



JOHN VAN NOSTRAND/Colby Free Press

Colby Heartland Christian School's preschool and kindergarten class combined to perform Share Bears this morning. Students dressed as bears and bees to sing songs and have skits to depict the importance of sharing and generosity.

47th annual Kansas Junior Miss Competition to be March 15

Kaedra Dixon of Atwood and Holly Keller of St. Francis will be two of 14 high school senior women from across the state competing in the annual Kansas' Junior Miss scholarship competition. The event will be held Saturday, March 15, in Belleville at the Republic County High School. Each contestant will be vying for the title of Kansas' Junior Miss for 2008, a share of cash scholarship awards and college-granted scholarships from schools throughout the nation, said Cassidy Grimes, public relations director. "The overall winner will receive a cash scholarship and will travel

with all expenses paid to Mobile, Ala., in June 2008 to take part in the 51st annual America's Junior Miss National Finals," she said. Other women competing include: Michelle Bacon of Abilene, Hillary Boyle of Salina. Briana Bruna of Hanover, Samantha Crawford of Belleville, Sarah Duffy of Girard, Kate Falkenstien of Lawrence, Katherine Malotte of Marysville, Jaira Mansfield of Kansas City, Kira Odell of Courtland, Kayla Richmond of Wellington, Drew Sothers of Courtland, and Melissa Traskowsky of Woodbine. For other information or questions, call Grimes at (800) 256-5435 or visit the website: <http://www.ajm.org>

Two arrests made in Colby beating

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Two people have been arrested in connection with the Sunday morning beating of a Colby man. Charles D. Headley, 24, was charged Monday with aggravated battery when he allegedly used a chain to hit Brandon J. Helus, 20, of Colby, at his residence. The second man, Jordan R. Leatherman, 19, of Colby, was also arrested for criminal trespass and aiding Headley in the assault, said Detective Sergeant Gary Shull. The incident happened while Helus was in bed at his home in the 1200 block of West Fifth Street Sunday morning shortly after 10 a.m. Shull said Helus was awak-

ened by someone beating him with a metal chain. Shull said Headley was charged in Thomas County District Court Tuesday with criminal trespass and a lesser charge of misdemeanor or battery. He was also charged with criminal trespass. Bond was set at \$10,000 and Headley remains in jail. Leatherman was booked, but later released. "A third person we were investigating turned out to be someone who knew of the beating, but was not directly involved," Shull said. Helus' roommate, Tyson A. Plumisto, 21, heard the incident and went into Helus' bedroom where he broke up the fight, at which time the suspect fled from the house.

Computer-age injuries decline

NEW YORK (AP) — Can a workplace epidemic be cured? With the personal computing boom of the 1990s came thousands of "repetitive stress injuries" or "repetitive strain injuries." RSI became the hip medical acronym of the keyboard era, with subset carpal tunnel syndrome the diagnosis of the day. "At its height of diagnosis, anybody showing up at a doctor's office with wrist pain or hand pain was being diagnosed with carpal tunnel," said Carol Harnett, vice president of insurer Hartford Financial Services Group Inc.'s group benefits division. Since then, carpal tunnel cases have plummeted, declining 21 percent in 2006 alone, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Among workers in professional and business services, the number of carpal tunnel syndrome cases fell by half between 2005 and 2006. What changed? First, it may not have been the white-collar epidemic it appeared to be. A 2001 study by the Mayo Clinic found heavy computer users (up to seven hours a day) had the same rate of carpal tunnel as the general population. Harvard University headlined a 2005 press release "Computer use deleted as carpal tunnel syndrome cause."

"Clearly, if keyboarding activities were a significant risk for carpal tunnel, we should have seen, over the last ten to 15 years, an explosion of cases," said Dr. Kurt Hegmann, director, the Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational & Environmental Health. "If keyboarding were a risk, it cannot be a strong factor." Blue-collar workers, especially those doing assembly-line work such as sewing, cleaning and meat or poultry packing, have a far greater incidence of carpal tunnel than white-collar workers, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. That doesn't mean white-collar workers don't get carpal tunnel and related disorders. But it may mean such disorders were over-diagnosed when they were most in the news, resulting in an artificially high number of cases by the late 1990s. Most doctors have dropped the term RSI, calling them "musculoskeletal disorders" while government agencies like "cumulative trauma disorders." Now, some experts think some of those patients had "referred pain" from trouble elsewhere, such as the neck. Other theories claim attention to ergonomics has prevented injuries or that they have become underreported because they lack the immediacy of a broken bone.

Additional counties eligible for ice storm assistance

TOPEKA -- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Kansas Division of Emergency Management (KDEM) announced today that five additional counties affected by the severe winter storms are now eligible for disaster infrastructure assistance. Gove, Logan, Wallace, Thomas, and Sheridan counties have been added to the Feb. 1 major disaster declaration. Sixty-five Kansas counties and entities including local governments; Indian tribes; and certain private non-profit organizations are now eligible for reimbursement of eligible costs under the Public Assistance Program. Applicants may now be eligible for debris removal costs and expenses for emergency protective measures taken before, during and after the storms to protect public and private property, and for permanent repair to facilities due to the Dec. 6-19 storm. Since this storm did not meet the federal qualifications for individuals, the declaration will only address reimbursements for local government and eligible non-profit organizations, and will not address personal or business losses. The initial counties eligible for Public Assistance are: Atchison,

Barber, Barton, Brown, Butler, Chase, Cherokee, Clark, Clay, Cloud, Comanche, Crawford, Dickinson, Doniphan, Edwards, Ellis, Ellsworth, Ford, Geary, Graham, Harvey, Hodgeman, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Kingman, Kiowa, Labette, Leavenworth, Lincoln, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, McPherson, Miami, Mitchell, Morris, Nemaha, Osage, Osborne, Ottawa, Pawnee, Phillips, Pottawatomie, Pratt, Reno, Republic, Rice, Riley, Rooks, Rush, Russell, Saline, Sedgwick, Shawnee, Smith, Stafford, Wabaunsee, Washington, and Woodson. The Public Assistance Program reimburses local governments, state agencies, and certain private non-profits that provide essential government services with federal funding for 75 percent of eligible costs. The State will pick up 10 percent of the eligible costs with the applicant taking responsibility for the remaining 15 percent. FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror. Local and tribal governments and certain private nonprofit entities that provide essential government services have until Saturday,

to apply for federal disaster grants for the Dec. 6-19 severe winter storm. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Kansas Division of Emergency Management are partnering to help communities in 60 counties pay for debris removal, emergency services and other eligible work necessitated by the storm. The program authorized 60 Kansas counties as disaster areas to include: Atchison, Barber, Barton, Brown, Butler, Chase, Cherokee, Clark, Clay, Cloud, Comanche, Crawford, Dickinson, Doniphan, Edwards, Ellis, Ellsworth, Ford, Geary, Graham, Harvey, Hodgeman, Jackson, Jefferson, Jewell, Kingman, Kiowa, Labette, Leavenworth, Lincoln, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, McPherson, Miami, Mitchell, Morris, Nemaha, Osage, Osborne, Ottawa, Pawnee, Phillips, Pottawatomie, Pratt, Reno, Republic, Rice, Riley, Rooks, Rush, Russell, Saline, Sedgwick, Shawnee, Smith, Stafford, Wabaunsee, Washington, and Woodson. Since this storm did not meet the federal qualifications for individuals, the meeting will only address reimbursements for local government and eligible non-profit organizations, and will not address personal or business losses.

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