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Attorney named to commission

By Christina Beringer

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Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback announced Tuesday that 21 new appointments to numerous boards and commissions throughout the state have been made, one of which was given to Thomas County Attorney Keven Berens.

Berens attended his first meeting for the Kansas Sentencing Commission in Topeka on Thursday. He was nominated for the two-year appointment by Kansas Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer and was approved by the governor.

"I am proud to announce these Kansans to their respective boards and committees," Brownback said. "I am confident that these individuals will utilize their experience and expertise in their respective professions to work to make Kansas even better."

There are 17 statutory members on the committee and Berens represents the one county attorney position, which is appointed by the

governor. He will serve alongside Sen. David B. Haley, Rep. Janice L. Pauls, Rep. Pat N. Colloton, and the Hon. Patrick D. McAnany with the Kansas Court of Appeals, just to name a few.

Berens said his role in the commission will be to help make recommendations and proposals which are submitted to legislature.

"We provide fair evaluation guidelines regarding those in prison, who is eligible for probation and what we do with people once they go on probation," explained Berens. "Basically, we monitor and give advice for every level of criminal supervision."

Berens explained that within the Kansas Department of Corrections, there is a maximum capacity to house 9,164 inmates. Currently, there are about 9,200. He said one of the duties of the commission is to find the best ways for people to serve their time without going over maximum capacity. The guidelines proposed by the

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Cheyenne County Clerk Terry Miller (left) witnessed Thomas County Attorney Kevin Berens sign documents for induction into

the Kansas Sentencing Committee. Behrens is also an attorney in Cheyenne County.

KAREN KRIEN/St. Francis Herald

Committee proposes new scholarship policy

By Kayla Cornett

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The Colby Community College board of trustees heard a proposal from a scholarship committee Wednesday during its monthly meeting in Thomas Hall. The committee developed a new scholarship policy that would save the college money. The policy was only presented at the meeting; the board will vote on it at the January meeting.

Brittney Squire, admissions administrative assistant, gave a powerpoint presentation that explained the policy the committee developed.

Squire started out by telling the board who was on this committee. The members are Squire, Ryan Sturdy, director of athletics, Vicky Bange, students accounts, Jade Inlow, associate director of financial aid, Jim Latoski, livestock judging coach, Tony Schroer, band instructor, Kathy Franz, nursing instructor, and Deb Bickner, English instructor.

She then explained what the scholarship stacking or overaward policy previously was (it is now suspended), which said the sum of all institutional aid received cannot exceed the college's total standard direct cost of attendance.

Squire discussed the new policy the committee believes the col-

lege should implement instead of the stacking policy. The proposed guidelines have all the institutional scholarships broken down into four categories: tuition based, leadership, academic and co-curricular. The policy would allow a student to receive one scholarship from the first three categories and two from the last category. Also, the tuition scholarships would be limited to 34 credit hours per academic year.

"However, they can only receive three scholarships total," Squire said.

Squire went on to talk about the current guidelines of the Thomas County Tuition Grant and the proposed restrictions the committee

developed.

The current guidelines for the grant are that a recipient must be a graduate of a Thomas County high school in the previous school year or have a high school diploma or general educational development certificate and have resided continuously in Thomas County for at least three years or be a graduate of a Thomas County high school currently living in Thomas County.

Also, in order to earn and maintain the grant, students must complete official paperwork through the Registrar's office, enroll in at least six hours and maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average while attending Colby

Community College.

In its proposal, the committee created three categories of students and made guidelines for the grant based on their status. There are concurrent students, or students still in high school, traditional students and non-traditional students. Not much criteria was changed for the concurrent students, but the committee did change some of the requirements for the other types of students.

The guidelines for traditional students is that they must be a graduate of a Thomas County high school within the last three years, must maintain full-time status and to receive full tuition, they must rank in the top 10 percent of their class or have a 3.5 grade point average at graduation. Students who do not meet these requirements will receive a discounted tuition rate of \$25 per credit hour.

For non-traditional students, they must have graduated high school more than three years prior to the date of application and has not attended college in the last calendar year. Full tuition will be covered up to six credit hours.

Squire also said that the college would require students to provide an Affidavit of Residency with their application.

Squire said another thing the committee wanted to propose was a probationary status. A student

receiving the grant must maintain a 3.0 grade point average, so if they fall below that average in their first semester, they get one probationary semester. If they fall below that average during the probationary semester, they will be ineligible to receive the scholarship in any other semesters.

The committee also proposed changing the award amount that students receive based on their ACT scores. Currently, the award begins with students who have a score of 16 or 17 receiving \$200. The committee would like to get rid of those two scores and start the award at scores of 18 to 20. Students with a score of 18 to 20 would receive \$200, a score of 21 to 23 would receive \$400, 24 to 26 would receive \$600, 27 to 29 would receive \$800 and scores of 30 to 36 would receive \$1,000.

"Just as a note for you, the average ACT score of our students is a 19," Squire added.

Another factor the committee discussed in its meetings is deadlines.

"At this time, we don't really enforce or have any deadlines stated," Squire said. "When a contract is issued to a student, they have two weeks to sign and return that contract. That's something that is supposed to be a rule now but we don't really enforce that rule."

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Fire destroys home in Levant Saturday

A structure fire in Levant over the weekend, which totally destroyed an abandoned double-wide mobile home, could have been much worse.

Responding to a 911 call from a neighbor just before 11 a.m. Saturday, Assistant Fire Chief Sean Hankin arrived on the scene at 324 Hovey St. in Levant at about 11:05 to find that there were already flames through the roof.

According to Hankin, the structure was fully involved, so the firefighters' efforts went primarily toward keeping the fire from spreading. The county was called on to assist with their 8,000-gal-

lon water truck; when that arrived they were able to quickly get the blaze under control.

According to County Appraiser Mary Cech, the 1975 double-wide, listed as abandoned, was owned by Eldon and Rose Hatfield, who live next door to the south. The Hatfield residence was not damaged in the fire, though Hankin said they used about 6,000 gallons of water and their driveway was probably under several inches of water.

The cause of the fire has yet to be determined.

On the hunt



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

The Colby Recreation Department held its annual Candy Cane Hunt on Saturday at Fike Park. Kids ages 3 and under hunted

for the candy canes first and then kids ages 4 to 7 followed. There were 26 participants in the event.

