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Snowstorm turns roads dangerous

By Kevin Bottrell

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A snowstorm that blanketed most of Kansas overnight proved dangerous – but not deadly – for area drivers, with several injury accidents and fender benders around the county.

Snow began falling Sunday morning and picked up as temperatures fell in the evening. By morning, Colby had received three to four inches. Areas to the north, in counties along the Nebraska line, got as much as eight.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported working three wrecks within minutes of each other on I-70 in Thomas County between Colby

and Oakley on Sunday:

- The first happened at 3:43 p.m. on I-70 about two miles west of Oakley. Chad Ryder, 23, of Lakewood, Colo., was driving west when he lost control on the snowpacked road, hit a guard rail and spun several times. His 1997 Ford sport-utility came to rest in the westbound driving lane. Ryder was taken to Citizens Medical Center.

- The second happened at 3:46 about 10 miles west of the first. John Wanjigi, 27, of Wichita was heading east when he lost control of his 2006 Pontiac Grand Prix near mile post 63, and it crossed the median into westbound traffic.

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Foster care group in need of parents

By Andy Heintz

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Youthville, a nonprofit welfare agency that specializes in foster care, adoption, psychiatric residential treatment, counseling and therapy, is looking for foster parents for children in Thomas County.

The organization will hold a meeting for potential foster parents at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin Ave.

Amy Tuttle, western Kansas supervisor, said her agency has six foster families in Thomas County, but it is looking to at least double that number. She said some former parents had moved away, retired or dropped out after having or adopting children. She said

Youthville wants to keep children living in their own area, but since Thomas County has a shortage in foster parents, some are having to move to another county.

At the meeting, the potential foster parents will learn:

- What it takes to become a foster parent.
- Licensing regulations.
- Benefits.

Brett Weller, marketing coordinator for Youthville in Wichita, said the organization always needs 15 to 20 more homes for foster children in the northwest Kansas area. Youthville has about 380 employees and about 1,000 children to care for, he said, adding that one of the biggest needs is parents for teenagers, siblings and special-needs children.

For information, call d(800)-593-1950, extension 8118, or e-mail info@youthville.org

Governor's inaugural hampered by snow

By John Hanna

AP Political Writer

TOPEKA – Sam Brownback took office as governor today even though winter weather forced his inauguration inside and a financial storm promised to test the Republican's mettle in keeping the state's budget balanced.

Brownback's swearing in today as the state's 46th governor was a moment that anti-tax, small-government and anti-abortion conservatives have long sought after years of centrists from both parties.

Twice in the last decade, governors have pushed successfully for higher taxes to prop up the budget in bad economic times. Republicans swept all statewide and congressional races on the ballot in last year's election for the first time since 1964, though, and captured huge majorities in the Legislature.

Just hours before the ceremony, Brownback moved it and his short inaugural address to the Kansas House chamber from the south steps of the Statehouse. Several

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Briefly

Hospital offers blood-sugar class

Citizens Medical Center will offer Journey for Control, a class about monitoring blood sugar for diabetics, at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the hospital. Class size is limited, but there is no charge. For information or to register, call dietitian Courtney McCarty at (785) 460-4849 or education co-ordinator Jeanene Brown at (785) 460-4850.

Seniors plan potluck Tuesday

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck dinner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share. Table service and beverage will be provided. For information, call 462-6342.

College pool closed Monday

The Colby Community College indoor swimming

pool will be closed until Tuesday due to a lack of life guards. Director Kip Nelson suggested checking the website www.colbycc.edu to see if the schedule has changed, or calling (785) 460-5476.

Cooking class for kids starting up

Signups are open for “Kids-a-Cookin’,” a free program put on by the Colby Recreation Department and Thomas County Extension. The program teaches children nutrition and food preparation in a fun atmosphere. The class meets from right after school to 5 p.m. in the basement of the Colby Community Building. Spring meeting dates are Thursday and Feb. 17, March 10 and April 7. To sign up, call the department at 460-4440.

Brewster museum meal Saturday

The Northwest Kansas Heritage Center Library and Museum of Brewster will have its annual meeting and potluck dinner at noon Saturday at Hunter

Hall. The Brewster Grade School music department and the girls from Victory House will provide entertainment. For information, call the museum at 694-2891.

Soup benefit to help heart patient

A benefit soup supper for Alex Rosales will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday in the Sacred Heart Church basement. Rosales had quadruple bypass surgery Nov. 26 and since has had two heart attacks. Money raised will help him pay medical and transport expenses. For information, call the church at 460-7167.

Chronic disease topic of series

Citizens Medical Center will hold the next sessions of the Kansans Optimizing Health Program, a six-week chronic disease support workshop, from 1:30 to 4 p.m. on Mondays from next week through Feb. 21, in the hospital's conference room. The free

class will meet for 2 1/2 hours once a week. The hospital encourages a \$30 donation to cover materials. Enrollment is limited. To register, call dietitian Courtney McCarty at (785) 460-4849.

Conservation group plans meeting

The Local Work Group, experts who provide guidance to Kansas Technical Committee on conservation issues, will meet at 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 27, at the U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center, 915 W. Walnut St. For information, call Debbie Potter at the Thomas County Conservation District at 462-7482.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Colby digs out after winter storm

Snow plows (above) were out in force Sunday clearing roads in Colby after the area received several inches of snow. The storm continued through the night, dropping three to four inches around Colby and six to eight inches farther north. This morning, downtown merchants had people, such as Greg Carpenter (right) of Plum Creek Ltd., shoveling off the sidewalks. Walmart had several plow trucks (below) making the rounds to clear snow out of its parking lot.



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press



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