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VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

A burned-out skid-steer loader and tractor are only a small part of the inventory of feeding equipment ruined by a fire that destroyed the shop and threatened the tree line and home early Thursday at the McCarty Dairy west of Rexford.

Fire destroys shop building at dairy

By Vera Sloan

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A mysterious fire early Thursday destroyed a 200-by-60-foot shop building and all its contents at the McCarty Dairy on U.S. 83 at Breton, five miles west of Rexford.

A motorist on the highway made the first emergency call to report the fire. Rexford fireman Bill Scott said the call for help came in about 2 a.m., and firemen could see a big ball of fire to the west when they pulled onto the highway. He said the building was pretty well engulfed in flames when they got there.

Scott said the fire went fast and the roof collapsed, preventing volunteers from getting water on the fire, but they couldn't send anyone inside. A state fire marshal inspected the ruins Thursday but could not deter-



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The fast-moving fire collapsed the building's roof, keeping fire fighters from getting to the interior.

mine a cause.

The Menlo Fire Department also responded, sending one truck, and two trucks from the Colby Fire Department came to help. Hoxie sent a tanker truck.

The Rexford fire fighters stayed

at the dairy until around 10 a.m., but were called back out around 12:30 p.m. Friday. Scott said the second call was to deal with fire still burning and smoldering in stored grain.

The grain, stored on the north

side of the building, was near to the McCartys' home, so they soaked and stirred it again.

Scott said that when they returned, four kittens came crawling out from between the studs on the west side of the building. He said they could hear them earlier, but couldn't get to them.

"I don't know how they survived," he said. "Their hair was a little singed, but they seemed to be fine. Mamma cat was glad to see them."

Scott said he and other firemen went to the site again on Saturday to soak and stir the smoldering grain. After an insurance adjuster has surveyed the damage, he said, they can take equipment in and spread the grain.

The shop housed all the dairy's feeding equipment, plus

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Fans, teams to jam town this weekend

By Andy Heintz

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Colby High basketball fans will have a busy week ahead of them when the school holds the 25th annual Paul Wintz/Tom Bowen Orange and Black Classic starting Thursday.

Eight teams each will compete in the boys and girls brackets. Playing in the girls tournament will be Colby, Goodland, Wichita South, Pine Creek from Colorado Springs, Liberal, McCook, Neb., Bishop Carroll from Wichita and Scott City.

The boys tournament is the same as the girl's except Wichita West is playing instead of Bishop Carroll. Games will be played at the high school and the Community Building.

The Lady Eagles will try to repeat as champions. Last year, the

sophomore-heavy squad won two close games and a blowout victory to take the tournament. They eeked out a 35-33 victory in the first round, dominated Flint Hills 49-9 and beat Pine Creek 49-39 in the finals.-game winning streak after losing two of the first three games. The girls survived a scare against Hoxie on Friday.

Colby will take on Goodland at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the Community Building. They will play again on Friday against the loser or winner of a game between Wichita South and Pine Creek. If they win, they will play at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Building; if they lose, they will play at the same time at the high school.

The Colby High boys will try to continue the momentum they gained Friday in an overtime victory over Hoxie. Last year's Ea-

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Donate to Haiti with Red Cross

Now through Jan. 30, customers and employees Dillon Stores can make a cash donation for relief in Haiti or round up their order to the nearest dollar at the cash register.

The joint effort with the American Red Cross is a response to the unimaginable tragedy in Haiti. All Dillion's locations across Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri will be participating.

Tom Chain, manager of the Colby Dillon's, said the store will have signs up. They're supporting the company's effort 100 percent, he said.

Customers may also join in helping the Haitian earthquake victims by making a direct donation at their local Red Cross office. Donations can also be ac-

cepted online, through cell phone text messages or by mail.

In Colby, the Red Cross office is at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave. Call 462-7161 for questions.

Address for online are:
• www.dillons.com and click on Haiti Earthquake Relief to make an online donation for the Red Cross relief efforts through their secure website.

• Cell phone: Text HAITI to 90999, and a \$10 charge will be billed to your phone as a donation to the Red Cross.

• Mail: checks for the relief effort in Haiti to the American Red Cross, Box 37243, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Governor's budget shifts money, priorities

By John Hanna

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — Even with the tax increases Gov. Mark Parkinson wants, his proposed budget would divert money from highway projects and aid to cities and counties to help finance other parts of state government.

The combination of the juggling and higher taxes would allow the state to undo a small part of budget cuts made last year. But much of state government would remain pinched by the recession.

Parkinson has said he proposed raising sales and tobacco taxes to avoid awful cuts and their effects. Budget Director Duane Goossen

already has a list of consequences that includes less money for schools and health clinics, higher fees at state parks and even the early release of prison inmates.

"The character of the different lists that you would create would be substantially the same," Goossen said. "They're all difficult, hard decisions now."

The Democratic governor's proposals tax proposals appear to have little support in the Republican-controlled Legislature. The toughest criticism has come from House GOP leaders, who strongly oppose raising taxes because they believe it will hurt struggling fam-

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Judy McCarty, followed by her grandkids, walked back to her house Saturday afternoon after taking lunch to her sons. The fire got dangerously close to a line of dry evergreen trees. On the other side is McCarty's house.

Briefly

Blood drive here Wednesday

The Red Cross will hold a blood drive from noon to 6 p.m. Wednesday at the Colby Community Building. Twenty-two students from the Health Science class at Colby High School will be assisting. The students will be loading and unloading the truck, serving food, checking donors in and escorting them. For information, call the Red Cross at (785) 448-3543.

County van won't run Thursday

The Thomas County Transportation Van will not run Thursday due to a meeting. For information, call Kristi Mann at the Thomas County clerk's office, 460-4500.

Girl Scout cookies on sale here

Girl Scout cookies are on sale through Sunday, March 7. If you don't want to buy cookies for yourself, you can ask Scouts to deliver them to Genesis

Food Bank or Kansas military units and families. If you have not been offered cookies by Feb. 1, call Mint Culver at 460-6005 or Penny Cline at 460-2929.

Hearing set on emergency plan

Thomas County Emergency Management and E-Fm Consulting will hold the final public meeting for the Thomas County Hazard Mitigation Plan at 6 p.m. Thursday at the Thomas County Office Complex. A public comment period will run from Thursday to Feb. 4, after which the plan will be set. Drafts can be viewed at the emergency management office or the Pioneer Memorial Library. For information, call Director Susan McMahan at 460-4516.

Meeting set for medical class

Enrollment for the Emergency Medical Technician class will be at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27, at

the Ambulance Building on South Franklin Avenue. Anyone who wants to enroll must attend. The class will begin Thursday, Feb. 4, and run Wednesdays and Thursdays, plus two Saturdays each month, until May 15. State grants cover the cost. For information, call Dawnelle Umberger at 460-4585.

Students offer Monday massages

Physical Therapist Assistant students at Colby Community College will hold a massage clinic from 4 to 7:30 p.m. on Mondays the next two weeks, through Feb. 1, in the Pierre Henry Allied Health Building, room 804. Cost for a 30-minute massage is \$12. Make appointments by calling Trudy Wildeman at 460-4797. Walk-ins are OK. For information, call Wildeman at 460-4797.

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, priority groups and the like.

St. Jude's needs old cards

Don't throw those used greeting cards away. The Colby Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary has a drop-off box at the Pioneer Memorial Library for them. Cards will go to kids at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis for projects. For information, call Hazel Duffey at 462-3476.



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