

Judge rules group to pay legal fees in state court

A federal judge did something sensible the other day, bringing Kansas a step closer to putting the school finance debacle behind it.

U.S. District Judge Monti Belot ruled in Wichita that the group Schools for Fair Funding wasn't entitled to have its legal fees in state court paid by the state.

Since 1993, the group, an alliance of "mid-size" Kansas school districts, has spent more than \$3 million in taxpayers' money to sue the state.

Then, the arrogant legal team that runs the group had the temerity to sue in federal court, asking that the state be forced to pay its legal fees.

The group won a controversial decision in state court forcing the Legislature to spend another \$800 million to \$1 billion on schools. State courts refused, however, to force the state also to pay legal fees.

Judge Belot not only denied the request for state legal fees, he dismissed a federal lawsuit filed by the group, saying the case had been settled by the state action.

Attorney General Paul Morrison, a Democrat elected last fall, hailed the ruling as "saving" taxpayers \$2 million to \$3 million. We'll still get the bill, since the school districts raised money for the suit from state and local school taxes.

Oddly enough, the attorney general hailed the suit, which he said had made Kansas schools stronger.

"But it's time for the state to move forward," he

said, "and put our money into classrooms, not courtrooms."

Wise words, but a little late. It will take Kansas decades to recover from the damage done by the school lawsuit, which established that a group that loses in the Legislature can push its political agenda in the courts. And win.

The state Supreme Court asserted extra-constitutional authority to order the Legislature to spend more on schools. Legislative leaders, some of whom had been on the losing side of school-budget votes, decided to blink.

Both the House and Senate caved in, forever weakening their authority and shifting the balance of political power in favor of the courts.

In the meantime, Kansas faces needs ranging from crumbling classrooms to a health-care system which could be likened to a disaster waiting to happen. To get money for schools, the Legislature has short-changed nearly every other fund, from highways to health to the college system.

All these bills will come due about the time the current state surplus disappears in the next recession, and Kansas already has a tax structure that citizens and businesses can't afford.

We should applaud Judge Belot's sensible decision, though, as a step in the right direction, away from litigating the budget and back toward the political process where the governor and Legislature are supposed to settle these issues.

And that's a good thing. — Steve Haynes

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



It is strange how we become dependent on things.

President Bush reminds us that we are "addicted to oil." How else would we get around? We have to have it to operate machinery for work.

When we get home what is the first thing most of us do? We turn on the television. It is what we need to get information and escape from a hectic day.

But one of the oddest obsessions has to be computers.

What got me thinking of this is an

e-mail exchange from an old friend in Denver. Every day or so I get some of the most entertaining emails from him which are sent on to other folks. But sometimes his emails are serious.

He sent an e-mail last week titled "sad day." It came Friday, a day I was on the road selling ads. I didn't come across it until Monday. At first I thought it would be one of his typically funny e-mails. When I opened it I realized it was bad news.

My friend's wife had died Friday morning. It was sudden and a heart

attack was suspected.

I responded by replying via e-mail. What would have been done before over the phone or by mail seemed naturally replaced by our computers.

I guess by it seeming natural proves how much we are dependent on this ever changing technology. And tonight, after I finish working on my computer, I will drive home and watch some television.

County Health Talk

Can Your Child See to Learn?

By Susan Roelfs
County Health Nurse

A thorough examination by an eye doctor is important to ensure that vision problems don't affect your

child's ability to learn.

School screenings, although beneficial, are not a substitute for a comprehensive vision examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. The Eye Care Council and the "See To Learn" program encourage parents and educators to be alert for signs that may indicate vision performance problems such as:

- Frequent rubbing or blinking of the eyes.
- Short attention span or day-dreaming.
- Poor reading.
- Avoiding close work.
- Frequent headaches.
- A drop in scholastic or sports performance.
- Covering one eye.
- Tilted the head (when reading).

- Squinting one or both eyes.
- Placing head close to book or desk when reading or writing.
- Difficulty remembering, identifying and reproducing basic geometric forms.
- Poor eye-hand coordination skills

Participating optometrists for the "See To Learn" program are offering free vision assessments for 3-year-old children in our community. Call today to schedule an appointment: 1-800-906-3937.

As a community resource, the Cheyenne County Health Department has additional pamphlets, book markers and stickers for parents, children and agencies to utilize. Call the health department at 785-332-2381 for assistance.

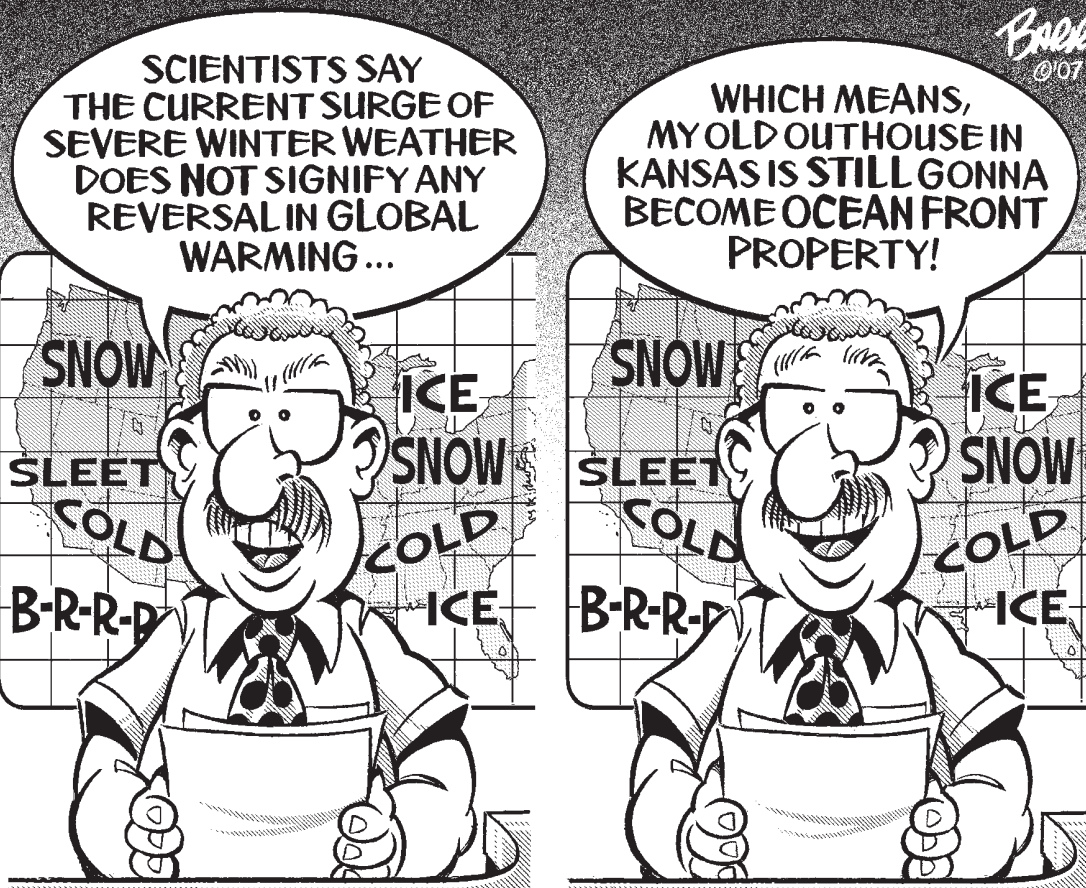
GOD SAYS

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will give their sin, and will heal their land.

II Chronicles 7:14



bob bozo's BAD NEWS/GOOD NEWS



News From the Past

10 years ago - 1997

Tryout for the play "Dust on the Sunflowers" will take place later in February. The play is written by Kate Gienger from Roy Weber's 20-year historical journey Swedish family adventures. It is a musical about real people who lived in Cheyenne County in the 1800s. Janice Churchwell is writing the music and Neva DeGood is helping with the production.

The Cheyenne County Commissioners gave the okay to purchase the materials needed and erect a fence to catch blowing trash at the county's landfill.

Two St. Francis students, Mark Schafer and Toni Rice, were entered in the State PTA Essay Contest after their essays were selected by the local committee.

Boy Scouts in the St. Francis troop include David Rose, Tim Gohl, Brent Like, Mike Dorsch, Derek Fromholtz, Dale Rose, Mike Confer, Brian Schlittenhardt, Ryan Weeks, Brad Carney and Kevin Trembly.

St. Francis tied Norton for the championship at the regional wrestling tournament. Eight Sainty wrestlers, Scott Jenkins, Travis Raile, Gabe Jenkins, Shannon Wilson, Kelly Gabel, Jim Keller, Michael Ochsner and Tyler Krien, qualified to attend

20 years ago - 1987
Elected to the National Honor Society are Susan Hilt, Kelley Lewis, Lisa Jolliffe, Bob Lee and Leslie O'Brien.

The St. Francis Indian wrestling team won the Northwest Kansas League Tournament. St. Francis had four champions: Tony Vandike at 98 pounds,

Mark Sherlock at 132 pounds, Darris DeGood at 138 pounds and Darrin Ross at 185 pounds.

40 years ago - 1967
Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Jones of Bird City will receive an award from the Cheyenne County Bankers for conservation work during 1966. Lydia Orth, Gordon Orth and Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Orth will also receive an award from the Bankers Award Committee.

Sainty wrestlers won their 10th State Title by scoring two points more than Norton at the State meet. Randy Cook, Stan Faulkender and Marvin Raile brought home gold medals.

45 years ago - 1962
This year's Bankers Awards winners for outstanding conservation practices in Cheyenne County are Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Raile and Mr. and Mrs. Harry Schlepp.

The High School Quill and Scroll officers include Danny Smith, Sandra Price and Phil Hinz. Mr. Daryl Leaming is the sponsor.

The St. Francis FFA Chapter won the Albrecht Duroc judging trophy at the Smith Center contest. Members of the team are Lyle Cook, Ole Juhl, Ron Ketter, Steve Nolan and Marvin Peter. Don Hall is the FFA Adviser.

Beauty operator of Cheyenne County observed National Beauty Salon Week by giving a "beauty lift" to patients at the Good Samaritan Village and the Miller Nursing Home.

Construction of a new dial telephone office to serve St. Francis will get underway next month.

Eight wrestlers, Lee Bandel, Gene Bandel, Larry Carrol, Thad Douthit, Fred Isernhagen, Bob Moberly, Ron Krien and Bob Andrist, qualified for the state tournament.

100 years ago - 1907

Miss Belle Fuller is now teaching in Bird City.

The school in District 18 is progressing nicely under the wise management of Miss Ethel Grimes.

Prof. Mueller has his new house in the southeastern part of the city well underway and will soon have it ready for occupancy.

The first baby of the new year, a charming little girl of standard weight and surpassing beauty, arrived at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C.R. Henry on Jan. 3.

Deroy Danielson went to Kansas City to attend the retail implement dealers convention.

Ed Uplinger, our meat market man, went down to Oberlin to get an ice plow to use in putting up ice but was compelled to return home without one.

New county officers being seated include: E.V. Moore, sheriff; Josiah Crosby, county attorney; W.S. Booth, county clerk; A.J. Webber, clerk of the district court; J.M. Adamson, probate judge; and the new county commissioner in the first district is Wm. F. Slagle.

City marshal A.F. Neubauer resigned his office Tuesday night.

Church of Christ
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424
502 W. Spencer
Norman Morrow - Minister
Bible Class 11 a.m.
Morning Worship 10 a.m.
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

United Methodist
Church Office 332-2292,
Church 332-2254,
512 S. Scott
Pastor Morita Truman
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Salem Lutheran Church
332-3002
Pastor Chris Farmer
Sunday School 10 a.m.
Morning Worship 11 a.m.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church
625 S. River • 332-2680
Fr. Roger Meitl
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.
Weekday Mass 8 a.m.
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

First Christian Church
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster
Sunday School 9:20 a.m.
Church Service 10:30 a.m.
Wed. night Bible Study 7 p.m.

Grace Assembly of God
332-2925, Pars. 332-2899
208 E. 2nd
Rev. Rob Meyer
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30
Sunday Eve. Service 6 p.m.

St. Francis Community Church
332-3150
204 N. Quincy Street
Pastor: David Butler
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

Seventh-Day Adventist Church
332-2888 • 3rd & Adams
Pastor Mike Larson
Sabbath School 9:30
Morning Worship 10:45

First Baptist Church
2nd & Scott • 332-3921
J.W. Gildewell, Pastor
Sunday School 9:30
Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,
Wed. AWANA Club 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church
202 N. College
Pastor Ken Hart
332-2928 Pars. 332-2312
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Clough Valley Church of Hope
12 m. west, 6 m. north of SF
Pastor Jason Howard
332-3152
Saturdays 8 p.m. CT or 7 p.m. MT

St. Francis Equity

First National Bank
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nwkansas.com
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