



Concealed weapons OK with license

By Heather Alwin
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Gun owners licensed to carry concealed weapons can now carry them into the Thomas County courthouse and other county-owned buildings.

Under a new state law, the county had to act to exempt county buildings from

the list of places a concealed-carry licensee can carry a handgun. Previously, county buildings were on a list of places automatically exempted by law.

County Attorney Kevin Berens briefed the Thomas County commissioners on the requirements of the new law at their meeting Friday.

"Unless we take security measures, we cannot exempt the county buildings from

concealed carry," he said, explaining that the county could get a six-month exemption while it put security measures in place, but that would not be a permanent exemption.

If the county chose to exempt its buildings from concealed carry, Berens added, commissioners must provide "adequate security" for each building, along with appropriate signs. Without this, the county

could be held liable for injuries inflicted by someone with an illegal weapon on the property.

The new law protects the county from liability if it chooses not to exempt the buildings or if commissioners provide and security, which could include metal detectors and full-time armed guards.

"It's always been my position that if someone is going to bring a gun into

the building, they're going to do it anyway," said Commissioner Mike Baughn. "I have no problem with people carrying concealed weapons if they are properly licensed."

Commissioner Byron Sowers agreed. Baughn, a former county sheriff, said he believes criminals are going to carry

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Stolen bus recovered

By Sam Dieter
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A carrier for the Colby Free Press says he got some stolen property back earlier this month with some detective work and help from his friends, the Thomas County sheriff's office and the Oberlin police department.

David Rudy, who along with delivering the afternoon paper works as a clown and goes to churches and helps renovate them, said he had been using an old school bus belonging to his friend Ron Chase to store some tools and other belongings. He said Chase bought the bus for him to store things in and has been

keeping it in Gem. Both men said the bus must have been stolen there sometime around May 20, and Chase said they figured out it was gone May 27.

They reported the bus stolen to the Thomas County Sheriff's Office, Chase said, but "I don't know if they had any leads or not."

A friend of theirs suggested they go online to find if anyone was trying to sell a school bus, and Rudy and Chase took matters into their own hands. About June 11, they finally found a picture of the bus sitting in Oberlin. Chase said the thieves apparently had decided to sell it before they actually stole it, since one of Rudy's

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Judge refuses to block law

By John Hanna
AP Topeka Correspondent

TOPEKA - The chief federal judge in Kansas refused Sunday to temporarily block parts of a new state abortion law, including a requirement that providers' websites link to a state site with information they dispute.

But U.S. District Judge Kathryn Vratil's ruling Sunday in a lawsuit filed by Planned Parenthood came after a state judge ruled Friday in a separate challenge that Kansas couldn't enforce the website requirement for now. Vratil noted the previous ruling, in a case filed by two doctors, in concluding that Planned Parenthood would not suffer irreparable harm if she didn't do the same. The rule was to take effect today.

Under the law, a provider's home page will have to provide a link to a Kansas Department of Health and Environment site on abortion and fetal development and contain a statement that the state's information is "objective" and "scientifically accurate." Abortion providers object because

the state's information says that a fetus can feel pain by the 20th week of pregnancy, while the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has said there's no evidence for such an assertion.

Supporters of the new requirement contend it ensures that women who are considering abortions have access to multiple sources of information about fetal development, the risks of abortion and alternatives to it.

"Women have a right to know that information," said Mary Kay Culp, executive director of Kansas for Life, the most influential anti-abortion group at the Kansas Statehouse.

Of abortion providers, she said: "They scream, 'The sky is falling,' no matter how reasonable the bill is."

The website rule is part of a sweeping law approved by Kansas legislators this year that also bans sex-selection abortions, blocks tax breaks for providers, prohibits providers from furnishing ma-

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Fourth festivities include free food

The smell of hot dogs and melon slices will fill the 4-H Building at the Thomas County Fairgrounds once again during the annual Fourth of July Hot Dog and Watermelon Feed beginning at 6 p.m. Thursday.

After you eat, Miss America 2011, Teresa Scanlan of Gering, Neb., will be at the event, signing autographs.

Farmers and Merchants Bank will sponsor a coin-toss game, with the last one standing taking the prize of a half-dollar coin for every year the country has been in

existence.

The free event is sponsored by the Colby High Plains Lions Club, which does the hot dogs, and the Colby Rotary Club, which provides watermelon. Festivities include bingo games and entertainment provided by the Bugbee Sisters, Tom Jones, Anna Peptis, Jeff Armstrong and the Starbuck Kids.

There will also be a drawing for a turquoise necklace by Mary Hurtt, with proceeds going to the Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation. Tickets are \$4 each or three for \$10.

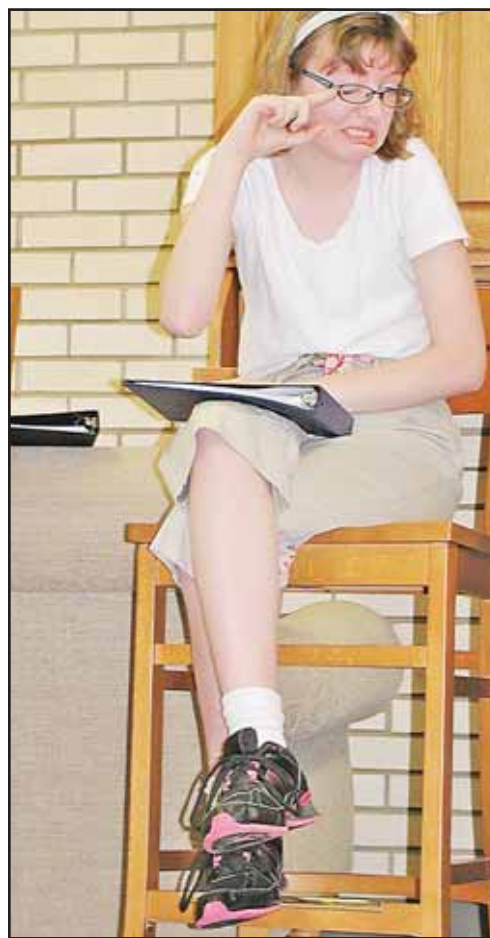
The free Kiwanis fireworks display will take place at 10 p.m. at the fairgrounds.



'I'm innocent!'

In "Misadventure in Topsy-Turvy Land: The Case of the Pilfered Pocket Watch," each character, including the countess, played by Alix Larson, (above left) tried to prove they did not steal the watch. During the play Thursday at the Pioneer Memorial Library, the young actors kept their scripts in front of their faces most of the time, when they were not reading from them, but Cosette O'Brien occasionally dropped hers for dramatic effect, to express dismay (below right), or sadness (below). Her brothers John and Brock wrote the play for this summer's readers theatre at the library. Chester the Cat, played by Karissa Singer, described her disagreements with Cosette's character, the white bunny, left, (above).

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press



Accidents result in minor injuries

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Two people went to the hospital over the weekend after accidents along U.S. 40 in Logan County, both with apparently minor injuries.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported the first accident happened at 6:30 p.m. Friday at the south edge of Oakley. Robert L. Hoover, 77, Weatherford, Texas, was driving a 2009 Toyota north on U.S. 83 approaching the intersection with U.S. 40. He failed to yield the right of way at a stop sign and hit a 2002 Pontiac Grand Am going east on U.S. 40, troopers said. That car was driven by Adayle A. Kirlin, 54, Kinsley, Kan. She went to the Logan County Medical Center, where she was treated

and released. Hoover and his passenger, Jackie M. Hoover, 74, also of Weatherford, were unhurt. All three were wearing seat belts.

The second accident happened about 16 miles west of Oakley at 7:10 a.m. Sunday, when a west-bound car driven by Elijah John Kuhlman, 18, Sharon Springs, drifted off the north side of the road at mile marker 52.8, near the elevator at Page. The driver over-corrected the 2005 Chrysler Pacifica and the car swerved across the highway into the south ditch, rolling once. Kuhlman, who was wearing a seat belt, also was treated and released from the Oakley hospital.



MARIAN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Byron Fritz and Larry Koon grilled hot dogs at last year's hot dog feed.

