



Blizzard bearing down on area

By Cynthia Haynes

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After an interlude of Indian summer, with temperatures in the 80s as late as Sunday, northwest Kansas is bracing for its first blizzard of the season tonight.

The National Weather Service in Goodland said a strong low-pressure system will move out of the Rockies and into the area tonight. Light snow was already falling in eastern Colorado and should spread into northwest Kansas and southwest Nebraska this afternoon.

Meteorologist Kelly James at the weather office in Goodland said that Colby could expect five to 10 inches.

"The wind is the biggest problem,"

she said, adding that wind-blown snow is what causes blizzard conditions.

Colby was on the edge of the rain today, she said, but after 7 p.m. that will probably turn to a rain/snow mix. As the temperatures continue to fall, the snow will take over tonight.

Snow may become heavy at times, the weather service said, with winds kicking up drifting and blowing snow. Travel will be hazardous with possible whiteouts and drifts. The snow should continue Thursday, then diminish by evening.

Meteorologist Dave Thede said travelers should be prepared for road closures tonight caused by weather and accidents. If you have to travel, he said, be prepared to have what you need because you could be stranded for several hours, maybe

more. He said if you do become stalled, not to run a the engine because snow can clog the tailpipe and cause poisonous carbon monoxide to build up inside the car.

A blizzard warning was issued for Thomas, Logan, Sheridan, Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, Sherman, Graham, Wallace and Gove counties in Kansas and Dundy, Hitchcock and Red Willow in Nebraska, from 7 p.m. tonight to 7 p.m. Thursday.

The weather service said snow accumulation was expected to range from three to four inches in Goodland to six to 12 inches from McCook, Neb., to Hill City.

North winds of 30 to 35 mph with gusts to 45 mph will whip up blowing and drifting snow and blizzard conditions.

The weather service issued a high wind

warning for the area through this afternoon, with north to northwest winds of 35 to 45 mph and gusts to 60 mph.

The service suggests that people stay home and secure trash cans, lawn furniture, Halloween decorations and the like. Before the cold arrived, the area had received more than an inch of rain since Monday, making everything soggy and travel difficult on unpaved roads.

A blizzard warning means strong winds and falling or blowing snow, which can produce whiteouts, the weather service says. With travel becoming difficult or impossible, the service urges people to check the forecast before deciding to travel. If you must get out and you do get stranded, the service advises people to stay with their vehicle until help arrives

and make sure you carry a cell phone.

While snow is expected to slow and then stop sometime Thursday, the service says travel will remain hazardous due to drifting and icy and snow-packed roads.

In preparing for bad weather, the Colby schools sent a reminder for parents of its cancelation and early dismissal policy.

If school is dismissed early, the administration will attempt to announce it on the radio and television at least one hour before letting students go. If school is cancelled, the announcement will be made no later than 6:30 a.m. that day.

The forecast is for better weather by Friday, mostly sunny with highs in the 40s and light wind. It should warm up over the weekend, with highs going into the 60s and lows in the 30s.



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Volunteers haul food for needy

Twins Courtney and Caitlin Tinkham, both Brownie Scouts, (above) relaxed after helping collect donations for the Genesis Food Bank in the "Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat" campaign Sunday. Abby Freisen, a Scout, (right) sorted food back at the county office building so it could be stored for the food bank. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and other volunteers picked up food people left on their doorsteps. Also helping were the Catholic Youth Organization, Colby Community College athletes and others.



State lighting east junction on Interstate

By Andy Heintz

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Workers for Kaylor Electrical of Holdrege, Neb., are making ready to hang lights high above the Country Club Drive interchange on Interstate 70 (Exit 54) now that it has enough traffic to warrant the improvement.

The project will cost the state Department of Transportation \$91,800. It entails installation of two 100-foot light towers at the interchange and two 40-foot poles at the ends of the ramps, by the stop signs.

The city of Colby and the state are collaborating on the project, but the state is paying the cost of the lighting improvements.

Most of the work will take place off the roadway, but the department asks drivers to slow down and pay attention to signs and workers in the work zone.

Eric Oelschlager, construction engineer for Area 2 in Atwood, said the department started looking into about the project about 2 1/2 years ago. There was not enough traffic at the interchange then to allow lights to be installed.

Once plans were finalized to build the Bosselman Truck Stop, Oelschlager said, he knew there would soon be enough traffic to meet the requirements. He said the city had been pushing for the lights even before the truck stop.

If the firm, a unit of IES Industrial Inc., gets the materials it needs by the end of the month, he said, the work should be finished by the first or second week of November.

For questions, contact Oelschlager at (785) 626-3258 or e-mail eric@ksdot.org, or contact Kristen Brands, district public affairs manager in Norton, at (785) 877-3315 or kristenb@ksdot.org.

Colby man home after being stabbed

By Andy Heintz

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A Colby man went to Citizens Medical Center early Saturday with stab wounds he said had been inflicted by a woman acquaintance outside a Colby convenience store.

The hospital reported a stabbing to the Colby Police Department at 2:43 a.m. on Saturday.

Police Chief Randy Jones said Christopher Brittain, 18, suffered numerous knife wounds to his right arm and torso. He was flown to a Wichita for treatment, but relatives brought him home early this week.

Police tracked down the woman, Mary Wood, 17, and Jones said,

she was arrested in connection with the stabbing. Paul Luna, 19, Colby, was arrested for obstruction of justice for allegedly trying to dispose of the knife.

Wood was taken by Thomas County sheriff's deputies to the juvenile detention facility in WaKeeney. Luna was booked and released.

Dale Plumisto, a friend of the family, said Brittain is recovering at home and feeling better.

Wood was brought back to Colby for a detention hearing on Monday. The hearing was waived when acting county attorney Bruce Flippe and Wood's attorney, Justin Barrett, agreed that she would remain in detention, police said, and she was taken back to WaKeeney.

Briefly

Hamburglar at McDonalds

Two popular McDonald characters, the Hamburglar and Grimace, will be visiting the restaurant at 2000 S. Range Ave. in Colby from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday. Bring your kids and your cameras to take pictures.

Weight-loss seminar cancelled

A weight-loss surgery seminar scheduled for 9:45 a.m. Thursday at the Citizens Medical Center has been postponed due to the weather. Hays Medical Center expects to do the seminar Thursday, Dec. 11, with the time to be determined.

Kids to post anti-drug message

For national Red Ribbon Week, Thursday to Halloween, Colby Grade School students plan to put an anti-drug message on the school

fence. Students will gather from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday to put up the message. The week teaches students to fight against drug and alcohol addiction.

Seniors, parents to be honored

Colby High plans a Senior-Parent Recognition Night on Friday for seniors in fall sports, cheerleading, dance, trainers, managers and pep band members from about 6:45 to 7 p.m., right before the last home football game of the season against Smoky Valley. Parents and participants should meet at the northeast corner of the track at Dennen Field at 6:30 p.m.

Coffee with Coaches Saturday

"Coffee with the Coaches" begins at 9 a.m. every Saturday during the Colby High football season at the Sports Shoppe, 400 N. Franklin Ave. Come talk football with Coach Chris Gardner.

Center plans Halloween bash

The Colby Care Center at 105 E. College Drive plans a Halloween carnival from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday. There will be games, candy and a costume contest with prizes. Everyone is welcome.

Kiwanis plans feed Saturday

The Colby Kiwanis Club will hold a pancake feed from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall, 220 N. Lake St. The cost of \$4 per person, with proceeds going to Christmas, youth and other community projects. Advance tickets are available from any Kiwanis member.

Church plans big auction

Sacred Heart Catholic Church and School will hold its annual auction Saturday at City Limits Convention Center. Doors will open at 5 p.m. for the

silent auction. A live auction will start at 7:15 p.m. Call Kim Brier at the rectory, (785) 462-2179, for information.

Bingo Saturday in Rexford

The Rexford Royal Neighbors plan a fund-raising bingo party from 7 to 9 p.m. Saturday at the Community Hall. Prizes will be given, cake and ice cream served and an offering taken for the Rexford Museum.

Scouts out selling popcorn

Colby Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts are selling popcorn door-to-door until Sunday. Choose from microwave popcorn, popping kernels and tins filled with caramel, chocolate or cheese popcorn. Anyone who isn't contacted by a Scout should call Gary Schuette, pack leader, at 460-0003.