

## Colby counselor chosen to serve on profession advisory committee

Elaine Ptacek, a licensed clinical professional counselor from Colby, has been selected to serve a two-year term on the Professional Counseling Advisory Committee of the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board.

The committee advises the board, which oversees the licensing of all mental health professionals other than medical doctors, including licensed professional counselors, marriage and family therapists, social workers, psychologists and drug-and-alcohol counselors.

Ptacek has been in private practice at Heartland Rural Counseling Services since 1997. Prior to that, she worked at the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center.

She has served on the Mental Health Credentialing Coalition since 2002, working with the

Kansas Counselors Association and the Kansas Mental Health Counselors Association.

This legislative work helped licensed professional counselors and licensed clinical professional counselors to be included in insurance-provider panels and helped change Kansas law to include them in adoption home studies.

She has worked in Topeka on legislative issues, advocating for licensed counselors and school counselors. She is the Kansas Counselors legislative advocate, working with the American Counseling Association and the American Mental Health Counselors Association on reimbursement from Medicare for counselors.

Ptacek has done workshops and presentations on mental health issues.

## Undergraduate discovers new species at Fort Hays

In the world of insects, the Kansas version of the jumping bristletail is a little thing, about an inch long, a third of that being body and the rest tail (three of them, in fact). It is not known either for good or ill. It is not even certain what it eats.

But it looms large in entomological circles because it is “considered to be the most primitive of the insects,” according to Dr. Richard Packauskas, associate professor of biology at Fort Hays State University.

And the Kansas bristletail, thanks to work by Packauskas and one of his students, Ryan Shofner, Littleton, Colo., senior, can now be recognized as a separate species, forthaysi (rhymes with eye), within the genus Hypomachilodes. Their research has been published in the *Journal of the Kansas Entomological Society* (also known as the Central States Entomological Society), October, 2010, Vol. 83, No. 4, pages 340-346.

The discovery of any new species of any animal is rare, but that was not the only rarity on display at a news conference last Thursday at Fort Hays’ Sternberg Museum of Natural History. The other was the fact that a biological studies undergraduate was an active participant in all aspects of the research – the field work, the search through the literature and the scanning electron microscope work.

As Shofner said later, “Very few institutions the size of Fort Hays State have an SEM, a scanning electron microscope, and if they do, you can bet that undergraduates don’t get to work with it. And it’s the same at the big research institutions, too. Undergraduates might get a class about it, but they don’t get to work a project on it.”

“This is another shining example of what makes our students ready for the world when they leave here,” said Fort Hays President Edward H. Hammond. “What is on display here today is not only a significant achievement by Dr. Packauskas and Ryan Shofner, but it is also the fact that at FHSU, undergraduate students have opportunities to do so much more than at most institutions.

“It is almost unheard of anywhere else but here that an undergraduate student would be allowed to participate in research work like this....

“It is even rarer that institutions our size and even larger have equipment such as a scanning electron microscope....”

Fort Hays acquired the scanning electron microscope in 1982 through a grant from the National Science Foundation. University funds updated it in 2006 to give it digital imaging capabilities.

“I want to say how fantastic the biology program is here at Fort Hays State,” said Shofner, when it came his turn to speak at the news conference. “I also appreciate how close the faculty here works with the

students, not just on research but on everything....”

Packauskas told how the project grew out of an entomology class two years ago. Part of the class work is to make an insect collection. Six of Shofner’s specimens were jumping bristletails, and he and Shofner set about trying to identify its family, but the family they identified, using the keys in textbooks, turned out to be one that was unknown in Kansas.

“I told Ryan that he should take a research class with me the following semester and, as he was interested in learning electron microscopy, that he should take that class as well and use the bristletail as a study specimen,” said Packauskas. “We also applied for an undergraduate research grant and received some collecting equipment that allowed us to garner 16 more specimens.”

The result, after two years’ research and writing, is *Hypomachilodes forthaysi*, documented in the journal of the Central States Entomological Society.

“We also decided,” said Packauskas, “that it should be named with the epithet forthaysi due to the fact that the first three specimens Ryan caught came from a spot of land owned by Fort Hays State University that consists of 35 acres of land that is fenced off and has not been grazed for over 100 years.”

Packauskas added another detail about the insect. “We have since found the insect in other localities and actually believe that it may occur across the state, but has been misidentified for a long time.”

He also said it is called a “jumping bristletail” because, as small as it is, the creature can actually jump about six inches.

The discovery of a new species was recognized and praised by Dr. Elmer Finck, the department chair, and the dean of the College of Health and Life Sciences, Dr. Jeff Briggs.

It is, said Finck, “a significant find, because the bristletail is an ancestral group to the rest of the insects.”

The journal can be found online at [www.bioone.org/loi/kent](http://www.bioone.org/loi/kent). The website of the Department of Biological Sciences is [www.fhsu.edu/biology/](http://www.fhsu.edu/biology/).



Fort Hays State University  
The Kansas bristletail found by Fort Hays student Ryan Shofner has been recognized as a separate species, *Hypomachilodes forthaysi*.



Ryan Shofner

## Two cases net settlements for state

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt announced Jan. 31 that his office has received \$610,000 from DirecTV and Dannon as part of multi-state settlements resulting from consumer protection allegations against the companies.

Attorneys general from 49 states and the District of Columbia alleged that DirecTV engaged in deceptive and unfair sales practices. Dannon settled charges of deceptive advertising filed by 39 states.

“These settlements today are big wins for Kansas consumers,” Schmidt said.

The states alleged that DirecTV was not clearly disclosing prices, terms or limitations to consumers, and enrolling them or re-enrolling them in additional services without clearly disclosing the terms.

Additionally, the company advertised cash back to consumers,

but provided bill credits instead. DirecTV is required to correct these practices, and has agreed to pay restitution. Kansas received \$185,000 of a \$13.25 million settlement.

The Dannon settlement was made regarding claims of health benefits in the advertising, marketing, packaging and selling Activia yogurts and DanActive dairy drinks. The states alleged that these claims were not substantiated.

### On the Beat

#### COLBY POLICE Monday

12:54 a.m. – Traffic: caller reported a subject who had caused some problems leaving in a vehicle. Located vehicle.

7:51 a.m. – Caller reported he struck a minivan in the 300 block of W. Eighth, but the van continued on.

9:11 a.m. – Subject came to station about possible scam or attempted theft. Report filed.

11:34 a.m. – Subject came to station with problem with rental. Civil matter; provided information.

10:03 p.m. – Report filed for incident of criminal damage to property.

#### Tuesday

12:15 a.m. – Caller wanted a welfare check on subject who left an unknown residence. Two officers advised of call.

4:54 a.m. – Security check at Walmart.

6:49 a.m. – Noninjury accident at 910 S. Range.

10:30 a.m. – Stalled vehicle at Fourth and Country Club Dr. Provided traffic control until it was moved.

12:46 p.m. – Semi slide off at Country Club Dr. and Willow. Vehicle was towed out; City street dept. salted area.

by reliable scientific evidence. Under the terms of the settlement, Dannon may not represent that the products can prevent, treat, cure or mitigate disease. Kansas received \$425,000 of a \$21 million settlement in this case.

Consumers who have complaints in either of these cases may contact the Kansas Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division at (800) 432-2310 or online at [www.ksag.org](http://www.ksag.org).

7:38 p.m. – Caller reported subject locked kids out of the house. Everything OK.

10:24 p.m. – Assisted stranded motorist on S. Franklin.

11:06 p.m. – Security check at the airport.

11:30 p.m. – Security check at Bosselman’s.

#### Wednesday

11:15 a.m. – Report of vehicle parked at 1880 S. Range for an some time. Attempted to contact owner; everything OK.

11:25 a.m. – Two-vehicle collision at Sixth and Mission Ridge.

11:38 a.m. – Caller requested welfare check. Reported not seeing subject in some time. Spoke with subject; everything OK.

12:01 p.m. – Caller reported juvenile left and has not returned home. Information provided; subject found.

12:07 p.m. – Two-vehicle collision at Fourth and Franklin.

2:54 p.m. – Security check at Walmart.

4:09 p.m. – Dog at large in the 400 block of Field. Spoke with owners; dog not at large upon arrival.

5:56 p.m. – Vehicle hit pole at Range and Davis.

10:14 p.m. – Subject came to station about vehicle struck at Hill and Golden.

## Nebraska bar builds rink for curling

VALENTINE, Neb. (AP) – The Olympic sport of curling is a big hit for a bar in western Nebraska.

KNOP-TV in North Platte says Jordan’s Bar in Valentine has built its own version of a curling rink and is now hosting leagues and tournaments. Owner Marty Jordan says they watched the sport during the Olympics, and the bar crowd just loved it, so he decided to give curling a try.

Curling involves two teams of four that take turns pushing a heavy, polished stone across a sheet of ice.

The bar’s outdoor curling rink is about half the size of what is seen on the Olympics. And, instead of stones, they use milk jugs filled with a concrete mixture.

## Hungary’s octogenarian burglar strikes again

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) – Hungary’s notorious octogenarian thief is not ready for retirement.

The 84-year-old woman, known as “Flying Gizi,” whose criminal record goes back to the 1950s, is again in custody for suspected theft, police said Tuesday.

Fejer County Police spokeswoman Agnes R. Szabo said the burglar, whose real name is Gizella Bodnar, is suspected of taking some 15,000 forints (€55, \$75) from a home in Bicske, a town in central Hungary.

Bodnar, who has been convicted of over 20 crimes and has spent nearly 18 years in prison, got her nickname because she enjoyed taking domestic commercial flights after successful break-ins. She eluded capture for years, as police never imagined that the cat burglar would travel so far to commit her crimes.

This time, she only got as far as the Bicske train station before the police found her and the missing cash she took from a wallet on the house’s living room table.

Bodnar, who began her criminal activities shortly after World War II, published an autobiography in 2007, claiming she became a kleptomaniac as the result of a youthful bout with meningitis.

Old age has not deterred her. In the past few years she has been fined several times for petty thefts around the country. Based in Budapest, she now favors the railroad, where Hungarian pensioners travel for free, over airlines.

“She’s a unique case in Hungarian criminology,” Szabo admitted.

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