



Kansas banks hurt

TOPEKA (AP) — About 10 state-chartered banks will be hurt by the federal bailout of mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the state's top banking regulator says, but none are likely to fail.

"At this point they are working with federal regulators," Bank Commissioner Tom Thull told The Topeka Capital-Journal for a story Wednesday. "It will be painful, but they're not in danger."

Thull said the banks hold common or preferred stock in the two corporations. That stock has become nearly worthless because of the federal government's takeover.

He declined to identify the banks, which represent 4 percent of the 250 state-chartered banks.

"Banks will have to charge it off," Thull said.

"It will affect their capital position."

Together, Washington-based Fannie Mae and McLean, Va.-based Freddie Mac hold or guarantee about \$5 trillion in mortgage debt, about half of the nation's total. Congress created them to pump money into the mortgage market so interest rates would stay low.

They traditionally backed the safest loans, 30-year fixed rate mortgages that required a down payment of at least 20 percent. But in recent years, they lowered their standards, as Wall Street banks backed the now-defunct subprime lending industry.

Under the bailout, the U.S. Treasury could inject as much as \$100 billion over time in each of the companies to keep them afloat, in exchange for preferred stock.

Class on crime scenes



DEBBIE SCHWANKE/Colby Free Press

One of the lab classrooms at Colby Community College became a "crime scene" last week for students enrolled in Dr. Angela Rivenshield's Criminalistics Course. Rivenshield (left) watched as one group of students stages the crime scene. The class was divided into two groups. After staging the scenes, group members collected evidence for the forensic science lab. This crime scene actually had two victims including a student and a large stuffed animal. The criminalistics course is an introduction to forensic and crime scene investigations. Criminal justice is one of America's fastest-growing career fields. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment for correctional officers, law enforcement officers and security officers is projected to increase as much as 35 percent through 2010.

Prevention Center gets \$125,000 cut in funds

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Sue Evans, director
Prevention Center

State and federal budget cuts will effect taking the word to children, teens and parents that alcohol and drugs damage them individually and as a family.

Sue Evans, director of the Regional Prevention Center of Northwest Kansas, told the commissioners on Monday the federal government is cutting \$125,000 from her office at the end of September.

"The grant was for five years and it ends Sept. 30," Evans said. "For us, we are trying to think how to make up that deficit."

Evans said that federal money being cut, \$64,000 of it was earmarked for salaries. She said the Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority may cut another \$70,000, but she and her board will not know about that until later this month.

The board consists of Penny Arnoldy of Oberlin; Pastor Glen Isernhagen of St. Francis; Marlo Crumrine of Brewster; and Janet Harper and Joan Ziegelmeier both of Colby.

The Regional Prevention Center serves the nine northwestern counties of Kansas - Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Wallace, Logan and Gove. Evans said new research shows alcohol affects the brain of teenagers different than it does adults, and she wants to keep educating children and their parents about it.

"We feel we've made a significant contribution to the reduction of alcohol and marijuana use and binge drinking," Evans said.

"The message is out there that it's OK to say now way to drugs and alcohol."

Brock Fairbrother since June 1 has served the prevention center as a consultant.

He told the commissioners many good things are happening at the center, but he wants to use his two years' experience working with teens at Colby High School to move forward.

He said at Colby High School, 82 percent of students abstain from drugs and alcohol, according to a recent survey he conducted.

"It's come to a point that we need to stir the pot," Fairbrother said.

"Some great things have been done, but we need to expand on that."

Fairbrother talked about a community coalition that involves healthcare providers, ministers, business owners and parents

that will have monthly meetings to talk about drug and alcohol abuse.

"We are trying to educate through the parent sector," Fairbrother said. "We have a lot going on."

Evans said despite less money coming down the pike, the center uses a program which outlines an alcohol and drug free community.

"Through the drug free community program we were able to do a lot of education and marketing that underage drinking is not good," Evans said.

"You need to talk to your kids that underage drinking in your house is not a good thing."

Commissioner Paul Steele agreed.

He said parents are mistaken when they think supervising teen drinking is a better alternative to having the teens drink outside their home.

"Parents who think they can host parties and let kids drink and then drive don't get it. If you are dead, you are still dead."

Fairbrother said he oversees a program called Own It. That program allows him to go into Thomas County high schools and teach teens they own their decisions.

He said he is in the process of setting up a web site, www.ownitall.org, where teens can chat about the program and owning their decision to avoid drugs and alcohol.

Evans said programs have been working in not only high schools in the service area, but elementary and middle schools as well.

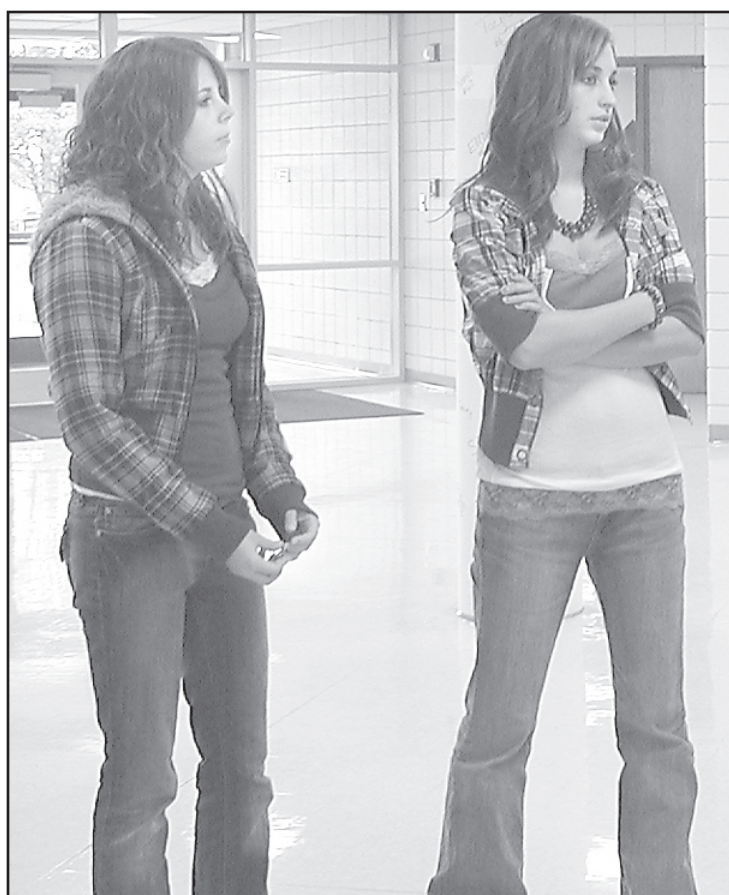
"We do life skills training in third, fourth and fifth grades," Evans said.

"They talk about how alcohol affects the brain, but we cover all grades and the life skills classes are worked into physical education classes."

Evans said the educational programs and classes are not just for Thomas County school.

"We'll take them to other counties," she said.

Homecoming activities



HEATHER WOOFER/Colby Free Press

Freshman Haley Stickel (right) and Sophomore Brittany Bange were among the students selected for this year's Colby High School Homecoming Court. Other homecoming activities include "Western Day" Thursday and "Spirit Day" Friday, officials said. "Jersey Action" will be at 7 p.m. Thursday at Dennen Field. The homecoming parade is 2:30 p.m. Friday, starting on Franklin Avenue. In addition to Stickel and Bange, other homecoming attendants are: Justin Slavens, Kale Arnberger, Krisstal Kriss and Gray Henry. The senior court includes Kiri Kendrick, Taylor Young, Jordan Krzycki, Stephen Dinkel, Tanner Kriss and Levi Schlick.

State taxes collected higher than expectations

TOPEKA (AP) — The state collected 3 percent more in tax revenues in August than expected.

That's some good news for legislators and other state officials, who have been worried about the national economic slump.

The state anticipated about \$385 million in general tax revenues in August and received nearly \$397 million.

The difference was \$11.4 million. Those figures were in a report from the Kansas Legislative Research Department.

The state also collected slightly more revenue than expected in July, the first month of its 2009 fiscal year.

Those expectations were contained in a financial forecast issued in April by state officials and university economists.

schools with needed equipment, supplies for sports and other activities. For questions, call Pam Augustine, 460-2924.

Bluegrass concert Sept. 18

Tickets are available for a concert featuring the Isaacs and Chace McNinch, bluegrass singers, at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 18, in the Colby High School auditorium. For questions or ticket locations, call (785) 443-1994.

Fair board meets Thursday

The Thomas County Fair Board will meet at 8 p.m. Thursday in the 4-H Building at the fairgrounds. Agenda items include committee reports from building and grounds, rodeo, parade and entertainment, fair book, advertising and exhibits and premium checks. Guests expected include Holly Stephens,

Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce executive director, and J&R Marketing co-owner Rich Epp. The board plans to discuss a grant from Midwest Energy. All meetings are open to the public.

Yearbooks have arrived

The Colby Middle School yearbooks have arrived, said advisor Linda Haas, and can be pickup at the office. Extra copies are available. For questions, call Haas at 460-5200.

1958 Class reunion planned

The Colby High School Class of 1958 will hold its 50th reunion Thursday through Sunday, Oct. 2-5, in Branson, Mo., said Sandy Harper, one of the organizers. "If you were in the class, we would like to hear from you," she said. For questions, call 462-3759 or Norma Higerd, 462-7806.

Briefly

Flint-knapping talk Sunday

Dr. Jack Hofman of the University of Kansas will be speaking at the Prairie Museum of Art and History starting at 1 p.m. Sunday. The topic, "Stone Tools in Prehistory" will include a demonstration about the art of flint-knapping. The event is sponsored by High Plains Chapter of Kansas Anthropological Association and those with artifact collections are welcome to bring them along for Hofman's comments. For questions, call 462-6399 or e-mail: aminer@st-tel.net.

Flags to fly half-staff

Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius is directing all state facilities and respective buildings to fly flags at half-staff Thursday

in memory of those who died in the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack. "On Patriot Day our nation comes together to recognize those who died in 2001, but also those men and women who work to preserve our freedom day in and day out. We also recognize the patriotism evident each day in communities across the country," Sebelius said. "From Greensburg to the Gulf Coast, ordinary Americans have reached out to one another and come together to strengthen this great Nation," she said.

Tailgate party Friday

The Colby High School All-Sports Booster Club is planning a tailgate party starting at 5:30 p.m., Friday, when the Colby Eagles football team plays Goodland. The menu choice is a hamburger or hot dog, potato salad, baked beans, chips and bottled drink for a nominal cost. All proceeds go toward helping the booster club in its mission of supporting area

