



# COLBY FREE PRESS

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EVAN BARNUM/Colby Free Press

Gail Nash of Elkhart (above) started the engine on a 29 percent scale model of a Russian Yak-55 aerobatic plane at the Colby RC Flyers Fly-In north of town Sunday. The Yak-55 went through acrobatics (lower right). Nash (below left), who said he has been flying this particular plane for about six years, watched his plane as he held the transmitter controlling it. He said he has been flying remote-control planes since 1977, when he started with line-controlled models.



## Fly-in buzzes Colby

By Sam Dieter

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The air was buzzing with the sound of tiny motors this weekend as remote-control plane enthusiasts met near Colby to fly their machines.

Ken Crampton, a member of the Colby RC flyers, said 15 pilots signed up for the club's annual fly-in. Some of them came from outside the state for the event, which lasted all day Saturday and

Sunday at the club's field seven miles north of town and about two miles north of the city airport.

Club members did not keep any score at the fly-in, which went by at a leisurely pace. They took turns bringing their planes onto the airfield in front of about a dozen recreational vehicles and trailers parked there, flying them in loops or doing other tricks while their friends watched, gassed up their own machines or looked over the

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## Accident leaves one dead

An elderly Ellinwood woman was killed in a wreck Sunday afternoon when the driver of the car she was in apparently fell asleep just north of Colby on K-25 and the vehicle rolled several times in the ditch.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported that Marvin L. Dewey, 60, Sioux Falls, S.D., was southbound when he apparently fell asleep and his car drifted into a ditch at a field access road about 3:25 p.m.

The wrecked 2008 Honda Civic was sitting against a fence on the east side of K-25 about four miles north of Colby. Officers reported they weren't sure how many times it had rolled.

Marvin Dewey was uninjured, but a passenger, Betty J. Dewey, 89, Ellinwood, was pronounced dead after she was taken to Citizens Medical Center. Rachel C. Dewey, 23, Sioux Falls, was flown to Swedish Medical Center

in Denver from Citizens.

The patrol listed Rachel Dewey having a disabling injury, but no information was available from Swedish today. All three people in the car were wearing seat belts, the report said.

Employees at the Kimple Funeral Home in Ellinwood said that Betty Dewey was Marvin Dewey's mother and they believe she was Rachel Dewey's grandmother.

## Haiti's hunger woes mount

By Trenton Daniel

The Associated Press

BELLE ANSE, Haiti — The hardship of hunger abounds amid the stone homes and teepee-like huts in the mountains along Haiti's southern coast.

The hair on broomstick-thin children has turned patchy and orangish, their stomachs have ballooned to the size of their heads and many look half their age — the tell-tale signs of malnutrition.

Mabriole town official Genes Lissage fears that death is imminent for these children if Haitian authorities and humanitarian workers don't do more to stem the hunger problems.

"They will be counting bodies," Lissage said, "because malnutrition is ravaging children, youngsters and babies."

Three years after an earthquake killed hundreds of thousands and the U.S. promised that Haiti would "build back better," hunger is worse than ever.

Despite billions of dollars from around the world pledged toward rebuilding efforts, the country's food problems underscore just how vulnerable its 10 million people remain.

In 1997 some 1.2 million Haitians didn't have enough food to eat. A decade later the number had more than doubled. Today, that figure is 6.7 million, or a staggering 67 percent of the population that goes without food some days, can't afford a balanced diet or has limited access to food, according to surveys by the government's National Coordination of Food Security. As many as 1.5 million of those face malnutrition and other hunger-related problems.

"This is scandalous. This should not be," said Claude Beauboeuf, a Haitian economist and sometime consultant to relief groups. "But I'm not surprised, because some of the people in the slums eat once every two days."

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## Architect's plan unveiled to public

By Heather Alwin

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Architect Glen Strait unveiled the design and cost estimate for the new county office, court and jail complex at a Thomas County Commissioners' meeting to a packed meeting room.

The plan, unveiled at the commissioners meeting May 31, includes two zones: the jail in a secured area and county offices in a separate area. The building would have a steel frame, masonry walls and a low-slope standing-seam metal roof.

The jail would have 18 prefabricated steel cells to house 36 inmates when double-bunked at maximum capacity. Strait said he designed the building to be compatible with a first-floor jail expansion if the county later needs

to increase capacity.

Strait said he estimates the complex will cost \$11,350,500 to build. This estimate does not include the expense of buying five to six acres of land, demolishing the existing courthouse or furnishing the new building.

The law enforcement center and jail will cost \$6,183,700, Strait estimates. The courthouse and office area will cost an additional \$5,166,800. It would take 18 to 24 months to construct.

"We're a long way from that point, though," Strait added.

Though the Thomas County Sheriff's Office paid for a floor plan for jail improvements out of its drug forfeiture money, the commissioners paid Strait \$5,000 to design the plan for the new complex since Strait's design features new construction for the complex rather than a remodel of

existing facilities.

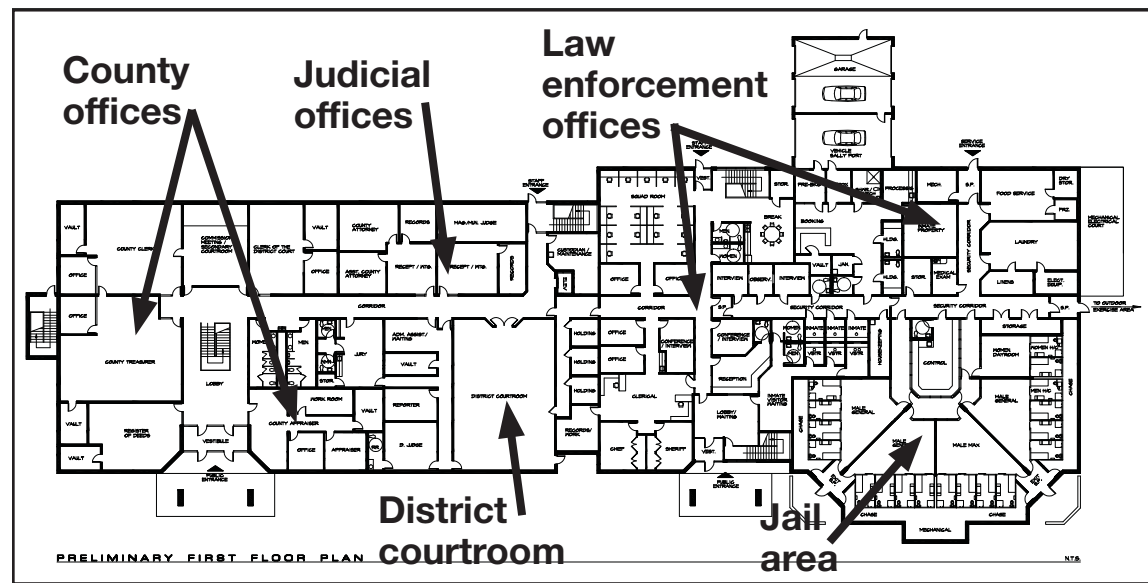
Strait said the new office spaces would not be much larger than those in the current courthouse, but the old building "is inefficient in the way it is laid out."

He said his plan for the new courthouse and office spaces "will have some increased square footage but, not a lot."

At the meeting, Commissioner Paul Steele noted that Kansas judicial districts could be consolidated in the future, requiring more court space for whichever county becomes the headquarters for a new district.

"I have been advised that we would require two courtrooms" if Thomas County is the center of a newly realigned district, he said. The building plan includes a basement to house a second court-

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GLEN STRAIT/Strait Associates

This is the main floor of the plan drawn up for the "Thomas County Justice Center."

## Residents turn out to ask about building

By Heather Alwin

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County residents packed the Thomas County commissioners' chambers to ask questions about the proposed jail, courthouse and office complex. Concerns ranged from the cost to the fate of the historic courthouse that has housed county judicial and administrative functions since 1907.

Rosalee Seemann, former county clerk, stopped in at the meeting Friday, May 31, to talk about the commission's plan to replace the historic old courthouse. Though she was not on the agenda, the commissioners rearranged their schedule to hear her views before architect Glen Strait revealed his plan.

Seemann said she would hate to see the "stately, beautiful building" demolished or empty.

"There has been a lot of money spent on this building over the years," she added.

At previous meetings, the commissioners have discussed the potential that the current courthouse would be torn down. Commissioner Paul Steele said he did not see any future uses for the old building and thought it would likely have to be demolished.

Seemann said she has been talking with people since the story broke that the commissioners planned to replace the historic courthouse. No one she has spoken to has been in favor of a new courthouse, she said, though everyone she spoke to was in favor of a new jail.

People were "emphatic" about their resistance to a new courthouse, she said.

Following Seemann's comments, Commissioner Mike Baughn, a former county sheriff, said, "I'm absolutely in favor of a new jail." He added that he feels a judicial complex, including courtrooms and law enforcement offices, would be a "good move," but he has not "been convinced that other courthouse services need to be relocated."

"People who have talked to me are very comfortable with a judicial center" but not a new courthouse for other county offices, he said. Baughn said a constituent asked him why, once the court functions were relocated, the office space in the current courthouse could not be reconfigured for other county functions.

Seemann said she thought offices could be reconfigured, giving departments more space.

Commissioner Paul Steele responded that the county "would have the worst of two worlds" by heating and cooling two buildings. The county already heats and cools separate facilities for the jail and courthouse.

Seemann said few repairs were done to the current courthouse prior to the 1970s, but several large projects were completed then.

"It's probably time to do it again," she said.

Later, Strait revealed his draft plan for the complex and took questions from the public.

"It is an unwritten law that a building should have a stable foundation before it is remodeled," he said, in response to questions about why the current building cannot be updated. "Personally, I don't think it is a good idea to spend a lot of money if the

foundation is suspect."

Strait added that he has not investigated the structural condition of the current courthouse since that was not part of what the commissioners asked him to do.

Baughn said people have asked him why the commissioners are focusing on this issue now since the historic building has stood for so long.

"I would think we need to have some figures about what it would cost to stabilize this building," one member of the audience said.

"This is the most beautiful building we have in town," another said.

Baughn said the commissioners would have to "engage in a cost analysis" before deciding to construct the new facility and demolish the current one.

Mike Wicht of Prochaska and Associates, an Omaha firm with expertise in designing jails, agrees. Though he was not at the meeting, members of his firm have visited Thomas County's facilities.

Wicht said his firm typically performs a preliminary study before drafting plans for new buildings. Such a study includes a cost comparison between closing the jail completely, continuing to use the existing jail as is, adding on to the existing jail or building a completely new facility.

A preliminary study was not included in Strait's contract with the county, but Strait said he has been told the floor of the current courthouse is sinking because the foundation is moving.

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