



14 pages

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## Ostrich shot on interstate near Mingo

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
Colby Free Press

Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn is defending Thursday's shooting of an ostrich by one of his deputies on Interstate 70 east of Colby. "It's like anything else on I-70," Baughn said, "once you take the legs out from under it, it becomes a missile."



M. Baughn

An ostrich strayed onto the roadway about 8:45 a.m. near Mingo was shot and killed with a 12-gauge shotgun. Baughn said the owner of the bird has yet to step forward or be determined.

Criticism about the incident surfaced after a Salina truck driver, Dennis Espinosa, witnessed the shooting.

"That was a senseless and inhumane act," Espinosa said today. "I think the deputy ought to be reprimanded. In my opinion, that was not just a chicken or small bird, it was somebody's big bird. They don't even shoot dogs that have bitten people."

Espinosa said he was eastbound on I-70 when the driver of a west-bound vehicle flashed headlights alerting him to something going on. "I saw a car just past the bridge in the ditch," he said.

"As I got closer I saw the deputy reach for his shotgun and he took about 10 fast paces toward the fence line and the ostrich had its wings up like it wanted to fly, but the deputy shot it."

Baughn said the ostrich, like other animals which stray onto a

**"In my opinion, that was not just a chicken or small bird, it was somebody's big bird. They don't even shoot dogs that have bitten people."**

Dennis Espinosa, Salina truck driver witnessing the shooting

roadway, becomes a traffic hazard his department must deal with.

"The trucker who saw the shooting is apparently a person who has a great deal of respect for the subspecies," he said. "But we have to put public safety first."

Baughn said over the past 10 years the sheriff's office has had to destroy about 10 emus which have strayed into the road.

"This is the first ostrich I can remember," he said.

Baughn said since people don't register their exotic animals his staff is unaware who owns what type of animal.

He said he wishes people who pasture their animals, cattle or exotic, near fence lines of roadways would contact his office and let the staff know who owns the animals.

He said he's eagerly waiting to see what the state's new law requiring registration of exotic animals will do for future situations like took place Thursday.

"We spend a lot of time and money trying to track down owners," he said.



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Lindsey Bugbee, right, showed her grandfather Jack Johnson the painting she did of him, his dog Sue and one of her pups during the

Colby High School art show Tuesday. The painting was a surprise for Johnson.

## Memory captured in painting

By Tisha Cox  
Colby Free Press

Jack Johnson only thought he was going to see his granddaughter's art work on display at Colby High School Tuesday. What he got instead was a surprise, and a keepsake of something he had lost.

His wife, Dixie Thompson, took him to the school to see the art being exhibited for the year. His granddaughter, Lindsey Bugbee, did a painting of Jack, his German short-haired pointer Sue, and one of her pups.

Lindsey is the daughter of Delin

Thompson and Steve Bugbee of Colby.

Jack took Sue hunting for a couple of days last fall.

The day after they came home, she died. Sue was only 6 years old, and he said it was a young age for a dog to die. Two weeks before, she had weaned a litter of eight pups, and all but one was sold.

Jack kept that pup, Bud, now 8-months-old.

"I didn't know about it until just now," he said. "It even has the collar down correct."

Lindsey said the painting, an acrylic, took about a month of class

to complete. She used plaster to give the painting depth and texture. The painting won at art shows in Oberlin and Hays.

"He surprised me with a car so I decided to surprise him with a painting," Bugbee said.

Thompson said Bugbee did the painting from very small photo of her grandfather and the dogs, and they were all pleased with the final result. Johnson has said the painting will hang in his office or a place of honor at home.

"We have a really good relationship," Johnson said. "I have a really good relationship with all my

grandchildren."

The painting for her grandfather isn't the only piece of art Bugbee has shown this year.

A batik piece, using her brother Treat's face, won the National Scholastic Silver award and Western Kansas Scholastic art show American Vision Award.

Bugbee said the painting used the batik style, but has a print over it. The painting will be on display around the country two years before she can have it back.

Bugbee, a junior, has been taking art from teacher Donna Roberts all through school.

## Thomas County fair board approves new Fourth of July event

By Tisha Cox  
Colby Free Press

The Thomas County Fairgrounds will have one more activity this summer. The Thomas County Fair Board approved letting the High Plains Lions Club use the 4-H Building for a Fourth of July event before fireworks.

The decision was approved at the board's meeting Thursday.

Lions members Sheryl Brenn and John Mead went before the board to discuss the matter.

"We would like to give something back to the community," Mead said, adding the club will celebrate its 35th anniversary this summer.

He said there is no activity before the fireworks display, and they wanted to borrow the 4-H Building to have a free meal for the community. The Colby/Thomas County Chamber is also involved, and they're working to plan an evening of activities for people to enjoy.

The board also decided to become part of the Kansas Lottery Rodeo Championship Series.

Board member Clair Schrock said by paying a \$50 membership to newly-formed Kansas Association of Rodeo Committees, the Thomas County rodeo will be included in the series.

Twelve rodeos are part of the series, sponsored by the Kansas Lottery, and participants must compete in at least eight of the rodeos to be eligible for \$1,000 in added money from the lottery.

Schrock said it might not help draw any really big name rodeo athletes to the Thomas County rodeo, but it could bring in more cowboys and cowgirls because it's

part of a series that covers the region.

In other business, the board heard a report on the buildings and grounds.

Groundskeeper Ron Kogler said he hasn't done much work on the campgrounds recently, but does need to put up posts to number lots.

Board member Marty Crampton suggested using plastic posts. He said it would work well because it looks good, lasts long and would be easily replaced if someone backed over one.

Kogler also asked the board about what to do when people don't show up when they

have booked the 4-H Building. Kogler and his wife, who have a house on the grounds, have taken over booking the building.

He said there have been instances where the building was booked but the facility hasn't been used. He wanted to know how to handle such situations.

Crampton said cancellations should be given more than a day or two in advance, but the board didn't approve anything.

Kogler also mentioned there is now no need to get bids for a new door for the 4-H Building. He said the lock was recently cleaned and lubed, and is working fine now.

## Frisky foxes



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Fox kits played outside their den this week, taking advantage of warm spring weather. The kits were discovered in north Colby. This isn't the first time foxes have been seen in the community. Last year, there were many reported sightings of the wily canines around Colby.

## Senator calls on Nuss to resign Supreme Court

TOPEKA (AP) — Kansas Supreme Court Justice Lawton Nuss should resign because of his conversation with two senators about school finance issues, a Republican senator who has been critical of Nuss said Thursday.

Sen. Tim Huelskamp, of Fowler, became the first person to suggest publicly that Nuss should step down. Nuss already has removed himself from a school finance lawsuit still before the court.

Huelskamp called Nuss' conversation "a very flagrant violation" of the judiciary's code of conduct, which does not allow judges to discuss cases without all parties represented.

"I think to clear the air, I think he should resign," Huelskamp said during a news conference. "What kind of communications did occur? I think, potentially, there are other justices who may or may not be involved. We're just trying to get to the bottom of this."

Court spokesman Ron Keefover has said Nuss' conversation with the senators was the only contact between the court and legislators on school finance issues. He declined Thursday to respond to Huelskamp's comments.

Nuss had his conversation March 1 with Senate President Steve Morris, R-Hugoton, and Sen. Pete Brungardt, R-Salina, a longtime Nuss friend.

They have said Nuss brought a spreadsheet and sought to clarify numbers about various school finance proposals, and Morris has said Nuss suggested a bipartisan plan would be helpful.

Nuss already faces a judicial misconduct investigation and an inquiry by the attorney general's office. In addition, House Speaker Doug Mays, R-Topeka, has appointed a 10-member investigating committee.

But Mays wasn't ready to call for Nuss to step down.