



Wind closes freeway, blows truck off

By Kevin Bottrell

The Goodland Star-News kbottrell@nwkansas.com

Winds gusting up to 77 mph Saturday uprooted trees, damaged roofs and caused a seven-car pileup on I-70, forcing the state to close the road near the Colorado state line for about two hours.

The winds began in the morning, with gusts in the 50s reported from Oakley to Yuma, Colo. Around noon, gusts estimated near 80 mph were recorded in Yuma, in the high 60s near Seibert, Colo., and in the 70s at Burlington, Colo. Gusts continued to be in the 60s and 70s across the region all afternoon. The highest confirmed gust was 77 mph just northeast of Goodland, right about the time of the accidents.

Snow began falling about 2:30 p.m., but only left trace amounts of moisture. The wind and low visibility from the blowing dust caused a seven-car accident at 1:20 p.m. near milepost 6 on I-70, about three miles west of Ruleton. All law enforcement officers in the area were diverted to the scene. Sherman County sheriff's officers responded, along with troopers from the Kansas Highway Patrol.

Several injuries were reported, with the victims taken to the Goodland Regional Medical Center. Because of the accident, plus the wind and dust, the Kansas Department of Transportation shut down I-70 west from Goodland, while Colorado officials closed the road heading east from Burlington about 1:45 p.m. Visibility on that stretch was down to nothing, said Lt. Joe Greene of the Kansas Highway Patrol.

The Interstate was reopened at 3:30 p.m. Some traffic was diverted around the accident on old U.S. 24 from Kanorado to Ruleton. Just minutes before the I-70 pileup, a semitrailer rig was blown onto its side south of Goodland. Greene said the rig was traveling north.

See "WIND," Page 2

Boeing plant in Wichita to be closed

By Roxana Hegeman

The Associated Press

WICHITA – Faced with big cuts in the defense budget, the Boeing Co. said today it will close its defense plant in Wichita by the end of next year, leaving more than 2,160 workers looking for jobs.

The closure will end the firm's presence in a city where it has been a major employer for 83 years. It also means the city will miss out on as many as 7,500 jobs involved with a contract to modify 767 aircraft as tankers for the Air Force.

Kansas senators and representatives, who fought hard for Boeing to get the contract, expressed outrage at the decision, though it was not unexpected.

The company said in November it was studying whether to close the Wichita facility, which specializes in modifying commercial aircraft for military or government operations, to prepare Defense Department budget cuts. The first layoffs are expected this summer.

The company said it was moving future aircraft maintenance, modification and support work to its plant in San Antonio, Texas, and engineering to Oklahoma City. Work on the Air Force refueling tanker will be performed in

Puget Sound, Wash. The company said the 24 Kansas suppliers on that program will continue to provide parts as originally planned.

"In this time of defense budget reductions, as well as shifting customer priorities, Boeing has decided to close its operations in Wichita to reduce costs, increase efficiencies, and drive competitiveness," said Mark Bass, vice president and general manager for the Boeing Defense, Space & Security facility in Wichita.

The study came even as the Pentagon works to prevent \$500 billion in automatic, across-the-board defense budget cuts over 10 years in the wake of the failure by a bipartisan congressional supercommittee to agree on \$1.2 trillion or more in deficit reductions.

Wichita had hoped the number of jobs at the facility would grow after Boeing won a contract worth at least \$35 billion to build 179 Air Force refueling tankers. The modification work on the planes had been expected to be done at Boeing's Wichita plant – bringing with it 7,500 direct and indirect jobs with an overall economic impact of nearly \$390 million.

Wichita Mayor Carl Brewer said the city, which prides itself

See "BOEING," Page 2



Sisters shorn for donation

Nine-year-old Brayclen Lynn (right, above photo) and her sister Brielle, 8, followed in the footsteps of their mother, Holly Lynn of Colby, when they gave up eight inches of long hair (right photo) to Beautiful Lengths, a nonprofit partnership between Pantene hair products and the American Cancer Society. The girls got their hair cut Thursday at Personal Touch. Their mother said she has made donations to Locks of Love, which also provides wigs for women who lose their hair to chemotherapy.

CHRISTINA BERINGER Colby Free Press



Class tackles abuse

Adults will learn how to help kids

By Christina Beringer

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To emphasize the prevention and proper reporting of child sexual abuse, Northwest Kansas Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect plans a free training session in Colby later this month, sponsored by the Thomas County Ministerial Association.

Prevention project director Paige Campbell and Smart Start Northwest Kansas project director Maureen Ostmeyer will discuss facts about child abuse from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Thursday, Jan. 19, at Smoffee's, 365 N. Franklin, in Colby.

"One of the most proactive and pragmatic approaches to diminishing child sexual abuse is the education of responsible adults," says the organization Darkness to Light, which promotes the training session to be offered. "Imagine a community where adults are actively working together to change a cultural norm – from one where child sexual abuse is shrouded in fear and denial, and children are easy targets to one where every child is protected throughout the community...."

"Turn on the news or pick up a newspaper, and chances are you will find a horrific story of child sexual abuse right in your own community. We are often left feeling fearful and powerless. But, we can move from outrage into action. Prevention is the answer."

Campbell said she encourages everyone to attend the free session.

"Everyone can benefit from the information that will be shared... especially since children have an impact in all of our lives," she said. "Your attendance can only serve to help a child in need."

"The Stewards of Children training session will inform adults about the prevalence, circumstances and consequences of child sexual abuse. We hope to build skills so adults can identify warning signs and react responsibly, with an ultimate goal of changing organizational policies and pro-

See "ABUSE," Page 2

Take me home?



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

A cocker spaniel posed for a picture Tuesday at the Colby Animal Clinic. The 8-year-old neutered male is available for adoption, along with several kittens.

Editor promoted to Goodland job

A Colby man has been named editor-manager of *The Goodland Star-News* with the new year.

Editor Tom Betz has decided to step down, and Kevin Bottrell, editor of the *Colby Free Press* the last 2 1/2 years, has moved to Goodland to take over at the *Star-News*.

Mr. Betz won't be going anywhere, however. He plans to stay in town and work on news-tech projects for Nor'West Newspapers, which operates the Goodland paper and seven others in northwest Kansas.

In Colby, Publisher Sharon Friedlander said the *Free Press* is

looking for an experienced editor to replace Mr. Bottrell.

"Kevin has done a great job here," she said. "He was well liked in town and will be hard to replace."

The new editor has a degree in journalism and technical communications in 2007. Bottrell said he got his first professional byline – it was misspelled – during the summer before his senior year in college as a stringer for the weekly *Berthoud Surveyor* in Colorado.

After graduating, he spent a year and a half as a reporter for the *Torrington Telegram*, a 2,000 circulation twice-weekly paper in Torrington, Wyo., and was editor of *The Lingle Guide* in a nearby town. He moved to Colby in 2009.



K. Bottrell

An Eagle Scout and a former musician, Bottrell said in his spare time, he enjoys computer games, music, movies, bowling and disc golf.

His older brother Andrew spent eight years as editor of the *Cameroon Citizen-Observer* in Missouri before moving to North Platte, Neb., earlier this year as a reporter.

Betz said he is looking forward to at least semi-retirement after a career spanning more than 50 years. During his time in Goodland, Betz gathered information for nearly 30 years on the 1928 robbery of the First National Bank of Lamar and published a book, "The Fleagle Gang, Betrayed by a Fingerprint." The case was said to be the first in the U.S. solved by a single fingerprint.

At the suggestion of a freshman English teacher, he said, he joined the staff at the high school newspaper for two semesters. That led to studies at Colorado State University, where he earned a bachelor's

degree in journalism and technical communications in 2007.

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