



# Businesses, offices close for New Year's

By Kevin Bottrell

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As Thomas County pauses to celebrate the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010, some residents will be getting a day off, but not all.

If you need groceries, Dillon's will be open regular hours, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. The pharmacy, floral section and gas pumps will be closed on New Year's Day. Walmart will also be open regular hours, which are 24 hours a day.

If you're looking for something to eat on New Year's Day, you're in luck. McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Arby's, Burger King, Wendy's, Sonic, Taco Johns, Village Inn and El Dos del Oro will all be open. If you need a cup of coffee after a late night of celebrating, Starbucks will also be open.

Colby banks will be closed for the holiday, with some closing early the day before. Farmer's and Merchant's Bank will be open regular hours on Thursday and will

close Friday. The Dillon's location will be open 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Thursday and will close Friday. Bankwest will be open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and will close Friday. First National Bank will close at 2 p.m. New Year's Eve and remain closed New Year's Day.

People's State Bank will be open regular hours Thursday, as will Sunflower Bank and will close Friday. The Bank's lobby will be open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and the drive-through from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Thursday and will also close Friday.

City Hall will be closed Friday. There will be no trash pickup that day. Residents on Friday's route will have their trash picked up Thursday, and should have their trash cans to the curb by 8 a.m., said Public Works Manager Chris Bieker.

Thomas County offices will be closed New Years Day, including the courthouse, health department and landfill. The landfill will reopen at its regular hours, 9 a.m. to

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## Getting rid of the snow



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

While Colby only got 4 inches of snow in last week's storm, far less than what was predicted, it left the city with drifts and piles everywhere. City crews began the process of picking it up and getting rid of it Tuesday, adding to the already-impressive pile in Buffalo Park.

## Caught on fire



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

The driver of this Chevrolet pickup truck got a nasty surprise while traveling through Thomas County on I-70 Monday. Smoke started coming from under his dashboard, so he pulled over at the Levant exit and called 911. By the time the Highway Patrol and fire department got there, the cab was engulfed in flame. The fire department quickly put out the fire.

# Two Thomas County farms recognized for 100-year span

By Vera Sloan

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Two Thomas County farms were inducted into the Century Farm program in September at the Kansas State Fair, joining eight others in the county with more than 100 years of family ownership.

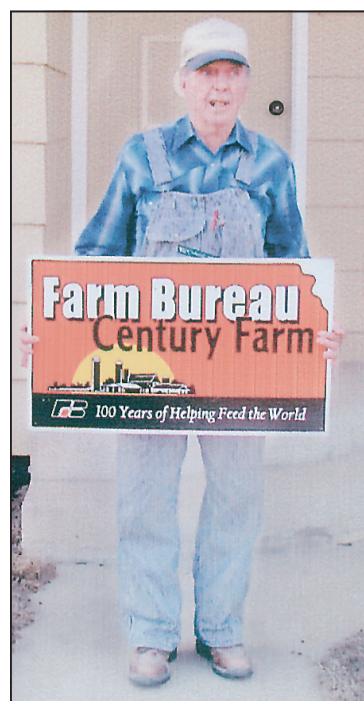
The Cleo Duffey farm near Menlo and the Henry Bremenkamp Jr. farm near Halford are the newest inductees. Across the state, the Kansas Farm Bureau has designated more than 1,900 Century Farms since 2000.

To be eligible, an applicant must be a member of the Farm Bureau, ownership must have been within the same family for 100 years or more on Dec. 31 and the present owner must be related to the original owner. Any family member who is a Farm Bureau member may apply to the bureau's county office.

Of the two, the longest-operating is the Duffey farm, homesteaded in 1885. Today it's operated by Cleo Duffey, 80, who still lived on the home place his grandfather settled.

John J. Duffey, grandfather of Cleo, came west from Page County, Iowa, to Cedarville in Smith County in 1883. In 1885, he ventured farther west to Thomas County to stake a claim on the northwest quarter of section 28-8-31, southwest of Menlo.

Leaving his pregnant wife and



Contentment is life on the farm for Cleo Duffey of Menlo. He farms and lives on the same piece of land which was homesteaded by his great-grandfather in 1885. His farm is one of two in Thomas County to be named for the distinctive designation of "Century Farm" for 2009.

one child in Smith County in August of that year, Duffey came to Thomas County in a covered wagon with a team of horses and enough equipment to break the sod, enough seed to plant 25 acres of oats and barley, rations for his

horses and himself and the equipment to cut sod to build a 16-by-26-foot house.

Family stories say he either made a dugout in a bank or lived in a cave that was already on the property while he prepared the claim where he would live and raise his family. It took until 1892 to receive the patent, or deed, from the government.

By the end of October, he was ready to return to Smith County to retrieve his wife and child - and a soon-to-be-born second child - and stay for the remainder of the winter months. The final trek to Thomas County began in the spring 1886, again by covered wagon, with the wife and two children with yet another on the way. This time, he brought \$5 and a cow he had purchased from the farmer he worked for, but had yet to pay for. He dug a well on the new property, where the family intended to stay for good.

"My granddad did business with gold pieces," said Freda Weyland, John's granddaughter, who lives in Norton. "There were no banks close by, so when he made a transaction, it was done with gold."

"He kept it rolled up into a ball of socks," said Loreda Wagoner, another granddaughter from Great Bend. "My dad used to tell how the kids were playing one day and found the 'sock ball' and were playing catch and keep-away with

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# People shred bad 2009 memories in New York's Good Riddance Day

By Karen Matthews

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK — Want to forget 2009? Shred it. Scores of New Yorkers and tourists seeking a fresh start in 2010 came to Times Square on Monday to put their bad memories through the shredder at the third annual Good Riddance Day.

Ben Winnick of Simsbury, Conn., shredded a newspaper story about the New York Giants' 41-9 loss Sunday to the Carolina Panthers, which ended

the Giants' playoff hopes.

"Hopefully, next season will be better," he said. Roxanne Rodriguez of Manhattan shredded a piece of paper with "Writer's block" written on it. She intends to buckle down and write a musical.

"This is going to be the year I'm going to be dedicated and focused, and I will get something down on the page every day," she promised.

The winner of a \$250 prize for most creative item

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## Briefly

### Church holds New Year's party

The Colby United Methodist Church plans an informal New Year's Eve party from 9:30 to midnight Thursday in the church fellowship hall at the corner of Pine Street and Franklin Avenue. There will be refreshments, table games and a short worship service at midnight. For information, call Millie Horlacher at 462-3104 or Carolyn May at 460-3655.

### Court offices to close early

The office of the Thomas County District Court clerk will close at noon Thursday to complete year-end accounting paperwork. It will reopen next Monday. For information, call Kim Schwarz at 460-4540.

### Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a 1-to-

1 1/2-year-old brown female boxer, a 1- to 2-year-old male dachshund-beagle mix and a 3- to 4-month-old female mixed lab puppy available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

### Fatherhood program to start soon

The Northwest Kansas Regional Prevention Center's "24/7 Dad" fatherhood program will be offered again starting at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church in Colby. For information, call the center at 460-8177.

### Hospital plans birthing classes

Citizens Medical Center will hold a four-week series of childbirth education classes from 7 to 10 p.m. Thursdays beginning next week for women

due to deliver before May. The partner who will be with the mother during labor should attend. The next classes will begin April 1. For information or to register, call Jeanene Brown in the Education Department at (785) 460-4850.

### Conservation meeting Jan. 15

The annual meeting of the Thomas County Conservation District will be at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at the Colby United Methodist Church. Make reservations by Friday, Jan. 15, to district manager Debbie Potter at 462-7482, extension 303.

### For latest flu info, call 460-4599

A hot line for questions on seasonal influenza and the H1N1 flu strain will be available throughout the flu season at (785) 460-4599. The Thomas County Health Department posts information about the status and availability of vaccines and priority groups.

### Medical class to begin soon

An Emergency Medical Technician class will begin Thursday, Feb. 4. It will run Wednesdays and Thursdays plus two Saturdays each month until May 15. Registration is due by Thursday, Jan. 21. State grants cover the cost of registration. For information, call Dawnelle Umberger at 460-4585.

### Hospital auxiliary needs help

The Citizens Medical Center Auxiliary is looking for volunteers. If you'd like to get involved, call Tama Unger at 460-1214 or Mary Smith at 462-3387.



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