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Veteran's Day

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Students cook for veterans

By Christina Beringer

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Lori Truetken's third grade class at Sacred Heart Catholic School paid tribute to veterans of military service Thursday in recognition of Veterans Day.

Each of Truetken's 10 students were allowed to invite a veteran to join the class for a special lunch of sloppy joes, baked macaroni and cheese, creamed corn and dessert.

"The class went grocery shopping on Tuesday to buy ingredients and the kids were busy all morning making lunch with help from some

of the parents," said Truetken.

Truetken said her students had a heavy hand in most of the cooking and five of the parents also volunteered to serve the buffet-style meal.

Third-grade student Oaklynn Carman, daughter of Curtis and Shana Carman of Colby, said she had a lot of fun in the kitchen and even got to make a few messes.

"Aren't they supposed to?" joked Truetken. "It just wouldn't be the same if there weren't any messes."

Oaklynn's guest for lunch was her grandmother, Helen Carman of Selden. She served in the United States Air Force during the Viet-

nam War from November 1963 until July of 1967.

"I wish they would have let me complete my four years, but I was honorably discharged," Carman proudly explained, "and our first son was born on the Air Force base in Fort Worth, Texas."

Carman said she enlisted in Cleveland and served as an operating room technician in the orthopedic ward during the war. Her husband also served in the Air Force.

"I remember I joined the day after JFK was shot," she said. "You never forget where you

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CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press

Third graders at Sacred Heart Catholic School ate lunch Thursday alongside the veterans they invited. The students helped buy the food and cook the meal.

House burns east of Rexford

The second house fire in five days destroyed a farmhouse near Rexford on Wednesday.

Rexford Fire Chief Bill Scott said his department got the call at 5:27 p.m. that a house about four miles west and one mile north of Selden was on fire. The house is in Sheridan County and the original 911 call went to the Sheridan County Fire Department, who responded along with Rexford firefighters.

The house belongs to farmer Gary Shaw and his family. They were not home at the time and no one was hurt. Scott said the house is still standing, but it has been gutted. The farmhouse was old, he said, with small rooms and a tin roof.

An investigator from the Kansas Fire Marshal's Office was out on Thursday to look at the house, but Scott said the report hasn't come back yet.

Pheasant hunting still promising despite declines

By Kevin Bottrell

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Pheasant season starts Saturday, and although populations in northwest Kansas have been impacted by drought and crop loss, it's shaping up to be a banner year for hunting in the region.

Pheasant populations have taken a big hit in the south part of Kansas due to drought, which destroyed the crops, such as winter wheat, that the birds nest in. According to the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism's Upland Bird Forecast, spring breeding populations were up by 17 percent.

However, the forecast said northwest Kansas will likely offer the best pheasant hunting in the state. Spring breeding populations in the 15 northwest counties were at all-time highs and the area hasn't experienced near as much drought.

However, pheasants in northwest Kansas were still impacted by the reduced ground cover. With less winter wheat available, because of early harvest, storm damage and crop failure, pheasant populations will see some decline, though not as much as in the southwest and south-central areas.

In an October interview, Kansas Small Game Coordinator Jim Pitman said the decline could be as much as 25 percent, but in the southwest it has been as much as 75 percent.

Many counties — including Graham, Wallace, Logan, and Gove — were authorized for emergency grazing or haying, further depleting the ground cover. In addition, Pitman said, heavy rain in early June can flood nests and keep chicks from reaching adulthood.

The department's brood survey observed 54 fewer birds per day, smaller brood sizes and lower

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Elevator explosion declared an accident

By Roxana Hegeman

The Associated Press

WICHITA — An explosion that killed six people and injured two others at a northeast Kansas grain elevator was accidental, the State Fire Marshal's Office said Thursday.

The agency said it found no evidence of criminal activity in the Oct. 29 grain dust explosion at the Bartlett Grain Co. elevator in Atchison, about 50 miles northwest of Kansas City. Preliminary findings indicate the blast apparently originated in the elevator's main bin area. The investigation is ongoing.

Rose Rozmiarek, the chief of investigations for the Fire Marshal's Office, said in a telephone interview that grain dust was definitely the fuel that was ignited, but investigators are still trying to determine the spark. The amount of grain dust accumulation at the time is going to be hard to determine, she said.

"All we can say is that there was enough (grain dust) to allow that to happen, which unfortunately is

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Lottie McLemore adjusts a bow on the door of a gingerbread house she made from scratch for Santa City. McLemore builds a new piece each year for the display. Last year she built an ice castle.

Groups have Santa City all ready to go



Mayor Gary Adrian and Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Leilani Thomas put the finishing touches on a sled dog display.

It took several long days, but Santa City is set up ahead of schedule. Just don't expect to see the inside of it for a few more weeks.

Santa City will open from 1 to 5 p.m. Friday, Nov. 25. After that it will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays until Dec. 12, when it will be open weeknights from 6 to 8 p.m. until Christmas Eve, when it will be open from 1 to 3 p.m.

The Colby Community College baseball team helped move the decorations to the scout hut. Mayor Gary Adrian, Lottie McLemore and Holly Whitaker from the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce and Leilani Thomas, director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau, and her husband Chuck put the displays together. McLemore built a gingerbread house from scratch.

Registration is also open for the annual Colby Christmas Light Parade, scheduled for 5:45 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 4. Registration forms are available at the chamber office, 350 S. Range, and are due by Friday, Dec. 2.

The parade will start on Franklin Avenue at Second Street and head north to Fike Park, where it will turn toward Santa City, which will be open after the parade.



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