



# COLBY FREE PRESS

75¢

Thursday

May 12, 2011

Volume 122, Number 75

Serving Thomas County since 1888

8 pages

## Post office proposal may alter pickup times

By Kevin Bottrell

Colby Free Press  
kbottrell@nwkans.com

A proposed consolidation of the Colby mail processing facility could move mail pickup time at the Post Office forward by as much as three hours.

A U.S. Postal Service official took great pains Monday to tell a group of about 50 postal employees, newspaper publishers, city officials, business people and citizens that the Colby post office is not being closed.

Rick Pivovar, district manager for Nebraska and Kansas, said the service is studying consolidating the mail processing centers in Colby and Hays into the one in Salina as part of an overarching plan to combat crippling revenue losses over the past decade. The service held a public meeting Monday at Colby Community College to discuss the proposal.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press  
District Manager Rick Pivovar explained the proposed changes to mail processing at a public meeting Monday.

If the proposal goes through, Pivovar said, the bottom line for customers is that mail put in the blue collection boxes for any destination outside the 677 area – basically the nine counties of northwest Kansas around Colby – would go to Salina to be sorted. Mail going to addresses in this area would be sorted in Colby, then sent to individual post offices.

Pivovar said that mail going to be processed in Salina should actually get improved delivery to much of eastern Kansas – overnight instead of the current two-day service. However, outbound trucks will have to leave earlier, and mail not brought in before the deadline will go out the next day.

Even if a letter misses the truck, he pointed out, the mailer doesn't lose anything. The service will be the same as if it had made the truck today – two-day delivery in much of the state.

Some sample cutoff time:

- Colby: now 7 p.m., change to 4 p.m.
- Brewster: now 6:20 p.m., change to 3:25 p.m.
- St. Francis: now 4:40 p.m., would change to 2:15 p.m.
- Goodland: now 4:40 p.m. (Mountain Time), change to 1:45 p.m.
- Hoxie: now 5:56 p.m., change to 3:21 p.m.
- Jennings: now 4:05 p.m., change to 2:25 p.m.
- Norcatur: now 2:55 p.m., change to 4:35 p.m.

Trucks with mail from Norton, now sorted in Hays, would leave at 3:30 p.m. instead of 5:30 p.m.

Pivovar said there would be no changes in delivery times, retail services, business mail acceptance or commercial rates. However, some carriers, especially those in rural areas, wouldn't be able to make

it back in time to get outgoing mail onto trucks that night.

A letter announcing the public meeting said, incorrectly, that the pickup times would not change. Officials said that's true in some of the areas under study, but not here. The letter did not get changed to reflect that – and news stories about the meeting as a result were incorrect.

Pivovar said the consolidation will save about \$99,000 a year at the Colby post office, mainly from reduced work hours. The consolidation would reduce afternoon work hours here by 2,269 per year. That's a little more than 43 hours per week, a little more than one full-time position.

Asked if any clerks here would be reassigned to Salina, Pivovar said he would have to follow collective bargaining

See "CHANGE," Page 3

## Former doctor dies Wednesday

Longtime Colby physician Dr. Floyd L. Smith Jr., died at the age of 91 on Wednesday, May 11, 2011 at the Prairie Senior Living Complex.

Smith was a doctor in Colby for 35 years, practicing at the Colby Clinic – now Colby Medical and Surgical Center. He retired in 1983.

He was born March 31, 1920, in Colby, the son of Floyd and Maude Ardell (Thurston) Smith. He earned a medical degree from the University of Kansas, and served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during World War II.

In 1948, he married Mary Ballinger. The two met in Hays, where she worked at Hadley Hospital. Mary was recently given the 2010 Community Service Award by the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce. She has been a member of the Citizens Foundation, library and museum boards, helped found the Pink Ladies and delivered meals on wheels for 35 years in addition to other volunteer work.

When the Smiths moved to Colby, they set up the Colby Clinic with Drs. Asher Dahl and George Marshall.

Joyce Schroeder was a nurse at the old Thomas County Hospital when Smith operated his clinic across the street. She said she worked with him a lot in the nursery.

"He was a nice man, a quiet

man." she said. "I enjoyed working with him."

Schroeder said she could only remember one time that Smith was upset at the nurses.

Smith also delivered Schroeder's sisters and children in the nursery. She said he had a very patient bedside manner, and always sat down to talk with the mothers before they took their babies home.

Smith was an elder in the First Presbyterian Church of Colby, a member of the American Academy of Family Practice, the Colby Rotary, the Boy Scouts, Colby School Board, the Colby Community College Board, the Pioneer Memorial Library Board, the Thomas County Historical Society and the Citizens Medical Center Board.

In 2009, Smith and his wife were awarded honorary degrees by Colby Community College.

Survivors include his wife Mary Smith, of Colby; five children, Sue (Ron) Evans, Nancy (Lyle) Saddler and Sally Smith, all of Colby; Floyd "Bud" (Cindy) Smith, Durango, Colo.; and Lauri (Lee) Deviney, Austin, Texas; nine grandchildren, Jill Evans (Jeremy) Donelan; Michael (Sara) Saddler; Jeffrey (Heather) Saddler; Brian Saddler, Austin Smith, Lindsay Smith, Cade Deviney, Zane Deviney; and Wyatt Deviney; and

See "DOCTOR," Page 3

## College crooners



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Sunflower Singers Terry Lay and Bryant Plummer sing a duet part during a performance of Green Day's "21 Guns" while Myles Engel plays the bass guitar at the college vocal concert last Thursday. The concert included both the Sunflower Singers and the college concert choir.

## Friends plan benefit dinner, auction for Oakley child with infantile spasms

A group of Oakley citizens is planning a dinner and auction to raise money for the family of Lucas Traynor, a child with infantile spasms on Saturday, May 21, at the Impact Center in Oakley.

The doors will open at 6 p.m. for the "Loads of Love for Lucas" fund raiser planned by family and friends. A spaghetti dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. The silent auction will close and the live auction will begin at 8 p.m.

Some of the items up for auction include a new grill, swimming pool passes, country club memberships, a Garmin global positioning system device, paintings, lamps, an indoor-outdoor fountain, a tent and many KU and K-State items.

Proceeds from the dinner and auction will go the Traynor family to help cover the mounting medical expenses.

Infantile spasms are seizures that come from a type of epilepsy syndrome. The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke says that treatment includes corticosteroids or other anti-epilepsy medication may help alleviate the symptoms. Surgery to remove brain lesions may also help.

Lucas is the son of Jason and Kerri (Button) Traynor. Kerri is a 2005 Oakley High School graduate. She is the owner of "Cute as Button Photography" and also does metal artwork.

## Legislators finally agree on budget

By John Milburn

The Associated Press

TOPEKA – Kansas legislative negotiators agreed Wednesday night on a \$14 billion budget for the state's 2012 fiscal year, one that will cut overall spending between 5 percent and 6 percent.

The spending plan that emerged

from talks between the two chambers heads first to the Senate for approval, then to the House.

Public schools would take the biggest hit during the next fiscal year, which begins July 1. But almost every state agency would see some spending cuts to erase a budget shortfall that once was as large as \$500 million.

Republican Gov. Sam Brownback, who met with negotiators throughout the week's talks, issued a statement noting that the deficit was closed without raising taxes, which wasn't the case last year.

"It cuts spending while priori-

See "BUDGET," Page 3

## Join Business After 5 and help win contest

The Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce Business After 5 will be this evening at 5 p.m. at Midwest Energy, 1125 S. Range, in conjunction with the Colby Take Charge Challenge.

Join in for an evening of food, fun, and networking, and remember every person who walks through the door gets Colby one step closer to winning the \$100,000 grand prize.

## Briefly

### Fitness class planned for moms

"Mommy and Me" baby fitness class will have a free opening class from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday, at Fike Park. Pre- and post-natal mothers and their children can come for the free fitness class. Dads are welcome too. Signup sheets will be available for the full class. For information, call Jennifer Kramer at 443-5527.

### Help plant veggies on Saturday

The Thomas County Coalition is looking for volunteers to help plant vegetables in the Community Garden starting at 9 a.m., Saturday at the K-State Experiment Station. Anyone interested should call the Regional Prevention Center at 460-8177.

### Mail carriers taking food

The National Association of Letter Carriers is holding its Stamp Out Hunger food drive on Satur-

day. Anyone who wishes to donate non-perishable food items should leave them in a bag at their mailbox. Those with keyed group mailboxes can leave them inside the package locker. For information, go to www.helpstampouthunger.com.

### Get in free with kids at museum

The Prairie Museum of Art and History is offering free admission to parents who accompany their preschoolers aged 5 and under to the museum from Monday through Friday, May 20. They will have the chance to explore the museum at their leisure and participate in self-directed activities, including dressing up as cowboys, Native Americans, train engineers or pioneer settlers, riding the mechanical horse or stick horses, holding a tea party, helping with "chores" in the garden and around the houses, playing with toy agricultural machinery, and more. Museum hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call 460-

4590 or email museumed@st-tel.net.

### Sign up for summer program

Colby United Methodist Church will have open enrollment for its Summer Youth Program from 4-6 p.m. Monday and Tuesday at the church. The program is for children age 3 through sixth grade. It runs Monday to Wednesday each week from June 6 to July 6. For information, call 460-2761.

### Kids can fish on May 21

Colby Community College and the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks will hold a Kids Fishing Derby from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, May 21, at Villa High Pond. There is no charge, but parents should register by Wednesday. Officials from KDWP will be assisting and providing information on fishing topics. The college will provide bait. A drawing will be held for several prizes. For information, call

Barry Kaaz at 460-5429 or Kathy Britton at 460-5550.

### Relay committee plans breakfast

The Thomas County Relay for Life committee will have a pancake feed from 7 a.m. to noon on Saturday, May 21, in the Colby Community Building. Tickets can be purchased in advance from any committee member or at the door. The Relay for Life will be from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. on Friday, June 17, at Dennen Field. For information, call Irene Hartwell at 443-0974.



8 0 4 8 7 9 1 3 8 9 8 3