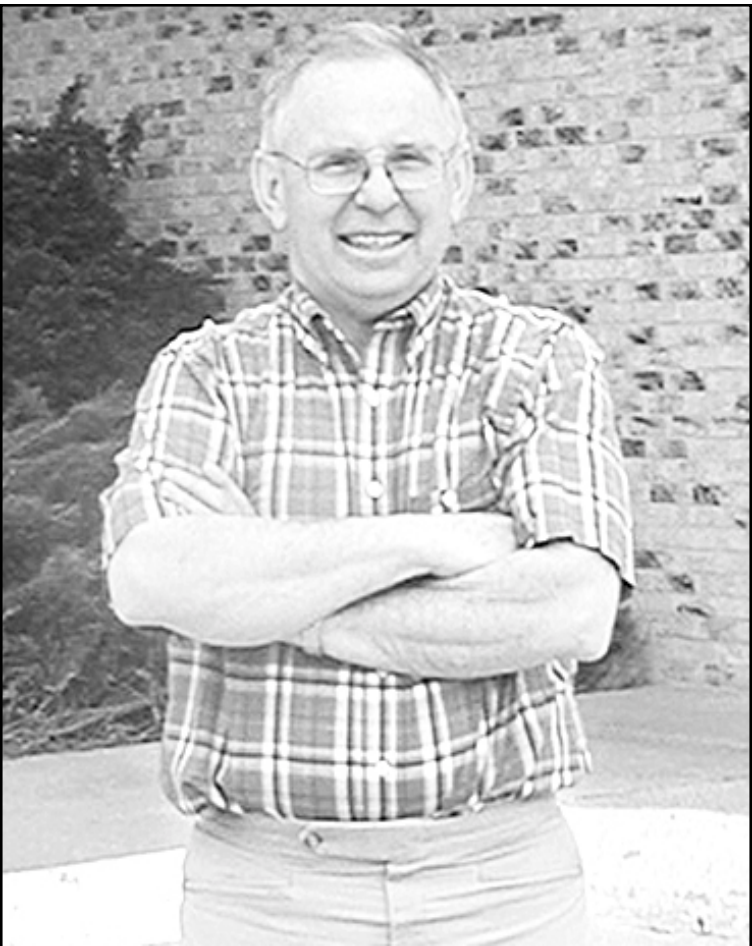
He also said it's not unusual for a pastor to stay at one church for a long period of time, although his 43 years is unusual. Fran said 10-20 years at one church isn't that unique.

Though retiring from his pastoral duties, they both will still remain active, although the couple hasn't decided what they're going to do.

They might go see their sons, but said they will decide later just what their plans might be.

They're both grateful for the time they've had in Colby, the experience and the people they've met.

"God has brought wonder people to the church," Fran said.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Pastor Fran Harwerth posed in front of his church located on Franklin Avenue. He is believed to be the longest tenured pastor in Colby.

Pet owners advised to find alternatives to fox trapping

By Patty Decker

Free Press Editor

There's two sides to every story and last week's front page article regarding the red fox was no exception.

After speaking with officials at the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Department in Colby, there were some legalities and philosophical issues overlooked in the initial story.

For example, one of the solutions to a roaming fox that kills cats in the original article was to call the police department and request an animal trap or protect one's property through force, if necessary.

However, sometimes by following a few simple alternatives, the problem could solve itself with a better understanding of the animal.

Before the decision to trap or destroy a fox is made, Matt Bain, wildlife biologist based in Colby, said residents might consider "covering all the bases."

One way to avoid unwanted critters would be not to leave any food outside. A fox, he said, will eat dog food or other pet foods unless the food is put up or out of



There is more than one way to out fox a red fox and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks had a few suggestions to try before going with the option of destroying the animal.

reach.

Another thing to consider is keeping domestic pets inside at night. A fox is a night hunter.

Even with precautions, when a fox causes damage to property, Bain said, then

the option of trapping could be necessary — but — the wildlife and parks department wants to promote trapping in the regular season.

For those unfamiliar, the regular trapping season for fox in 2004-05 was Nov. 17

through Feb. 15. Although the 2005-06 season has not been determined, Bain said it would fall close to last year's dates.

Chris Berens, also a wildlife biologist in Colby, said that as cities expand out, that type of growth infringes on the habitat of foxes.

"The fox is being pushed out of their home and they will deal and adapt the best they can with what they have to work with," Berens said.

The fox, he explained, tends to stay on the fringes of towns rather than further out since their only real competitor is the coyote.

"Coyotes don't like people," Bain added, which is why the fox will remain closer to towns and avoid the competition.

"The ideal scenario for dealing with the fox population," Bain said, "is trapping during the regular season."

Benny Young, enforcement officer with the wildlife department said, while it is true that people have the right to protect their domestic animals, it is also true that Colby has a leash law, which does include cats.

"It is my understanding that domestic

animals need to be on a leash or confined in a fenced yard," he said.

Young also offered some food for thought: "If a person decides to break the law by letting their pets run loose — how can that same person claim they are trying to protect their pet by trapping the foxes?"

"Red foxes are furbearing animals and are protected by state law," he said (expect during the trapping season).

Foxes have a well deserved reputation of being very smart, Young said, and they will take the easiest meal they can find for themselves and their pups.

Prior to taking radical steps when dealing with animals, like the fox, Young, Bain and Berens would advise others to call them with questions or for suggestions.

If keeping animals inside is an inconvenience to pet owners (not wanting to follow the leash laws) than that is not a good enough reason to kill the fox.

"They (foxes) are just following the laws of nature," Young said.

"The question is can man follow his own laws as well?"

To reach them, call 462-3367.

Thar she blows!



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Street corners around Colby were a little wetter than usual Tuesday as Colby Fire Department firefighter Don Phillips flushed hydrants. A hydrant on Franklin was one of several that Phillips worked on. Members of the fire department will be working on all of the hydrants in town for the next two to three weeks.

Memorial garden dedication on Oakley's Sunday schedule

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

OAKLEY — A memorial garden honoring the late Senator Stan Clark and Logan County residents who have served in the military will be dedicated in Oakley on Sunday.

The Garden of Honor and Stan Clark Memorial will be dedicated at 2 p.m. at Bertrand Park, located at 700 West Third Street.

Larry Rowilson, junior vice commander of VFW Post 2981 will open the ceremonies featuring the Oakley Community Choir singing the national anthem.

Special guest speakers for the event will include Clark's son, Will, along with State Representatives Virginia Beamer and Jim Morrison, State Senator Ralph Ostmeyer,

VFW 9th District Commander J.T. Plummer and State VFW Commander Larry Graham.

Special guests will be the late Senator's wife, Ruthie Clark, and his parents, Bob and Edith Clark, all of Oakley.

The garden is inside the city park located on the north side of the Oakley Public Library and Fick Fossil and History Museum.

Rowilson, along with Bill Parke, Mike McCafferty, and Frank Munk, also veterans, came up with the idea for the new garden area.

Large free-standing stones with the names of Logan County residents who served in the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force and Marines will be listed on the stones. Each stone will have enough space

for 380 name plates.

Name plates will be sold for \$10, and they may be purchased by contacting Rowilson at (785) 672-3584.

Also in the park is a silhouette of a soldier kneeling by the grave of a fallen soldier with an M16 in the ground, and in the future a tank and anti-aircraft gun will go on display, Rowilson said.

Construction for the majority of the garden area is being done by Parke, along with assistance from the Oakley High School Chapter of the Future Farmers of America. Landscaping for the football shaped memorial area was done by the Oakley Garden Club and was spearheaded by Jane Weiland and Sally Runnals.

Police accuse father of killings

ZION, Ill. (AP) — When the father of a missing 8-year-old found her bloodied body in a ravine, next to her lifeless best friend, it seemed every parent's worst nightmare.

Jerry Hobbs, just out of prison, led police to the girls himself. They wanted to know how he found them. They kept asking him questions. Finally, after hours of being interviewed, Hobbs was charged with both murders, a crime that stunned this small city near the Wisconsin line.

"I think its safe to say his reaction to questions piqued the officers' interest to question him further," prosecutor Michael Waller said in announcing the charges Tuesday.

Waller would not discuss possible motives for the killings but said details would come out when Hobbs appeared in bond court Wednesday.

"This horrific crime has terrorized and traumatized the Zion community and, I think it's safe to say, people of good will everywhere," Waller said. "There's no rational explanation or reasonable motive that can be ascribed to an act of horror like this."

Hobbs, 34, took authorities to the bodies just off a bike path early Monday, claiming he had spotted them while searching for his missing daughter with the girl's grandfather, Arthur Hollabaugh.

Hobbs was questioned through the day Monday and again Tuesday in the deaths of Laura Hobbs, 8, and Krystal Tobias, 9. Both girls had been beaten and stabbed multiple times and then left to die in the woods on Mother's Day.

The county coroner, Richard Keller, said the girls were found side-by-side, facing up and did not appear to have been sexually assaulted.

"If it was him, then good thing they brought him down," said Krystal's 15-year-old brother, Alberto Segura. "We never thought a father would do that to a daughter. They were just babies. They didn't do anything wrong."

