



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

Gift shop in the spirit



PATTY DECKER/Free Press Editor

The gift shop at Citizens Medical Center held its annual holiday open house on Sunday to give shoppers an early start on their Christmas decorations. Charlene Baalman, one of the organizers, is pictured getting ready for the event, which featured a large selection of ornaments, puppets and Christmas figures. For those who might have missed the opening, the gift shop will continue to sell these items during its regular hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. All profits from the gift shop help buy items for the hospital. Winners in the open house drawing were Margaret Denneler, receiving a friendship circle candle ring; Georgetta Schoenfeld, winning candle trees; and Fawna McFee, the recipient of a stuffed snowman. More than 50 people attended the three-hour event.

Council to consider approval of city hall as smoke-free facility

By JAY KELLEY

Colby Free Press

The Colby City Council will be busy Tuesday night at their regular meeting at City Hall at 7:30 p.m.

The council will hear a request to make City Hall a no-smoking facility. The north side of the building is already non-smoking, but Armstrong said there are full-time firefighters who smoke who are allowed to do so in the fire department living quarters after hours.

In addition to old business, which is a decision to rescind approval of a final plat of the Dell Addition for Woofter Construction, the council will discuss requests for changes to curbs, easements and water main, the authorization of a new city street and award bids for two new police cars.

Internal business on the agenda will include an increase in health insurance premiums and a request to make City Hall a no-smoking facility.

Mike Woofter has requested an additional 10 feet of property for landscaping and a sound barrier for his truck stop south of the Comfort Inn on

south Range, said City Manager Carolyn Armstrong. This would require rescinding approval and sending the plat back to the planning commission.

Jay Bhakta and Mark Augustine will appear before the council to request assistance in moving an eight-inch water line on the property between the Ramada Inn and the Amoco station on South Range. According to Armstrong, the pair will request the city provide labor to move the line and they will pay for all materials.

Other business facing the council includes:

- Bob Coleman will request a curb cut into his backyard for access to a garage at 905 E. 6th. The entrance would be on Country Club just beyond the crest of a hill.

- Approval of an ordinance amending the Street, Alley and Easement encroachment codes.

- Hearing a proposal to pave Horton Avenue, near Comfort Inn by Cahoj Construction.

- Consideration of bids on two police cars from Frontier Autoplex and Tubbs & Sons Ford. The city vehicle committee will have a recommendation before the council meets.

- Hear reports on a 28 percent increase in health insurance premiums, effective Feb. 1, 2002 and a cable TV increase.



C. Armstrong

Cash prizes await winners of big Colby Christmas parade

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Colby will once again "ring in the holidays" with a Christmas parade in the downtown area on Sunday, Dec. 9, beginning at 6 p.m.

The theme is "All Hearts Go Home For The Holidays," said Deanna Mallory, publicity chair.

"This is a city-wide effort and we encourage everyone to participate — whether it's a business, organization or individual — we want to make this our best parade yet," she said.

Something new this year, she said, is that prize money will be awarded for the first and second place winners in five categories.

The categories will be judged for the best theme and/or display to include religious groups; lighted displays, such as on cars, com-

"This is a city-wide effort and we encourage everyone to participate..."

— Deanna Mallory, publicity chairperson for the parade

bines or other vehicles; children's expressions of Christmas; best float overall, and best display or float by clubs and organizations.

First place winners will receive \$50 and second place winners will be awarded \$25. The prize money was donated by the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce.

The parade committee is also looking at ways to ensure more participation by providing two or three flatbeds for groups to use and the Sports

Shope has agreed to enhance the holiday atmosphere by setting up speakers outside to play Christmas music. Jon Eicher, chairperson, is visiting as many local businesses as he can to persuade better participation.

"Colby Ag Center always has a neat display and this year we are challenging the other implement dealerships to top them," he said.

Another area the committee hopes to see is more participation from are church groups and

children. It would add a lot if there were lots of carolers singing joyful songs, he said, and children come up with great ideas.

The parade participants will line up at the former Boogaart grocery store parking lot at 5:30 p.m. and the route will be down Franklin Avenue, ending at Fike Park, Mallory said.

The parade will also signify the traditional kick off for businesses staying open later through the holiday season.

For most merchants, the hours will be extended until 8 p.m. beginning Monday, Dec. 10 and continuing Monday through Friday, with Saturday hours from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sundays from 1 to 5 p.m. until Christmas.

Those planning to participate in the parade should first call the Chamber office at 462-3401 to register their entry, Mallory said.

Eicher added that it helps when people call to let the committee know their plans so that the announcer can give each entry recognition.

"In previous years," he said, "there might be a whole bunch of children show up to participate and we weren't able to give them credit because we couldn't get their names to the announcer in time."

The goal is to push hard this year, get lots of kids and adults involved and make the event memorable, Eicher said.

Mallory agreed saying that she too would like to see this be the best parade Colby has ever had by making it truly a family affair.

Committee members for the parade are Eicher, chair; Pat and Deanna Mallory, Leilani Thomas and Greg Schafer.

Four journalists missing in Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—U.S. warplanes and northern alliance artillery on Monday pounded positions of the Taliban and foreign militants linked to Osama bin Laden at Kunduz, the Taliban's last stronghold in the north. Four international journalists were missing after gunmen took them from a convoy in eastern Afghanistan.

The siege tightened around Kunduz as U.N. and U.S. diplomats tried to quickly arrange a conference of Afghan factions to plan a post-Taliban government — perhaps as soon as this week. Over the weekend, the northern alliance made a key concession, agreeing to hold the meeting on neutral ground.

Foreign militants — mostly Arabs, Pakistanis and Chechens — loyal to bin Laden's al-Qaida terror network were preventing Afghan Taliban fighters from surrendering Kunduz, refugees from the city said.

Alliance troops for the past several days had encircled the city without fir-

ing. But on Monday they used two tanks, two artillery pieces and a multiple rocket launcher to fire on Taliban positions in the hills.

American warplanes also struck the city's defenses Monday. U.S. strikes were also reported in the south and east of the country.

Refugees from Kunduz have said up to 300 Taliban fighters were shot — apparently by their own side — as they tried to surrender Friday. Reports of other killings on a smaller scale have also emerged in recent days.

One refugee, Dar Zardad, said Taliban in Kunduz killed eight teenagers after some of the youths laughed at them, and other fighters killed a doctor who was slow to treat wounded Taliban.

Some alliance commanders cast doubt on an earlier reported Taliban offer to surrender if the foreigners' safety was guaranteed. The Taliban are not in a position to talk terms because the Arabs were in effective control of

Kunduz, the commanders said.

The four journalists were missing after armed men stopped their convoy of six to eight cars on the road between the capital, Kabul, and the eastern city of Jalalabad. Gunmen opened fire after the journalists were taken from their cars, drivers said.

"They took the journalists, and when the journalists turned to look at them, the gunmen shot," said driver Mohammed Farrad.

The area recently came mainly under the control of anti-Taliban forces. However, some Taliban stragglers and Arab fighters were still believed to be in the area. Two Reuters journalists were missing from the ambush — Australian television cameraman Harry Burton and Azizullah Haidari, an Afghan-born photographer — the news agency said. Also missing were Julio Fuentes, of the Spanish daily El Mundo, and Maria Grazia Cutuli, of the Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera, the two papers said.

Hazardous duty



MAXINE NELSON/Colby Free Press

Sandy Swob, director of Thomas County Household Hazardous Waste, helped unload a car on Saturday at the collection site on Fourth St. in Colby. "This was the last collection for this year due to inclement weather," she said. However, collection drives will begin again next spring.

Briefly

Weather: Just plain nice

It looks like Thanksgiving week will provide some pretty nice weather for the Colby region, if the National Weather Service forecast is correct. Tonight, clear, lows in the middle 20s and calm winds. Tuesday, partly sunny, highs in the lower 60s and light westerly winds. Tuesday night, clear, lows in the middle 30s. Wednesday and Thursday, partly cloudy, lows in the upper 20s to around 30 and highs in the middle 50s to around 60. Sunday's high in Colby was 53 and the overnight low this morning was 20. There was no precipitation, leaving the month's total at 0.15 inches. The soil temperature at the four-inch depth is averaging 50 degrees. The records for Nov. 19: 78 in 1897 and 4 in 1937. (The daily temperatures, precipitation and records are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)

Accident kills Hoxie teen

HOXIE — A 19-year-old Hoxie man was killed in a one-vehicle accident Saturday morning on U.S. 24 in western Graham county. The Kansas Highway Patrol reported that Vess Mowry was eastbound on U.S. 24 four miles east of the Graham-Sheridan County line when he struck a bridge, losing control of his 1989 Chevy pickup and spinning into the south ditch. The truck rolled several times and came to rest on its top. Mowry was not wearing a seatbelt.

Mickey-Leopold Funeral Home in Hoxie is handling arrangements. Visitation is until 8 p.m. tonight and from 9 a.m. until services on Tuesday. Services will be at 2 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church in Hoxie.

CPR, first aid classes planned

The American Red Cross will be sponsoring a CPR and

First Aid class on Tuesday and Thursday, Nov. 27 and 29 at the Thomas County Emergency Medical Services building, 1245 S. Franklin Ave. The course, said Donna Finley, executive director of the Thomas County Red Cross, trains people to act in an emergency and to recognize and care for respiratory or cardiac emergencies, sudden illness and injuries. To register or for information, call Finley at 462-7161 or 462-2366.

Thanksgiving: A day off for many

Thanksgiving day will be a day off for most business folks in the Colby community. Additionally, the Free Press will not publish a paper. For the most part, everybody will get back to their normal workday activity on Friday. "The Free Press wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, and gives special thanks for all those emergency people who look after our welfare while we are enjoying the day off," said

the newspaper's publisher Tom (TD) Dreiling.

'55' Alive class nears

The "55 Alive" defensive drivers course, sponsored by AARP, will be given at the Senior Progress Center on Nov. 29-30, from 1-5 p.m. This course is open to all area individuals 55 or older. You must attend both classes to qualify for a discount on your automobile insurance premium. Call Deb Koon at 462-2901, to enroll.

Sorority plans annual gift shop

Mu Epsilon Sorority is sponsoring its annual Santa's Helper Shop on Saturday, Dec. 8, from 9 to 11 a.m. at Pioneer Memorial Library. Shopping is open to all children in fifth grade and under. Organizers said, all gifts are \$3 with proceeds going to support community projects.

