



COLBY FREE PRESS

6 pages

The aftermath of Christmas



Ice show

PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

It might not have been a white Christmas in Colby, but in the vicinity of Cleveland and Sixth Street this morning, there was quite an ice show (above). On first sight, it might appear that a water line broke; however, public works department officials confirmed today that this wasn't the case. Apparently, a sprinkler was inadvertently left on, which created the spectacular phenomenon.



Empty pockets

As the holiday season winds down and children all around town are playing with their new toys, many of the adults, such as Jim McLaughlin of Colby, (right) are back to work after emptying their pockets to make those dreams possible. "It was actually a great Christmas," McLaughlin said. He and his wife, Rhonda, have two daughters, Cameron, 7, and Carson, 2.

Two Thomas Countians seek seats on state boards

By PATTY DECKER
Free Press Editor

Two Colby men are candidates for seats on two of the four state commodity commissions positions that include corn, grain sorghum, soybeans and wheat.

Mike Brown, who farms in Thomas County, is campaigning in district one for the wheat commission. That district not only includes Thomas County, but also Cheyenne, Decatur, Graham, Norton, Rawlins, Sheridan, and Sherman Counties.

Brown is currently the director of the 21st Century Grain Processing Co-op board and is also on the board of the Grain Growers Membership Insurance Trust, said Lisa Taylor, Kansas Department of Agriculture public information officer.

Richard Calliham, a fifth-generation farmer in Thomas County, grows wheat and sorghum and is a candidate for the grain sorghum commission, she

said.

Calliham is active in the Colby Wesleyan Church and in the Kansas Farm Bureau, Taylor said.

"The voter registration deadline for the election is Tuesday, Dec. 31," she said.

Those eligible to vote, Taylor said, are people in the state who will reach the age of 18 before the election and who have been growing corn, grain sorghum, soybeans or wheat during the last three years.

"Registered voters," she said, "will receive an official ballot in January and all ballots must be postmarked no later than March 1."

After the votes are cast, an official counting day in March will be announced so those wanting to observe the vote-counting process can do so, Taylor said.

Brown is the only candidate campaigning for the district one seat on the wheat commission. However, there are

two candidates for the wheat commission position in district two and three.

In district two, Taylor said, Robert Herl, Trego County and Ron Suppes, Scott City are vying for the position. Included in district two are the counties of Gove, Greeley, Lane, Logan, Ness, Scott, Trego, Wallace and Wichita.

Another area candidate for a commodity commission position is Ted Zielke in Sherman and Cheyenne Counties, who is campaigning for a seat on the corn commission.

"Growers who did not sign a valid candidate petition form may register by filling out a voter registration form," she said.

Forms are available at the Thomas County Extension Office in Colby, the Thomas County Conservation District Office, or the Kansas Department of Agriculture in Topeka.

For producers wanting more information, call Taylor at (785) 296-2653.

B ringing the weather to Colby Course in meteorology scheduled

By TOM (TD) DREILING
Free Press Publisher

Everybody talks about the weather, but....

There will be a lot of weather talk at Colby Community College starting in late January, and anyone of high school age or older can take advantage of a course in meteorology — at a bargain price.

Called *Introduction to Weather/Basic Meteorology*, the class begins Thursday, Jan. 23 for 12 Thursday night sessions. The cost to enroll is tuition for one credit hour — \$50 for

Kansas residents and \$88 for out-of-staters — plus a \$5 fee. Each session begins at 6:30 p.m. and concludes at 9 p.m.

The course, according to the college, promotes a basic understanding of important meteorological concepts and the science of meteorology. It will be taught by meteorologists from the Goodland National Weather Service office.

The class is expected to unmask the mystery behind weather forecasting. Cloud buildup, what kinds of clouds roam the skies, clear conditions, partly

sunny cover, precipitation — or lack of — will interest enrollees.

During a time of severe drought, something northwest and southwest Kansans have been enduring for a couple of years, can be expected to find its way into class discussion.

Coffee shop weathermen, armchair forecasters, farmers, city folks with an eye toward the sky will have an opportunity to learn the science of the profession.

Additional information is available by calling the college's admissions office at 785-462-4690.

White Christmas gets out of hand with up to three feet of snow falling

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — After a brilliant white Christmas, a winter storm waned in time for commuters and travelers to slog back to work through areas buried in up to 3 feet of snow.

The nor'easter Wednesday dumped snow throughout the Northeast, shutting down more than 100 miles of a major highway through central New York, canceling flights and causing power outages to thousands. It was the ninth fiercest snowstorm in the Albany area listed in National Weather Service records dating back to 1884.

The snowstorm, blowing out of the Great Plains, was blamed for at least 18 deaths since Monday. The system moved east Tuesday night, from the Midwest into Pennsylvania, New York and New England. It re-formed Wednesday off the East Coast as a nor'easter.

The fringe of a storm brought up to 9 inches of snow to portions of Michigan. In Cleveland, 10.2 inches of snow fell, making it the whitest Christmas on record in the city.

The storm faded early Thursday. "There should be no snow falling when

the commute starts," said meteorologist George Maglaras.

At the height of the storm, a 103-mile stretch of the New York State Thruway was shut down between Syracuse and Amsterdam because plows couldn't keep up. After more than 200 vehicles were dispatched to keep the roads clean, authorities planned to reopen the stretch after midnight, said Thruway spokesman Terry O'Brien.

"We should have things fairly well in hand" for the morning commute, O'Brien said. "Just take it easy if you have to travel, leave a lot of extra time," he said.

There were heavy delays at Syracuse Hancock International Airport, and Albany International Airport braced for an especially busy day Thursday after airlines canceled almost all flights Christmas evening.

All three of New York City's airports were affected, with John F. Kennedy International and LaGuardia airports closing Wednesday evening and flights delayed at Newark Liberty International Airport. Flights were also canceled or delayed at airports in Albany,

Hartford and Boston.

To the south, slush forced officials at Baltimore-Washington International Airport to close the two major runways temporarily. Six inches fell on parts of western Maryland.

The full force of the storm was felt in the Mohawk Valley, where up to 36 inches of snow fell as fast as 5 inches per hour Wednesday, according to the weather service.

Snow twirled round and ice patches clung to Sakib Kania's mustache as he cleared heavy inches of snow from his car with a house broom in Albany.

"That's really the right weather for Christmas," Kania said. The last time it snowed on Christmas in the Albany area there were 3.8 inches in 1985.

The snowfall total in Albany reached 19.2 inches at midnight, breaking the 1978 record of 11.8 inches, the weather service said.

The city of Schenectady and the town of Catskill, among others, declared states of emergency, as did the counties of Schenectady, north of Albany; Otsego, west of Albany; and Herkimer in central New York.

Somebody is \$314.9 million richer

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — Someone who bought a lottery ticket in West Virginia won the \$314.9 million jackpot in Wednesday's Powerball drawing, a lottery official said.

Multi-State Lottery Association drawing manager Sue Dooley said no

other information on the winner would be immediately released.

An unexpected Christmas Day run on Powerball tickets pushed the already whopping \$280 million jackpot to \$314.9 million just before numbers were drawn, making it the multistate

lottery's largest prize ever. The numbers in Wednesday night's drawing were 5-14-16-29-53 and the Powerball was 7. The prize would be the third-largest lottery jackpot in U.S. history. The winning ticket was bought in the West Virginia town of Hurricane.

DODGE CITY (AP) — Twelve-year-old Aryn Schowengerdt waited years for her father to make good on a promise to give her a pony.

But after receiving the horse of her dreams this Christmas, Aryn decided to give it to the children of United Methodist Youthville, a 75-year-old foster care agency with a ranch and horse program on 120 acres in Dodge City.

"I thought it would be better to give it to them instead of being selfish and keeping it for myself," said Aryn, a

sixth-grader whose grandfather is a volunteer at Youthville. As it happened, Youthville was looking for a new horse. "We needed a bigger horse because a lot of our kids are bigger," said Nikki Schartz, horsemanship specialist at Youthville.

Aryn gave the horse his name, Avalanche, and presented him to the children of Youthville last week. She will visit Avalanche from time to time and even be able to ride him occasionally, said her father, Dr. Andrew Schowengerdt.

Nice gesture on the part of girl, 12

WeatherWatch Colby-Oakley area

The numbers
Wednesday's high, N/A
Low this morning, N/A
Year ago today, 50 & 13
Temperature at 11:45 today, 40
Soil temperature, 31
Records for Dec. 26: 64 in 1971, -8 in 1962

The forecast
Tonight, clear, lows in the mid teens, southwest winds up to 10 mph. Friday, sunny and warmer, highs in the mid 50s, southwest winds up to 15 mph. Friday night, clear and mild, lows in the mid 20s. Saturday, sunny and warmer, highs in the lower 60s.

Briefly

Senior Center to close Jan. 1

The Senior Progress Center, located at 165 Fike Park in Colby, will be closed on New Year's Day, Wednesday, Jan. 1. There will be no meal delivery, and the transportation van will not run.

The center will re-open on Thursday, Jan. 2.

City council to meet Monday morning

The Colby City Council will hold a special meeting on Monday, Dec. 30, at 7:45 a.m. in the council chambers at the city building. Items on the agenda include approval of the consent agenda, action on cost sharing for family health insurance, and approval of the agreement between Mid States Port Authority, the state of Kansas, Kyle Railroad, and the City of Colby, pertaining to easements and construction for the Highway 25 viaduct project.

Courthouse opens Friday

The Thomas County Courthouse will re-open at its normal

business hours on Friday at 8 a.m. The courthouse was closed Christmas day and today.

Food bank schedule noted

The Genesis Food Bank will not be open on Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2003 due to the holidays. The food bank will be open its regular hours on Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2003, from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m., said Rosalie Seemann, president of Genesis.

CPR class planned in January

The American Red Cross will be sponsoring a CPR Class on Thursday, Jan. 16 at the Colby Community College Student Union. To register or for information, call Mary Smith, Red Cross Chapter manager at 462-7161.

Reminder for recyclers

The Thomas County Recycling Center is reminding everyone

that Christmas wrapping paper, gift bags and cookie tins can be recycled at the facility, 720 E. College Dr. (located under the City of Colby's blue water tower).

Recycling officials are also asking that people depositing wrapping paper and gift bags, use the chipboard bins and for cookie tins use the tin bins.

For questions, call Lynette Koon, (785) 462-7482 (Ext. 39).

Wellness Fair information

With the Wellness Fair nearing, businesses are being asked to take part in promoting community health and wellness by covering the cost of the fair registration and or health screenings for their employees who may want to participate.

The fair will be held on Saturday, Jan. 18, 2003, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the student union on the Colby Community College campus. Blood work will be done on Saturdays, Jan. 4 and 11. The registration fee is \$5, with the addition fees for some of the tests.

For more information about business coupons for the Wellness Fair call Wanda Davis at (785) 462-4797.

