

# State bond rating in jeopardy of being reduced

BUDGET, from Page 1

rating and was prompted by the state's declining cash reserves. Legislators ended the 2002 session with a budget reserve of nearly 5 percent. However, continued declines in revenue collections took that balance down to less than 1 percent when the 2002 fiscal year ended June 30. "That makes us financially vulnerable," Goossen said, adding that the state continues to borrow from other

internal funds to meet daily demands for revenue. James Breeding, a credit analyst with Standard & Poor's, said the road to financial health could prove challenging because the state has relied on one-time measures to fund part of the recent shortfalls. He noted the reduction in the state's cash reserves to help cover the gap in the state's \$4.4 billion budget. In addition, Standard & Poor's director Jim Wiemken said Kansas began

experiencing revenue shortfalls in 1999, a year after several hundred million in tax cuts were approved. "Then, the economy slowed on top of that. So they got hit from both sides," he said. Because of that double hit, Gov. Bill Graves is preparing to reduce spending through an allotment process. All agencies, except for the judicial and legislative branches, will be notified within the next week of their cuts, Goossen said.

How deep those cuts will be is not known, but is widely expected to include substantial cuts in education and social services. The last allotment process was carried out by Gov. John Carlin in the 1980s. However, the process was halted after legislators imposed the severance tax on oil and mineral production. Sen. Steve Morris, R-Hugoton and chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, said it would behoove legislators to begin work on the 2004 budget before the start of the legislative ses-

sion on Jan. 13. He said that Kansas routinely dropped below its mandated 7.5 percent reserve account in recent years. Ten percent would be ideal to meet all cash-flow demands, but 5 percent is workable, though it does strain resources, Morris added. "But when you drop below that like this year, that's what catches their attention," said Morris, in reference to the bond rating. Morris said absent improvement in the state's individual income and cor-

porate tax collections, legislators will have few options but to increase taxes or make deeper program cuts. A tax package would come just one year after \$252 million in new taxes were passed to shore up the current budget. On the Net: Kansas Legislature: <http://www.kslegislature.org> Gov. Bill Graves: <http://www.ink.org/public/governor/> Standard & Poor's: <http://www.standardandpoors.com>

## District following rules

SCHOOL, from Page 1

in only six hours a week. The equipment the schools use to water lawns isn't fast enough, he said, and the district can't afford to change its watering system. The hardest area to water is the football field, Selby said, adding that administrators are worried the ground will be harder than normal during football season and athletes may be injured. The district held its back-to-school picnic at Steever Water Park last year, Selby said, but isn't able to do that this year because the city is draining the pool early. The last day to swim is on Sunday, he said, and the city is planning to get the chemicals out of the water and use it for some other purpose. Selby said the district wants to conserve. "We're just trying to do the best we can," he said, "and follow the

rules." In other business, the board: • Hired Rich Schwasinger as junior class sponsor, Travis Witman as seventh grade girls basketball coach and eighth grade boys basketball coach, Candy Boyce as junior high teachers' aide and Lindsey Emig as assistant volleyball coach. • Accepted resignations from Barb Custer, high school teachers' aide, and Kim Weiss, a cook at West Elementary School. • Reviewed two bids on installing a new central air and heat system at the district administration office, but didn't accept either bid. Selby said the bids didn't follow the same specifications and the board gave him permission to further evaluate both and come back with a recommendation. Bowman's Heating and Air Conditioning bid \$19,415 and Goodland Sheet Metal bid \$10,010.

• Gave Selby permission to seek bids from banks on investing certificates of deposit and pick the best offer. Selby said on Aug. 17 two of the district's certificates of deposit, now at Western State Bank, will come up for renewal, one worth \$935,000 and the other \$154,662. Selby said he will let the board know which bank he picked. • Heard members Jane Philbrick and Dick Short won plaques from the Kansas Association of School Boards for attending a certain number of educational meetings during the past year. • Heard the back-to-school picnic will be held at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 22, at Gulick Park. • Paid \$185,750 in monthly bills, including a \$50,000 payment to Apple Corporation for new computers. • Voted to buy milk from Vap Distributing in Colby again this year. Selby said Vap is the only company that has made a milk bid for the past few years.

## Board agreed on parking

The Goodland School Board agreed Monday to let Peoples State Bank, which is putting in a branch north of the district administration building on Main, use part of the school's parking lot for a drive-through if Peoples provides more parking. Jon Pope, president of Peoples, which has banks in Colby, Hoxie and McDonald, attended the meeting Monday to ask the board to either sell him part of the school's parking lot or grant him an easement to use it. Pope, who lives near Hoxie, said Peoples plans to open the new branch soon and wants to have a drive-through window on the west side of the building it is remodeling on 13th and Main. The problem, he said, is that the district owns 50 feet of land west of the

building and uses the space for parking. Without use of the school's land, he said, it would be impossible to have a drive-through on the west side. Pope said it's possible to put a drive-through window on the north side of the new bank, but that location would be more awkward for customers. He said he has talked with leaders of St. Pauls Episcopal Church, which is right behind the new bank, about paving the empty lot south of the church for more parking space. The church hasn't given approval yet, Pope said, but if it does, the district will be allowed to use the parking lot, making up for the space it will lose. He added he will let S&T Tele-

phone, which is building a new office south of the district administration building, use the parking lot, too. Pope noted that when the new businesses open, parking will be tight. "It's going to get real sticky on the whole block as far as parking goes," he said. "The new parking lot would be beneficial for all of us." Superintendent Marvin Selby said he thinks it would be better for the board to give Pope permission to use the land rather than selling it to him because the district may want to use the land again someday. The board agreed, with members saying they'll give Peoples permission to use the school's parking lot as soon as the church gives Pope the go on building a new lot.

## School to take bids on Edson gym again in October meeting

GYM, from Page 1

marketed the facility, just north of I-70, as a warehouse. Selby said there might be businesses in Kansas or Colorado that could use a warehouse in Edson. Campbell said the board should seek bids again, but this time specify in the advertisement that the district would like to be paid \$28,700 for the gym. Other board members didn't agree with Campbell, and when his motion

didn't receive a second, he withdrew it. Schilling, an Edson farmer, said he thinks the board's best option is to sell the gym to Harrison and Simpson. In the end, he said, the district would make \$28,000 off the deal. He explained the board would take in \$15,000 from Harrison and Simpson, plus would save about \$15,000 in utility bills. Take away the \$2,000 the district

will pay each year to rent the gym, and Schilling said it adds up to \$28,000. Selby added that if the facility were sold as a warehouse the district probably wouldn't be able to use it for sports practices. He noted the pump on the well near the gym is not working and the school will have to fix it if it wants students to use the gym. It will cost about \$6,000 to fix the

well, Schilling said, adding that Harrison and Simpson said they planned to drill a new one. He noted that TNT plans to let Edson residents use the gym, something most owners would not allow. The facility was built with taxpayer dollars, he said, and should be used by taxpayers. "We need to evaluate how important it is for us to have the facility," Selby said.

Jim Mull, Grant Junior High principal, said the gym gives the school more space, allowing more students to participate in sports, but he said they can live without it. Duell said the gym probably wouldn't sell as a grain bin. He said drought has taken its toll on the wheat and corn crops, and there probably won't be enough grain to fill the gym this year or next. Schilling moved to take bids on the

gym again and Gray seconded the motion, with the rest of the board agreeing. The board decided to give buyers two options — either to buy the gym outright, or buy it and rent it back to the district for part of the year. Members said they have the right to refuse any or all bids. The bids will be due back at the end of September and the board will review them at their first meeting in October.

## Household waste date set in September

WASTE, from Page 1

remover, oven cleaners, pool chemicals, photo chemicals, rub and upholstery cleaners and toilet cleaners. Home improvement products such as adhesives, enamel or oil-based paints, paint stripper, thinners and turpentine, stains, finishes or preservatives and latex or water-based paints which may be recycled. Pesticides include ant and roach killers, arsenicals, botanicals, carbonates, chlorinated hydrocarbons, herbicides, organo-phosphates and rat and mouse poisons. Miscellaneous household items include batteries, both wet and dry cells, pet products, photo processing chemicals, fingernail polish remover, pool chemicals and electronic items. Linsner said they will also accept

old fire extinguishers which will be taken apart and recycled by Dennis Bentzinger. Among the items that will not be accepted are explosives, ammunition, dioxins, compressed gas cylinders, infectious waste, asbestos, radioactive waste, commercial hazardous wastes and unknown materials. Linsner said at this time they will not be accepting computer monitors because the state has not defined them as hazardous waste, but groups them along with fluorescent light and mouse poisons. They contain a small amount of mercury, but the state says the glass can be crushed and put in a landfill. More details will be coming, Linsner said, as she gets closer to the collection and gets the hours of operation established.

## Burn ban extended by county commissioners

Thunderstorms have been developing more frequently, but miss Sherman County, and without moisture in the forecast the Sherman County Commissioners agreed Tuesday to extend the countywide burn ban for another week. Rural Fire Chief Kenneth Griffith told the commissioners he would recommend the extension for at least one more week because of the continued dry weather. The commissioners set the burn ban right before July 4. The National Weather Service forecast for the remainder of the week shows temperatures in the 90s and little or no chance of isolated thunderstorms. Under state law, the commissioners must decide every seven days whether to extend the burn ban. The commissioners reviewed bids for copiers for the county clerk's office and for the county treasurer's office on Tuesday. Janet Rumpel, county clerk, and

Mary Ann Snethen, assistant clerk, presented the bids and said they were recommending the Saven copier from Tri-Central of Colby. Snethen said they had tried the Saven and a similar Canon copier from Ikon of Colby. She said the Saven had all the features the office needed, and was simpler to operate than the Canon. She said they did not see a Sharp copier in operation, which was bid by Topside Office. The bids were \$4,261 from Ikon; \$3,993 from Tri-Central and \$6,645 from Topside Office. The commissioners asked if all the bids included trade-in for the old copier, and Snethen said she had checked and all three did include the trade-in. Because of the wide difference, the commissioners decided to go with the lowest bid. Commissioner Chuck Frankenfeld made the motion to purchase the Saven from Tri-Central.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitch Tiede, and the vote was unanimous with Commissioner Kevin Rasure voting in favor. County Treasurer Shelby Miller brought in the bids on a copier for her office, and said she had seen the Saven and a Canon. The commissioners asked if she had seen a Sharp copier in operation, and Miller said she had not. She said she would call Topside and see if there was one in the city she could see in opera-

tion. The commissioners said they would delay the decision until she had seen the Sharp copier. They said they wanted a fair comparison because the prices of the copier were much closer and if possible they would like to purchase the one from Topside in Goodland. The bid on the Saven was about \$1,700, which Miller said she liked. The Canon was the one she did not like, and the Sharp was priced at \$2,145.

## Inmate captured after escape

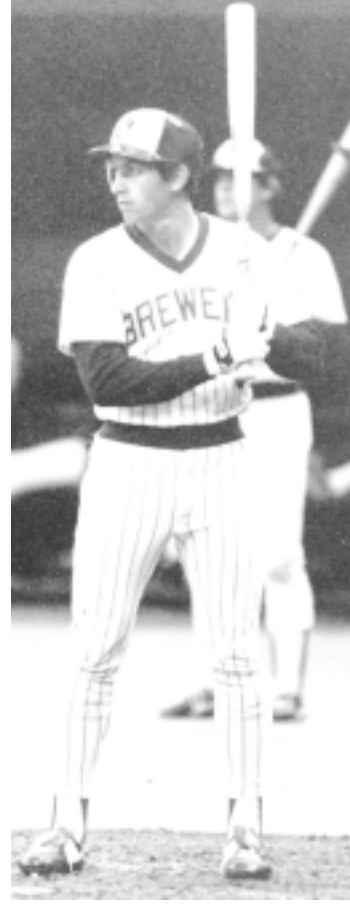
LANSING (AP) — Authorities on Tuesday captured an inmate who escaped Sunday from a minimum-security work crew at Lansing Correctional Facility. Lansing police caught Billy Wiles, 24, at about 10 a.m. Tuesday after they got a tip that Wiles had been spotted.

Wiles was apprehended without resistance and transported back to Lansing Correctional Facility, police said. Wiles is serving a 60-month sentence for sexual exploitation of a child less than 18 years of age in Mitchell County. He was scheduled for release in April 2005.

You are invited to hear **Doug Loman**, former outfielder for Milwaukee Brewers


Sunday, Aug. 18 10:30 a.m. Word Of Life Church 223 E. 10th at Clark Goodland, Kansas

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