



Free Press Viewpoint

Project has world of possibilities

No matter where we sit in this country, or even Thomas County, we are surrounded by food in one way or another.

Drive near Colby's Interstate 70 exit and you see a variety of food, from restaurants to the grocery store. Look out a window from a rural Thomas County home and see the cattle, wheat and corn fields, that eventually evolve into things inside those places near the I-70 exit.

We are used to those things. We take it for granted. We can't think of having it any other way. We don't think of having it any other way.

But there are people who are not that close to food physically and figuratively – and some of our area people are wanting to do something about it.

Members from a few Colby churches have discussed the possibility of starting a Foods Resource Bank project. A project is when a farmer donates the value of a portion of his crop or livestock to Foods Resource Bank. Others help the farmer by donating either time, money, equipment, or all three, to help with production of the crop.

After the crop has gone to market, the value of the determined quantity is used to help people around the world learn how to produce and sustain their own sources of food.

Based in Michigan, Foods Resource Bank has projects in many agriculture-heavy states including Kansas.

Some Foods Resource Bank projects are a combination of two churches. A rural church provides the farmer, field and labor while a city church provides the money for the crop. Even though Thomas County is far from the metro areas of Denver, Colo., and Kansas City, there should be enough resources and cooperation to establish a Foods Resource Project this year.

And the reward will be giving people on the other side of the world a sample of what we have and enjoy.

- Publisher, John Van Nostrand

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press,

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Strange situations end up in court

It never ceases to amaze me how frivolous lawsuits pay off in big bucks. I am talking about the "Stella Awards," which were named after Stella Liebeck, an elderly woman who spilled coffee on herself and awarded damages against was McDonalds.

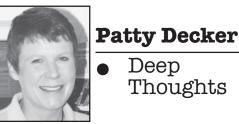
Since that case, someone or some group has been compiling the most frivolous lawsuits in the United States. I found the list online and was told about some of them from a friend.

For those who haven't seen the latest list, here it is with the winners in no particular order.

• The first acknowledgment goes to Kara Walton of Claymont, Del., who sued the owner of a nightclub.

Apparently, she fell from the bathroom window to the floor and knocked out her two front teeth. (Gives new meaning to the song, "All I want for Christmas . . .") The incident was alleged to have occurred when Walton was trying to sneak out through the window in the ladies room to avoid paying the \$3.50 coverage charge. She was awarded \$12,000 and dental expenses.

 Then there was Jerry Williams of Little Rock, Ark., who was awarded \$14,500 and medical expenses after being bit on his behind by the neighbor's beagle. The beagle was on a chain in its owner's fenced yard. Although Williams had sued for more money, the jury determined that the animal might have been "a little" provoked by Williams who was shooting him repeatedly with a pellet gun. • In Los Angeles, Carl Truman, 19, won his lawsuit, after his neighbor, the owner of



a Honda Accord, ran over his hand with his car.

Apparently, Truman did not notice there was someone at the wheel of the car when he was trying to steal the hubcaps. Truman won \$74,000 in expenses.

• Amber Carson was awarded \$113,000 from Philadelphia restaurant. The case involved Carson slipping on a soft drink spill and breaking her tailbone. The beverage was on the floor because Carson threw it at her boyfriend 30 seconds earlier during a fight.

• A Bristol, Penn. resident, Terrence Dickson, received \$500,000 by a jury. According to information on this one, Dickson was leaving a house he had just finished robbing by way of the garage, but was unable to get the garage door to open due to the automatic door opener malfunctioning. He could not go back into the house either because the door connecting the house and garage locked when he pulled it shut. The owners of the home were on vacation, so Dickson, who was locked in the garage for eight days, survived on a case of pop and a large bag of dry dog food. In his lawsuit, he claimed the situation caused him

mental anguish.

• Another huge jury award of \$780,000 was awarded to Kathleen Robertson of Austin, Texas, after she broke her ankle by tripping over a toddler who was running inside a furniture store.

The owners of the store were surprised at the jury's verdict since the misbehaving toddler was Robertson's son.

• And this one is considered the favorite by Stella Award readers everywhere.

An Oklahoma City man, Merv Grazinski, bought a new Winnebago motor home. On the trip home from an Oklahoma University football game, Grazinski said that while driving on the freeway, he set his cruise control for 70 mph.

He then said he left the driver's seat to go into the back and make himself a cup of coffee. As is fitting for a Stella Award and of no surprise to most "reasonable" people, the motor home left the freeway, crashed and then overturned.

He sued the Winnebago dealership claiming he was not advised a situation like that would occur after reading the owner's manual. He said since it wasn't in the manual, he didn't know he couldn't do that.

public/legislators/jmorriso

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COLBY FREE PRESS

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State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.

Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

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Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Ron VanLoenen, Judy McKnight THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth Colby, Kan., 67701. THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news credited to it or not otherwise herein. Member Kansas Press Association, Inland Press Association and National Newspaper Association. SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$38, 8 months \$53, 12 months \$70. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$50, 8 months \$62, 12 months \$78. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$57, 8 months \$67, 12 months \$81. All other states, \$81, 12 months

Nor'West Newspapers Haynes Publishing Company

The company changed their manuals on the basis of the lawsuit and the jury awarded Grazinski \$1.75 million PLUS a new Winnebago motor home.

Sometimes what actually happens is more bizarre than anything that could have been imagined and so goes the expression - truth is stranger than fiction. Decker is editor of the Free Press.

Should consolidation concern Kansans?

From The Salina Journal

Hutchinson, noted that Kansas has 18,000 more local government employees than the average of our four neighboring states.

We rank third among all states in the number of employees who draw paychecks from cities, counties and other local government entities. And we have lots of those entities ranking fifth among the states.

Should this concern us?

should be aware that we are so rich in local Speaking in the Salina Public Library, government, for that gives us the opportu-Dave Kerr, a former state senator from nity to weigh and discuss the value and cost of the governments that serve us. ...

We've done too little in Kansas to question the need for our intricate web of local governments. And even if we were to question that and seek to consolidate and streamline the governments that serve us, state laws would be boulders in our path.

A bill expected to be introduced into the Legislature this week would free Kansas Perhaps. Or maybe not. But at least we communities to consolidate as their resi-

dents see fit. It would keep the state from meddling in local matters. ...

Our extensive local government payroll costs us an estimated \$630 million more than it would if it were on par with neighboring states. What do we get for that money? Are we providing ourselves with a level of service that those in neighboring states envy? Or are our payrolls a cost of inefficiency?

Let us find out. ... Let us reject the notion that a government system set up when we traveled by horse must endure.

