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COLBY FREE PRESS

Friday

April 15, 2011

Volume 122, Number 60

Serving Thomas County since 1888

10 pages

Storm brings high wind across plains

By Kevin Bottrell

Colby Free Press
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A gigantic winter storm swirled around Colby on Thursday, bringing gale-force winds and several inches of snow.

Schools were closed this morning, and area roads — those that were open — were icy and snow-packed. Troopers and deputies were kept busy with slide-off accidents as winds blew trucks and cars out of control.

The storm stretched from eastern Colorado to Arkansas yesterday, with the bulk of the winter weather passing north of Colby.

Colby, Sacred Heart, Heartland Christian, Brewster Hoxie and Golden Plains schools all were closed. The Colby High baseball games scheduled for 4 p.m. were cancelled and teams with away games never made it out of town. Colby Community College softball games at 3 p.m. were postponed to Monday.

Slushy main streets were cleared in Colby in the morning, but side streets and parking lots remained snowpacked. A slew of accidents was reported on county roads. A car got high-centered on Country Club Drive this morning and a semi-trailer rig slid off U.S. 24 about 11:15 a.m. today, blocking traffic.

Growing as it spread east and south, the storm spawned tornadoes from Kansas to Arkansas and Oklahoma. One woman was killed in Arkansas when her mobile home blew over. Several in that state were killed by falling trees. Another two were killed by a tornado in Oklahoma, and by noon today, the toll had risen to nine in all.

Satellite images today showed heavy precipitation between Manhattan and Hutchinson in Kansas, with other masses in northern Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee, all moving east, centered around the

low-pressure center that passed over Colby.

Areas in the southeast may get rain rather than snow. Parts of central Mississippi were under flash flood, hail and thunderstorm warnings. Meantime, “red flag” fire warnings continue for areas in Colorado, Texas and New Mexico that avoided the storms. The Storm Prediction Center in Norman, Okla., said today that tornadoes, hail and damaging wind were likely in the South.

In northwest Kansas, winds got as high as 62 mph in rural Wallace County, 61 in Goodland and 60 in McCook, Neb. Most parts of the area got about 3 inches of snow, but the wind blew it into deep drifts.

The sun came out around 8:30 and began to melt the snow, but the area was still under a blizzard warning until 10 a.m. High winds continued to cause visibility prob-

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Downtown businessmen braved the wind to shovel snow and slush off their front sidewalks this morning. Gale-force winds created drifts more than a foot deep in places.

Capturing Thomas County



KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Painter David DeArmond of Merriam put the finishing touches on an oil painting of the Thomas County courthouse on Wednesday. DeArmond said he is trying to paint a scene from

every county in Kansas and Thomas was No. 7. He said this is his third series of county paintings.

Veterans' ride to pass through

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News
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Riders in the 23rd annual Run for the Wall veteran's motorcycle event will spend Saturday night, May 21, in Goodland and parade out through Colby on Sunday morning, May 22.

Jo Ann Wahrman said Goodland organizers hope to have streets lined with people as the riders, many of them Vietnam-era veterans, parade through town.

The run will pass through Colby on Interstate 70 around 8:45 to 9 a.m. May 22, but members of Colby veterans organizations here said they knew of no activities planned here. In some towns, people will line freeway overpasses, waving flags and banners for the riders.

Plans include a supper that Saturday at the old National Guard armory in Goodland. Wahrman and her husband Joe, who have been part of the run for the past several years, are gathering volunteers to put on the dinner.

Jo Wahrman said Steve Evert has agreed to cook the meat. She said more volunteers are needed, and donations to help pay for the dinner would be appreciated. Anyone interested in helping can call her at (785) 890-3277 and leave a message or e-mail wahrman@

st-tel.net.

Wahrman said organizers plan to have some light entertainment at the armory on Saturday. She said they are looking for someone to sing the National Anthem.

About 400 rides and their motorcycles will arrive in Goodland about 6 p.m. The riders will be camping and staying in motels throughout the town.

Sunday morning, the Goodland Rotary Club plans an early breakfast at the armory beginning about 6 a.m. Dick Liess, a Rotary member, is heading up the effort. Wahrman said it would be great to have some help cleaning up on Sunday morning after the riders leave.

A nondenominational church service is scheduled for 7:25 a.m. A riders' meeting will be at 7:45 a.m. and the riders will head out on Caldwell Ave. about 8:15 a.m.

The plan for Sunday is to parade down Caldwell to 17th Street, turn east to Cherry Ave., and south to Business U.S. 24 before heading east and out to I-70, where they will head for Oakley and to Junction City for the next evening.

The Run for the Wall was started to remember the prisoners of war and missing in action from the Vietnam War, and today is an annual pilgrimage to the Wall built

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Presidential hopefuls trying to fit into tea party movement

By Philip Elliott

The Associated Press

BOSTON — It's a tricky time of courtship.

As the tea party turns 2, the still-gelling field of Republican presidential contenders is the first class of White House hopefuls to try to figure out how to tap the movement's energy without alienating voters elsewhere on the political spectrum.

Look no further than this weekend's events marking the tea party's second anniversary to see how the candidates are employing different strategies. Some will be out front as the tea party stages tax day rallies across the country. Others, not so much.

Former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty, an establishment Republican making a play for tea party support and clamoring to be heard over bigger names, is among those jumping in with both feet. Missis-

siippi Gov. Haley Barbour is being more coy.

Pawlenty, for his part, planned to hold court at a gathering on Boston Common — in the city where colonists staged the 1773 Tea Party revolt against the British government and in neighboring New Hampshire. And he's headed for Iowa a day later for similar appearances that are likely to include “Don't Tread on Me” banners and tirades against Washington spending.

Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, perhaps the Republican most closely identified with the tea party, is slated to attend a weekend tea party rally at the Wisconsin Capitol, the site of recent protests over legislation that would strip union rights for most public workers.

Tea party darling Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachman, all but drafted into the race by tea partiers, plans to share the steps of the South Carolina Statehouse with another of the movement's favorite

daughters, Gov. Nikki Haley.

And little-known businessman Herman Cain, who is hoping tea party backing can make him more than a longshot, plans to hit rallies in New Hampshire, Iowa, Michigan and Texas.

Real estate magnet Donald Trump, who claims he's serious about running, picked a tea party rally in Boca Raton, Fla., to make his stand.

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Briefly

Two groups plan egg hunts

The Colby Kiwanis Club will hold its annual Easter egg hunt at 10 a.m. Saturday at Fike Park. Kids 3 and under start at 10 a.m., 4 to 6 at 10:10 and 7 to 9 at 10:20. For information, call Sean Hankin at 460-4454. The Colby Care Center will have a hunt for kids of all ages at 2 p.m. that afternoon. Call 462-6721.

Boating safety class Saturday

The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks will hold boating and water safety seminars and free boat-safety inspections from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday in the Colby Walmart parking lot. For information, call Wildlife Officer Michael McGinnis at 462-7602.

Sale, donations to help family

The Brewster community plans a bake sale and fund raiser for Vernon and Sally Patton from 7:30

a.m. to noon (Central Time) Saturday at the Brewster Frontier Ag elevator office on South Kansas Ave. Donations of food and cash, as well as shoppers, are needed to help the family with medical bills. For information, call Lila Mayer at (785) 694-2715.

Girl Scouts collecting old flags

The Colby Girl Scouts will have a collection box in the lobby of the Pioneer Memorial Library through Saturday for their annual flag disposal drive. They remind everyone that U.S. flags should be properly disposed of if they're dirty, no longer rectangular, faded or in general disrepair. For information, call Katherine Kersenbrock-Ostmeier at (785) 443-2479.

Rexford church offers missions

The Rexford Community Church will hold its annual Missions Conference from Friday to Sunday.

Activities include a youth-group pizza party at 6:30 p.m. Friday; breakfast at 8 a.m. Saturday and a supper at 6:30 p.m. for everyone; and a combined Sunday school at 9:30 a.m., worship at 10:30 a.m., and a fellowship dinner to follow. For information, call the church at (785) 687-3305.

Photographer to be at museum

Come meet photographer Roxie Yonkey of Goodland at an informal reception from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Prairie Museum of Art and History. She is exhibiting a selection of her work through the month, touching on both rural and urban themes. For information, call the museum at 460-4590.

Walking trails focus of sessions

Meetings on a walking trail plan for Colby will be from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Monday at the Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin, and from 6:30 to

7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Pioneer Memorial Library. The plan is a joint effort of the Thomas County Coalition, the Wellness Committee, the Multipurpose Activity Center and the city. Refreshments will be available and you might win a door prize. For information, call Karen Merryman at 460-8177.

Churches offer Lenten series

Soup and Scripture, sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, starts at noon each Wednesday through Easter at Smoffee's. Speaker for next week will be Craig Crossman. For information, call Jarrod Spencer at (785) 443-2403 or your pastor.



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