

Library has books on cookies, faith for your holiday reading enjoyment

The Pioneer Memorial Library staff wants to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas! We want to remind you to get your items to read, listen to and view early before Christmas. We will be open tonight night until 8 p.m., and then open until 5 p.m. on Friday. We will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

I am just returning after being out of the office for a day and a half with stomach flu or as my husband told me more correctly, "Gastroenteritis (also known as gastric flu, stomach flu, and stomach virus, although unrelated to influenza... (per Wikipedia)."

Needless to say that holiday goodies have not found their way back to my list of hopes and dreams for the holidays. I'm glad I told you about a recipe book or two last week. However, I can go and see sugar plums and such on display at Santa City in Fike Park. Remember that Santa City is open even on Christmas Eve. If you are looking for a fun activity for yourself, your family or you children, take them to Santa City. It also costs you nothing to enjoy. My husband and I always enjoy going through Santa City. Last year we had the joy of seeing a 3-year-old talk to Santa about his Christmas. We even ate a delicious, decorated sugar cookie.

The only truly holiday book that we just placed on the shelf is



Melany Wilks

• **Library Links**

"Martha Stewart's Handmade Holiday Crafts: 225 Inspired Projects for Year-Round Celebrations," by Editors of Martha Stewart Living. What's nice about this book is if you missed using it for Christmas, you can start with New Years and then use it for each holiday thereafter. I found one craft I think I could make, "felt button covers" for Valentine's day (p. 43). And for the wheat farmers, "harvest sheaf centerpiece" (pp. 234-235).

Actually, many of the crafts and decorations would add elegance and creativity to many holidays. I would like all of you to invite me to your making of them so I can watch in awe of your creative genius!

If you are anything like me, I usually enjoy finding a book or two to read during the Christmas and New Year's holidays that are a bit introspective and lend themselves to issues of faith, struggle and overcoming.

A favorite author of mine is the ever-thoughtful Max Lucado. One of his more recent books is "God's Story, Your Story: When

His Becomes Yours." This book looks at life and its chaotic events that may happen and just how we can see God in the midst of it all. A second book by Max Lucado is "Max On Life: Answers and Insights to Your Most Important Questions. This book has seven sections: Hope, Hurt, Help, Him/Her, Home, Haves/Have-nots, and Hereafter. Within each section are short discussions about a question the author has posed. There are a total of 172 discussions to make up the book. This could almost be a daily devotional for a person.

Another new book that caught my eye was "The Color of Rain: How Two Families Found Faith, Hope, and Love in the Midst of Tragedy," by Michael Spehn and Gina Spehn. This book is about how two childhood friends find their lives intertwined through tragedy and victory.

When this book came to my attention, it reminded me of a day that I had walked the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. I found myself tired and on the opposite side of the bridge and needing a bathroom. Nearby, I spotted a grey porta-potty. Inside the porta-potty was a message, "No one sees you crying in the rain." I was struck by this message as I stepped out into this grey misty day, and in my spirit came a message, from who I believed was God, "I see you crying in the rain!" That state-

ment within my spirit has often come back to me when I hear or see hopeless statements by others. Like this book, we can find faith, hope and love in our every circumstance, even in the face of death. Because, when we come to these stations in our lives, life is brought to the most basic and fundamental of all meaning and purpose.

Another meaningful book of a life changed in seconds by unimaginable circumstances is "Gabby: A Story of Courage and Hope," by Gabrielle Giffords, Mark Kelly and Jeffrey Zaslow. This book outlines her life since the shooting as told in conversational style by her husband Mark Kelly.

Remember to bring in your canned foods to pay your fines to the Pioneer Memorial Library. Food for Fines runs until Friday. You can redeem your library fines, by simply filling out a small form available at the front desk; give the items and your slip to the library staff so they can remove any fines you have on your record. Food for Fines does not apply to lost or damaged items. If you have a lost item, please come in and talk to our library staff and solve the problem. We will be donating the food items to Genesis-Thomas County. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at 460-4470.

See you in the library!

Deaths

Willard Dean Palmgren

Willard Dean Palmgren, 78, a Levant native, died Thursday, Oct. 20, 2011, at Southwest Medical Center in Liberal.

He was born Aug. 4, 1933, in Levant, the son of Willard Orin and Hallie Marie (Close) Palmgren.

He graduated from Levant High School in 1951. He was self-employed as an auto mechanic.

On Nov. 10, 1951, he married Myrtle Mae Searls in Colby.

He was preceded in death by his parents, a son, Steven Dean Palmgren, and a grandson, Cory Daniel Palmgren.

Survivors include his wife; four sons, Daniel Gene (Joan) Palmgren, Dale Wayne (Linda) Palmgren, Sammy Lynn (Susan) Palmgren, and Keith Leon (Mary) Palmgren; five brothers, Larry

(Fran) Palmgren, Garry (Martha) Palmgren, Chuck (Linda) Palmgren, Don (Gail) Palmgren and Denny (Beth) Palmgren; one sister, Brenda (Chuck) Smith; eight grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Memorial services were held Tuesday, Oct. 25, 2011, at Brennehan Funeral Home Chapel in Liberal. The Hugoton Masonic Lodge gave Masonic Rites. A private family inurnment was to take place later.

Memorials may be sent to the Liberal Senior Center in care of the Brennehan Funeral Chapel, 1212 W. Second, Liberal, Kan., 67901. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.brennehan-funeralhome.com.

State officials issue lottery scam warning

TOPEKA (AP) – Kansas officials are warning consumers about scammers who contact them by phone or e-mail saying they've won a prize in a foreign lottery.

A joint statement from the Attorney General Derek Schmidt and the Kansas Lottery cautions against providing personal financial information to strangers who promise to deposit lottery win-

nings in the so-called winner's account.

State officials also say that if a call or e-mail requests payment of a fee to process a lottery prize, it's a scam.

Schmidt spokesman Jeff Wagaman says the public warning was prompted by dozens of calls and complaints from Kansans during the past two weeks.

Public invited to Flint Hills meeting

Everyone is invited to attend the second Governor's Flint Hills Visioning Summit on Tuesday, Jan. 17. The summit will bring together stakeholders from throughout the Flint Hills Region and across Kansas from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Shawnee Ballroom at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Topeka.

There is a \$20 registration fee and lunch will be provided for those who register in advance. Because of space constraints, there is a limit of 300 participants. A legislative reception will follow from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The January meeting is a follow up to the first summit held in May, and is focused on growing the Kansas economy and creating

jobs. Gov. Sam Brownback's administration will continue to use the input gathered from this summit to help develop an ongoing strategy for the Flint Hills region. Stakeholders and policy makers will make presentations to help participants understand the challenges and strategies. During breakout sessions, participants will discuss specific issues and offer feedback, recommendations and direction for the future. In addition to Brownback, Kansas Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Secretary Robin Jennison will also attend.

Public involvement is crucial to the success of the program. The second summit will be another step to creating thriving rural communities throughout the Flint Hills of Kansas.

Presentation portions of the summit will be streamed live over the Internet for those unable to attend in person. Links will be displayed on the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism website at www.kdwp.state.ks.us, on the Summit website at fhs.ksoutdoors.com and on the Kansas tourism industry website at TravelKSIndustry.com

To register or learn more about the meeting, visit the Flint Hills Visioning Summit website at fhs.ksoutdoors.com or contact Linda Craghead, Asst. Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism at Linda.craghead@ksoutdoors.com or call (785) 296-2281.

Expert helps keep poinsettias alive till Christmas

MANHATTAN – With the proper care, many modern poinsettias can bloom until May.

"The care is more challenging than just keeping the plants alive through Christmas. But, it isn't difficult," said Ward Upham, K-State Research and Extension horticulturist.

To remain attractive, he explained, poinsettias have three fairly specific needs.

"Moisture can be the make-or-break factor," Upham said. "If the plants dry out to the point of wilting, poinsettias drop leaves. If they're too wet, they develop root rot."

"I suggest checking poinsettias'

moisture daily. Stick your finger an inch into their soil. When the soil is dry at that depth, give them a drink."

For watering, Upham recommends: Carry the plant to a sink. Use warm water. Apply until water runs from the pot's drainage hole. Let the pot sit a while and/or discard drainage water that ends up in the pot's saucer.

Poinsettias prefer living in the brightest area available – up to and including sunny windows, he said.

"Fortunately, their temperature needs aren't too different from human comfort zones," Upham added. "Poinsettias don't appreci-

ate drafts – hot or cold. They like daytime temperatures between 65 and 75 degrees and nighttime between 60 and 65 degrees.

"With poinsettias, though, temperatures above 75 degrees shorten bloom life. Those below 60 cause root rot."

Window display sites can be tricky, he warned. Contact with cold windowpanes can damage plants. The air close to windows can be significantly colder than the average room temperature, particularly at night.

"Some people draw the drapes each night between poinsettias and nearby windows," Upham said. "Others physically move poinsettias away from windows at night."

Poinsettias can live to bloom again next Christmas, he said. Information on extended poinsettia care is available at county and district K-State Research and Extension offices and on the Web at <http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/library/hort2/mf521.pdf>.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day

Hi-Plains Co-op	
Wheat (bushel)	\$6.21
Corn (bushel)	\$6.06
Milo (hundredweight)	\$10.30
Soybeans (bushel)	\$10.18

Corrections

The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.

Wishing all a Merry Christmas

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