



COLBY FREE PRESS



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Dorothy Stephens of Colby looks at Christmas decorations at Someplace Special. The first weekend of the holiday shopping season brought out nice size crowds to Colby businesses. Stephens' home will be featured in the annual holiday home tour on Sunday, Dec. 7 from 2-5 p.m.

Merchants generally encouraged by early turnout of shoppers

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

It's only the beginning of December and the first big weekend of the holiday shopping season has already past.

Some Colby merchants reported an overall brisk weekend.

The Sports Shoppe had a busy Friday but slowed down some on Saturday. Manager Tess Smith said Friday was the best day. "but we had a good weekend," she said. "It was a good beginning to the holiday season."

Mike Wiens, at Someplace Special, said despite being open only one day over the weekend, business was good. He said the shop was open Sunday afternoon for the annual holiday open house. "We had a very good turnout," Wiens said.

"We were very well pleased."

The nature of their business shifts between the beginning of the month and Christmas.

He said they sell more gift-type items and decorations the first part of the month and more floral arrangements near the actual holiday because people are having holiday gatherings, parties and dinners.

Wiens is hoping the season brings a lot of business.

"We're hoping to stay busy," he said. "We're hoping for a steady flow of people."

David Keck, at Colby True Value, said he had a big weekend.

"I'm very pleased," he said. "For this time of year it was as expected."

He said the best-selling items were bean bag chairs, furniture and items from the sales circular.

Keck said things will pick up even more as it gets closer to Christmas.

He said being open on each Sunday before the holiday and having extended hours will help. Downtown businesses will be open until 8 p.m. starting Monday, Dec. 8.

Office Works had a quieter weekend but business is expected to pick up this week.

Jaton Denneier, a clerk, said Friday was a little slow but their anniversary sale is going on all week, which should attract customers. She also expects to get busier as it gets closer to the holiday.

Ted Domsch, manager, said despite the slow day, Saturday turned out to be "fair."

Temporary register of deeds appointed by commissioners

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Thomas County has an interim register of deeds, following action taken today by the Thomas County commissioners at their regular meeting. .

The commissioners went into executive session to discuss personnel matters, and when they returned

to open session they named Maybelle Moore as interim register of deeds.

She is the temporary replacement for Denny Burke, who retired after 19 years of service to the county. Burke was elected to the post in 1996.

Commissioner Ron Evans said she will fill the position until the

Republican Party makes its appointment.

In other business matters:

The Thomas County road department will be getting several new computers.

The county commissioners approved a bid of \$3,232.98 from S&T Communication for two new computers..

Clair Schrock, road department head, presented four bids to the commissioners, including two from S&T, one in the amount of \$3,356.98 and the low bid of \$3,232.98. There were also bids from Office Works for \$3,526 and PC Express for \$3,392.30.

Schrock also brought up an insurance claim turned into the county by

someone whose vehicle was damaged by a rock on a Thomas County road. He said the individual was hoping the county's insurance would pay for the damage.

"We didn't get some of the big rocks off the road," Schrock said. "I'm pretty sure it was our fault it happened."

The county did turn it into their

insurance provider but the claim was declined.

County commissioner Glen Kersenbrock said it wasn't the commissioners who refused to pay the claim. "It wasn't us that turned it down," he said. "It was the insurance company."

The commissioners named Mark Bredemeier to the Fair Board.



Not much change

Colby, Oakley, Hoxie
forecast

Tonight...Mostly cloudy. Lows in the upper 20s. South winds 10 to 20 mph.

Tuesday...Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 50s. South winds 10 to 15 mph shifting to the northeast in the afternoon.

Tuesday night...Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain showers and snow showers. Lows in the mid 20s. North winds 15 to 20 mph.

Wednesday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 50s. West winds 5 to 15 mph shifting to the south around 10 mph in the afternoon.

Wednesday night...Mostly clear. Lows in the upper 20s.

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

The Colby City Council will consider approving an agreement for an airport layout plan and south apron/taxi lanes improvement project when it meets Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall, 585 N. Franklin.

In order to meet the Federal Avia-

tion Administration's minimums for taxi lanes at the Colby Municipal Airport, said Carolyn Armstrong, city manager, it would require relocating one hangar and removing two others. The airport board will meet prior to the council meeting on Tuesday to talk about the agreement and recommendations.

Bob McLemore, Colby's fire chief, prepared a bid sheet seeking approval by the council on specifications and authorization to seek bids for a new vehicle, Armstrong said.

The council is also expected to allow the city to seek bids for the heating and air conditioning at the new Public Works building.

In other council business:

- Mayor Warren Hixson will ask the council to approve the appointment of Jim Tubbs to the city council to fill the unexpired term of Todd Barrow, who is moving out of town. Barrow's term will expire in April of 2007.

- Hixson is also seeking to reappoint Lois Van Horn to the city's

housing authority board with the term expiring in December of 2007.

- The council will also consider the mayor's recommendation to reappoint Brent Wiedeman to the Colby/Thomas County Metropolitan Area Planning Council with the term expiring in December of 2006.

For questions or an agenda, call 462-4410.

Murder charges filed against four today in Hays fight

TOPEKA — Charges were filed today against four individuals for their alleged role in the death of a Fort Hays State University student last month, said Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline.

Luis Anthony Llamas, 23, a senior at the university from San Diego, Calif.; Jaime Raul Lopez, III, 23, a senior from Chula Vista, Ca-

lif.; Christopher Ryan Ross, 19, a freshman from Wylie, Texas; and Bradley Darnell Deary, 21, a junior from Smithville, Texas, have each been charged with murder in the second degree for their alleged participation in the beating death of Clint Johnson on Thursday, Nov. 13, in Hays. All four defendants are being held in the Ellis County Jail

in lieu of \$500,000 bond.

"The charge of murder in the second degree is a Level 2 Person Felony and carries a possible prison sentence of 109-493 months," said Ellis County Attorney Thomas Drees.

Assistant Attorney General Stephen Maxwell will prosecute the case on behalf of Kline along with

County Attorney Drees.

Johnson was an 18-year-old Fort Hays State University freshman from Healy. He died two days later from injuries suffered in a Nov. 13 fight at the University Apartments near campus.

"Even though this event took place off campus at a privately owned apartment complex, this

tragedy has significantly impacted the university community," said Dr. Edward H. Hammond, university president, during an earlier interview.

"Even though Hays is one of the safest communities in the state and the region, twe need to send a clear message that they will not be tolerated," Hammond said.

Ft. Riley loses 17th soldier in Iraq

FORT RILEY (AP) — A Fort Riley soldier has died in Iraq from noncombat-related injuries.

Spc. Thomas J. Sweet, II, 23, of Bismarck, N.D., was killed Thursday in Camp Junction City, Iraq,

according to Fort Riley officials.

He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment of the 1st Infantry Division.

Sweet joined the Army in May 1999 and had been stationed at Fort

Riley since October 1999. He was a cannon crew member and deployed to Iraq in September.

Sweet is the 17th Fort Riley soldier to die in Iraq, according to the Pentagon.

Briefly

Santa's shop opens next week

Pre-school through fifth grade students will be able to do their own shopping when the annual Santa's Helper Shop opens from 9 to 11 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 13, at Pioneer Memorial Library in Colby. The event is sponsored by Blue Jean Ladies (formerly Mu Epsilon) with all homemade gifts priced at \$3 to include gift wrapping. Limit is four gifts per child, organizers said, and all proceeds go to benefit community projects.

Chamber hosts holiday open house

The Colby Chamber of Commerce will host its annual "Holiday Open House" from 5 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The public is invited. The office is located at 350 S. Range in the Thomas County Office Complex.

Senior party announced

Prairie Senior Living Complex will host a Christmas party

for its residents on Friday, Dec. 19 from 2-4 p.m. Family and friends of residents as well as the public are invited to come celebrate the holiday. Sixty-five members of the Colby Grade School fifth grade choir will be on hand to perform and at 3 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Claus will hand out gifts to residents. For information, call 462-8295.

Christmas Home Tour planned

Kappa Upsilon is once again planning the Christmas Home Tour from 2 to 5 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 7. This year's event will feature five homes on the tour with tickets available at either Donelan Jewelry, First National Bank or by calling Linda Vaughn, (785) 462-8882. This year's tour will include the homes of Norm and Betty Behring, Dorothy Stephens, Dave and Sandy Harper, Pat and Deanna Mallory and Dan and Amy Jennings.

Advent Soup-Scripture scheduled

An Advent Soup and Scripture, sponsored by Colby First

Christian, First Baptist, First Presbyterian, and United Methodist Churches will begin on Wednesday from noon to 1 p.m. The theme this year is "Are We Ready For..." A soup lunch will be served, a meditation given by one of the church pastors, and Larry Booth will lead the singing. The schedule is: Dec. 3 at First Christian Church, Jim Puckett speaking; Dec. 10 at First Baptist Church, Jim Mardock speaking; and Dec. 17 at Colby United Methodist, Carol Rahn speaking. All are welcome.

Benefit set to help Rodeo Princess

A soup supper fund raising event is planned from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Thursday at the Colby Community Building to help Lisa Jones, Miss Rodeo Kansas Princess 2002, with expenses throughout the year. The supper is in conjunction with the Scott City-Colby basketball game. Miss Rodeo Kansas Princess is responsible for all of her expenses throughout the year with sponsors, fund raisers and donations used to offset the cost of travel, food, lodging and promotional expenses.. The cost will be free-will donation.

College
update
page 3



