

Colby professor dies

By Kevin Bottrell
Colby Free Press
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Iconic Colby Community College professor Dr. Max Pickerill died Monday at the age of 85.

Pickerill taught math and science at Colby for 36 years – beginning in 1974 – and even after his retirement, he remained involved in the college. Services were at 9:30 a.m. (Mountain Time) Friday at the Colby United Methodist Church. Visitation was from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. (Mountain Time) on Thursday at Harrison Chapel at Colby.

Pickerill had spend the last year in an out of hospitals and care centers. Roger Hale, a friend and former Colby College teacher, said Pickerill slipped into a coma in his final days, speaking intermittently to visitors.

Pickerill was born in 1925 in Parsons to Earl and Inez Pickerill. He

and his eight siblings grew up during the depression. His mother died in 1936 and his father spent three years unemployed. Pickerill had six children, three boys and three girls. His daughters, Cynthia England and Beverly Grabel, both live in Colby. He had eight grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and seven great-great-grandchildren.

In 1943, Pickerill enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He was trained as a radioman and served on board the U.S.S. Blue Ridge, the command ship of the 7th Fleet. He was honorably discharged in May of 1946.

While in the Navy, he earned the Asiatic Pacific Area Campaign Medal, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon and the American Area Campaign Medal. He was a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion.

In civilian life, Pickerill attended Parsons Community College, Pitts-

burg State University, Fort Hays State University and Louisiana State University. He spent 61 years teaching, beginning his career while he was still an undergraduate in Pittsburg.

While he was teaching, he was named an outstanding community college instructor by the University of Kansas six years in a row, and was chosen as the 1984-85 Distinguished Professor Award by the college.

Pickerill's former students are spread all throughout Kansas, Hale said.

"You didn't go anywhere that he didn't know people," he said.

The college named its lecture series after Pickerill in 1998.

Just last year, Pickerill was named professor emeritus at the college's graduation ceremonies.



Dr. Max Pickerill teaching a class at Colby Community College. He taught math and chemistry for 36 years.

Commission met to talk about court finances

By Kevin Bottrell
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Lawyers, judges, court employees and business owners made up most of the audience that turned up Tuesday, April 26, to talk with members of a Blue Ribbon Commission that is looking into the Kansas court system.

Colby lawyer Cal Williams, Finney County lawyer John Wheeler and Patrick McAnany, a judge and commission chair, met with the public at Colby Community College. Williams said the commission members were taking notes at 19 public meetings around the state, looking for ways to save money, and what services people want to keep local.

eastern Kansas.

Berens suggested the courts look at raising fees to generate more revenue.

Etta Walker, a lawyer from Sharon Springs, said she practices in Colorado, a state which has gone to part-time judges in some areas. Walker said it is nice to have a local judge. Wallace County's judge has been in place for eight years, but the state is paying him full time for about two days of work. She suggested either making the position part time, scaling down the county to two magistrate judges or sharing a judge with a neighboring county.

"I don't want to lose access to a judge," she said, "but I don't believe we need to have judges tied to certain counties."

Hoxie Lawyer Ken Eland disagreed, saying counties would get less-qualified judges if the positions were made part time.

Eland said ready access to title records is key for his practice. During

last year's court furloughs, he was unable to get information, such as if a judgement had been made on a title before closure, which is a potential liability for him.

"Service is what's important, and sometimes that costs money," he said.

Eland suggested raising taxes may be necessary to maintain essential government services. Douglas Spencer, an Oakley lawyer, said that had occurred to him, but he was not sure how much of an increase would be necessary. People need to

know raising taxes is an option, he said, so they have the choice when they vote.

"If we want to keep these nice things we have, we have to pay for them," he said.

Spencer suggested returning responsibility for magistrate judges to the counties. Counties would likely pay them less and reduce hours he said, but the burden would no longer be put on the state.

"The bottom line is the state is looking to cut judges," he said, "and that ought to be in the coun-

ties' hands."

Walker said some of the northwest counties, such as Wallace and Logan, can't raise much money with taxes because of how farmland is assessed. Residential and commercial property owners pay the lion's share of the taxes, and the low-population counties don't have enough of those to generate a lot of revenue.

"I'm afraid of dumping the burden on counties until we can fix that," she said.

Spencer was concerned about state-required technology upgrades. Counties are having trouble as it is to maintain computers, he said, and would the state provide continuing support or just pay for the upgrades?

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"We are examining all aspects of the court system," he said. "We want to improve the courts and make better use of taxpayers money. That's a major concern at this point."

Williams said once the meetings are done, the commission will organize all the information and make a recommendation to the Kansas Supreme Court, which will in turn make a recommendation to the Legislature. Even though the courts are a separate branch of government, he said, the Legislature controls the budget, and so can exert a lot of control over how the courts operate.

Williams said there were several areas he wanted people to consider, such as increasing flexibility of personnel, what services can be provided better regionally and what would be better done locally and how technology can be used to streamline the courts.

Williams emphasized the commission has no recommendation yet, and is holding the meetings to get ideas from the public.

"We're not here to tell you what's happening," he said. "We're here to ask what it is we should be doing. We're not here to close courts, we're not here to fire anybody."

Paul Bailey, who owns an appraisal company and a title company in Colby, said whenever corporations talk about making things more efficient, they usually mean cutbacks.

Bailey said a lot of his interaction with the court system involves looking up probate cases and lawsuits involving titles, and he was concerned about where he would have to go and how far he would have to travel to look them up. Online records are good, he said, but a lot of records are not electronic yet.

Bailey said he is concerned about small claims courts being too far away. Some business owners can't spend time away from their offices to travel to appear in court, he said, and so would not make use of small claims courts when they should.

Williams said location of records was not something that had been brought up in the other meetings.

"Those are the kinds of things we need to take back," he said.

Thomas County Attorney Kevin Berens said losing judges in some of the northwest counties would increase travel costs for lawyers.

Berens asked the commission members to consider what effect losing judges would have on the poor, such as a person seeking a protection from abuse order who didn't have a car and couldn't get to a county with a judge. They could have a remote conference, he said, but people don't want to see and talk to a judge in person.

Judges in high-population counties like Shawnee do a lot of first appearances by remote, Berens said, suggesting instead of eliminating judge positions in western Kansas, having western judges hold hearings over the internet for cases in

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Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10			11		12		13	
15			16		17		18	
19			20		21			
22			23	24		25		26
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		32					33	
	34	35			36	37	38	
39				40				
41				42			43	44
45			46	47		48		49
		51			52	53		54
56	57						59	
60				61			62	
63				64				65

- CLUES ACROSS**
- PCLUES ACROSS
 - Annualized percentage rate
 - Short term memory
 - Outward flow of the tide
 - Sob loudly
 - Minerals
 - Integrated data processing
 - Mountain spinach
 - Animal flesh
 - Grapefruit & tangerine hybrid
 - Language of No. India
 - Below
 - Angry
 - Soviet Socialist Republic
 - Blood-sucking African fly
 - Fusses
 - Close by
 - Blood pumping organ
 - W. Samoan monetary unit
 - Salmonella aftermath
 - Counterbalance to obtain net weight
 - About pope
 - 45th state
 - Slips by
 - Be suitable for
 - Right angle building extension
 - Chicken ___ king
 - Azotaemias
 - 55120 MN
 - Cologne
 - A thing or unit
 - Ointment
 - Actress Lupino
 - 4,840 sq. yards
 - Film spool
 - For every
 - NYSE for Honeywell
- CLUES DOWN**
- Resistance unit
 - One rejected from society
 - E. Central African nation
 - Mexican hat
 - Arboreal plant
 - Unkind
 - XVIII
 - Bundle (abbr.)
 - Characters in one inch of tape (computers)
 - Computer screen material
 - Retain a printing correction
 - Booed and
 - Implements
 - To the same extent
 - Swat
 - Musically vocalized
 - Before
 - Used for easing the foot into a shoe
 - Supporting stalk
 - Future destiny
 - Relating to an oracle
 - Salespersons
 - Opaque gem
 - 3rd largest Italian city
 - Vessel used for washing
 - Birds of prey
 - One bound in servitude
 - 41st state
 - Denotes substance is present in the blood
 - Administer an oil
 - What you scratch
 - Relating to aircraft
 - Swiss river
 - Weight = to 1000 pounds
 - Lyric poem

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	1		4	8				
	4	3			1		8	
2				3				5
3					7	6	5	
	2			4	6	7		9
4				5	3		2	
	9		1				7	
8	5	1	3	7			6	2
	3					8		1

Level: Beginner