



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

More than 20 parents and their children attended Storytime family night Tuesday at Pioneer Memorial Library with Judy Kleinsorge, children's librarian, right, reading about funny farm animals. Storytime activities are offered year round.

Spring wheat expected to boost Montana

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Montana farmers plan to plant 5.5 million acres of wheat for the crop year, the most since 2002, a federal agriculture agency says.

Much of that — 3.05 million acres — is expected to be seeded to spring wheat, the Montana field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service said. That would be a bright spot in the state's wheat picture: Winter wheat plantings are down from the previous crop year and durum acres are expected to be sharply lower.

"My instant reaction was, the numbers were surprising. They don't seem to compute," Tracy Houck, executive director of the Montana Farmers Union, said last week. "We've had a good year. We're going into the (spring planting) season with good moisture for the second year in a row."

Thomas Chard, an agricultural statistician with the agency, said energy and commodity prices are likely behind the lower numbers. Fuel prices were high last fall when

farmers were seeding winter wheat, which he said probably kept some producers from planting more acres. And durum prices, as recently as February, were much lower than during the same period the past few years, he said.

While spring wheat acreage is expected to be up from last year's 2.6 million acres, it would still pale in comparison to acreage seeded in the mid- to late-1990s, agency figures show. In 1997, for example, farmers planted nearly 4.3 million spring wheat acres.

This year, a shift from durum to winter wheat acreage, along with better soil moisture conditions, are adding to the higher spring wheat hopes, the agency said.

Farmers plan to plant 450,000 acres of durum, which would be down from last year's 590,000 acres and the fewest since 1999, when just 360,000 acres were planted, according to the agency.

Producers, meanwhile, planted 2.15 million winter wheat acres for last year's crop.

Electric company upgrading Holcomb plant

HOLCOMB (AP) — A bevy of activity at Sunflower Electric Power Corp. promises greater and more efficient energy production for western Kansas.

The electricity provider is currently undergoing a \$20 million upgrade at the Holcomb plant to refurbish its massive generator, upgrade the boilers and coal pulverizers, and replace the computer system that runs the facility.

"It's a once in a 20-year thing," said Steve Moss, senior manager of power production.

The generator was shut down on March 10, and about 200 people brought in by contractors have been working toward getting it back online by April 19.

Kyle Nelson, executive manager for power production, said the upgrades will bring the plant from the

past to the present, replacing old copper wiring with fiber optic cables and installing a computer system that will provide more information to operators.

But refurbishing the existing plant isn't the extent of the activity a few miles west of Garden City.

An agreement has been signed with Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, a Colorado electric cooperative, to build two 600 megawatt generation plants on site — nearly tripling the current output in Holcomb.

When Sunflower was organized in 1957, the nonprofit corporation designed the Holcomb site with a 1,000 megawatt facility in mind.

Officials already have applied for building permits with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and have discussed using its

right to an additional 2,369 acre-feet of water from the Ogallala Aquifer to run the plant.

The company is also stockpiling the 88,000 tons of ash left by the 1.6

million tons of coal burned annually, which will be used to stabilize the ground where the new plants are to be constructed.

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EASTER SUNDAY *Schedule of Services*

These Colby Churches listed here warmly invite you to share part of your day with them.

Wishing You A
Blessed Easter

Colby Wesleyan Church
320 W. Pine, Colby

Maunder Thursday Service
7:30 p.m., April 13 at the church
Tenebrae service and drama

Please come join us!

Trinity Lutheran Church
855 E. 5th St. • Colby, KS
785-462-3497

April 13 7:00 P.M. Maunder Thursday with Communion and Stripping of the Altar
April 14 7:00 P.M. Good Friday Tenebrae Service
April 15 5:30 P.M. Easter Eve
April 16 7:00 A.M. Easter Sunrise Service
8:00 ~ 10:00 A.M. Breakfast Served by the Youth.
10:30 A.M. Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord
Join us & Bring a Friend!

SACRED HEART CHURCH



Fr. Dana Clark
585 N. French, Colby • 785-462-2179

Holy Thursday 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday 12:05 & 7:00 p.m.
Holy Saturday Easter Vigil 9:30 p.m.
Sunday Masses 8:00 & 10:00 a.m.

Celebrate your faith this Easter Sunday

COLBY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"

Holy Thursday - April 13th.....7:00 p.m.
Tenebrae Service, Good Friday - April 14th.....7:00 p.m.
Sunrise Service.....6:30 a.m.
Breakfast.....following Sunrise Service
Easter Service.....8:30 a.m.
Coffee.....9:30 a.m.
Sunday School.....9:45 p.m.
Easter Service.....11:00 a.m.

950 S. FRANKLIN • 785-460-2761

College Drive Assembly of God



Pastor Jeremy Gundling
245 W. College Drive • 785-462-8234

EASTER MORNING SERVICES
Breakfast.....9:00 a.m.
Outdoor Family Worship.....10:00 a.m.