



10 pages

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## Robber pleads guilty to heist in Colby

By Steve Haynes

Colby Free Press  
s.haynes@nwkans.com

A 67-year-old Pennsylvania man has pleaded guilty in federal court to robbing the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Colby last fall.

The office of U.S. Attorney Barry Gris-

som said Timothy D. Seifert, 67, Bethlehem, admitted to one count of bank robbery. He was charged with robbing the bank here on Oct. 28.

He gave a teller a note saying he had a gun under his jacket, police said at the time. If the teller gave him money, the note said, no one would get hurt. He got the money and left the bank.

When officers caught up with him a few blocks away, he was not armed and surrendered willingly.

There was some speculation he was looking for a warm place to stay – or a trip home. About a week before the robbery, on Oct. 16, Seifert had turned himself in to officers at the Thomas County Law Enforcement Center, saying he was

wanted in Pennsylvania.

Colby Police Chief Randy Jones said at the time that officers check on the out-of-state warrant, but Pennsylvania declined to come get the man. He was released.

Seifert apparently didn't make much effort to get away after the robbery. Three Colby police officers and a sheriff's deputy surrounded him about three blocks

away.

After that, the FBI took over the case and charges were filed in federal court. The U.S. Attorney's Office said Thursday that sentencing had been set for March 19. Seifert faces a maximum of 25 years in prison and a fine up to \$250,000 in the case.

## Spring-like weather sets record high here

By Kayla Cornett

Colby Free Press  
kcornett@nwkans.com

If you thought it was nice out yesterday, you're right. Hope you enjoyed it while it lasted.

The National Weather Service in Goodland reported that both Colby and Goodland set record high temperatures Thursday, with Colby measured unofficially at 74 degrees and Goodland at 73.

The previous high for Jan. 5 in Colby was 72 degrees and in Goodland, 71.

Mark Buller, a meteorologist at the Weather Service office in Goodland, said the abnormally warm temperatures are most likely caused by La Niña, a

cooling of currents in the Pacific Ocean.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, La Niña weather occurs when water temperatures near the equator in the Pacific are cooler than normal. This changes weather patterns in North America and produces warmer temperatures, said Buller.

These warm, sunny days won't last very long, however.

Buller said a cold front should move through Kansas today, bringing temperatures 20 to 25 degrees cooler than yesterday.

He said there is a chance of snow on Saturday night and Sunday for both towns.

## Price of postage to go up as service fights of crisis

By Brandi Diederich

The Oberlin Herald  
oberlin.editor@nwkans.com

The price of stamps will be going up again this month as the U.S. Postal Service struggles with a loss of \$8 billion to \$9 billion a year.

The rate for first-class letters will go up a penny, from 44 to 45 cents on the first ounce, on Sunday, Jan. 22.

The charge for postcards will go up 3 cents to 32 cents, for letters to Canada or Mexico, 5 cents to 85 cents and to other international destinations, 7 cents to \$1.05, the service says.

Because all first-class stamps today are "forever" stamps, good for first-class mail at whatever rate is adopted, people can just use up the stamps they have, said Joe Welshon, officer in charge at the Colby post office.

He said that means the Postal Service will just keep selling stamps it has on hand at the new price, too.

"It should be a much easier transition this time than it has been in the past," he said.

Prices will also increase for



U.S. POSTAL SERVICE  
A George Washington 3-cent stamp was typical first-class postage from 1917 to 1958.

other mailing services, the agency said, including standard mail (mostly advertising), periodicals such as newspapers and magazines, package services and extra services such as registered mail and return receipts.

For details, go to about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2011/pr11\_factsht\_pricechng\_1018.pdf. This will create a pdf file on your desktop. Click on the file icon to see the new prices.

Brian Sperry, Postal Service

spokesman in Denver, said customers can continue to mail letters at today's price by buying "Forever" stamps before Jan. 22. He said these stamps were created to help consumers get through price changes.

Mr. Sperry said the overall average price increase across all mailing services is capped by law at 2.1 percent, based on the rate of inflation shown by the Consumer Price Index.

The increase is one way for the service to deal with its financial crisis, he said, and hopefully bring the agency back to its feet.

He said the service adjusts prices annually, just like other shipping companies, but doesn't add surcharges for fuel or for residential or Saturday delivery.

A timeline of letter prices issued by the service shows the price of a stamp was 2 cents in 1885. It took 32 years to require a 1 cent increase in 1917. The price went to 4 cents in 1958 and 5 cents in 1963.

Since 2006, the service has had a price increase every year except 2010. The last stamp increase was in May 2009, from 42 cents to 44 cents.

## No charges files in death of teenager

GARDEN CITY – A southwest Kansas prosecutor says no charges will be filed in last fall's fatal shooting of a star wrestler from Garden City High School.

Eighteen-year-old Braxton Medina was killed Sept. 6 after going into a house to retrieve personal

items he had loaned to someone. Finney County investigators said at the time that Medina had entered the home illegally.

A 17-year-old inside the house shot Medina once in the chest.

KWCH-TV reports (<http://bit.ly/yml3X5>) that Finney Coun-

ty Attorney John Wheeler said Thursday the shooting was a case of legal self-defense under Kansas law. Authorities said 17-year-old did not know Medina, only that someone was entering the house illegally. Medina had just begun his senior year in high school.



CHRISTINE BERINGER/Colby Free Press

Rhonda Faber got a quick lesson in the features of her new Ford Mustang Friday after a brief party with friends and co-workers at Tubbs and Sons Ford on South Range Ave.

## Colby woman drives off in ninth Mary Kay vehicle

By Christina Beringer

Colby Free Press  
colby.society@nwkans.com

Ronda Faber of Colby is commonly known for flashing a new shade of lip gloss or brandishing the latest mascara, but most recently, she has been showing off her sporty new 2011 Ford Mustang.

Faber, a senior sales director for Mary Kay cosmetics, picked up her free car from Tubbs and Sons Ford Sales on Friday during a congratulatory party at the dealership. In lieu of a legendary pink Cadillac, Faber said she was one of the first to receive a revered classic American-made Mustang in black. The car was unveiled in July as Mary Kay's newest addition to its career car program.

"When you think about the little black dress or that favorite mascara that's black, it's a fashion color, it has universal appeal, and it's something we think is a great complement to the pink Cadillac," said Sheryl Adkins, Mary Kay global vice president.

The Cadillac will continue to be the premier vehicle loaned to sales directors as an incentive for those whose teams sell at least \$100,000 in cosmetics per year. The Mustang is for directors who sell less.

"If I remember right, my team and I had to sell about \$78,000 in wholesale products in six months to receive the Mustang," Faber said. "There are

117 in my team, in 17 states from California to Maryland, and I couldn't have made my goal without them."

For the first time on Friday, Faber was able to test out all of the car's features, customize it to her preferences and finally got to take it out for a spin – but only after one of her sons speedily jumped into the driver's seat before she could get a chance. He was denied an opportunity to test drive the car, despite his pleas.

"I got my first car in August of 1999 and it had only seven miles on it," she said. "My Mustang today has 30 miles, and I'm excited to add a few more to it."

Since the program began in 1969, more than 120,000 sales agents have qualified or requalified to earn use of a Mary Kay career car, the firm says. Today, more than 5,600 are on the road nationwide.

"The Ford Mustang combines style and sport with functionality and durability," said Darrell Overcash, president of Mary Kay Inc. U.S. "The Career Car Program, and now the Ford Mustang, provides the Mary Kay independent sales force the opportunity to earn the use of a visible symbol of their success that reflects their hard work, determination and professionalism."

Faber said she started her Mary Kay business in 1998 and became a sales director in 2000. The Mustang, she said, is her ninth Mary Kay car.

## Seniors may be paying for their licenses again

TOPEKA – The tradition of giving free hunting and fishing license to senior citizens in Kansas might be coming to an end.

The Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, faced with the huge Baby Boomer generation about to turn 65, says it will ask the Legislature to remove the exemption.

The department will also ask that Kansans 65 and older no longer get reduced rates or ex-

emptions for state-park fees.

Department attorney Chris Tymeson said Thursday the agency needs the changes to shore up its budget. He says the average age of sportsmen in Kansas continues to increase, costing the agency money.

The *Wichita Eagle* reports (<http://bit.ly/w6ZdoS>) that those currently exempt would not be grandfathered in, so they, too, would have to pay. Exemptions and reduced rates for landowners would continue.

## Corps plans close watch on spring water

OMAHA (AP) – The Army Corps of Engineers says it is trying to improve the way it manages the Missouri River's reservoirs after last year's historic flooding, but the 2012 plan released Friday doesn't include any additional flood-storage space.

The corps has been criticized by people living all along the river because of the way it managed last year's flood that caused \$630 million damage to flood-control structures and covered hundreds of thousands of acres of farmland along the 2,341-mile-long river for months.

The corps said it tried to address some concerns by promising to

improve communication and react swiftly to signs of high runoff, but officials say there wasn't time to clear more space than normal in the reservoirs.

"The selected drawdown strategy was designed to evacuate stored flood water as quickly as possible to allow people to get back into their homes, farms and businesses to begin the process of recovery, and to allow inspection and repair of infrastructure including the dams and levees to ensure they are ready for the 2012 season," the corps said in the plan.

Officials say the levees, dams and channels along the river remain vulnerable going into 2012

because repairs are needed.

Still, the corps said there is only a 10 percent chance that the amount of water flowing into the Missouri River from melting snow and rainfall this year will exceed the amount the plan can handle.

Last year, the corps had to release massive amounts of water from the six dams along the river all summer to deal with unexpectedly heavy spring rains and above-average mountain snowpack. That caused flooding that began in June and continued well into the fall in some places.

A report from outside experts released last month said the corps did the best it could to deal with

last year's record flooding, but the panel recommended several changes that could prevent a disastrous repeat.

The corps said it has already started implementing some of those recommendations, including updating the hydrologic studies it uses. But the corps says many of the suggestions require either detailed study or additional funding, so they couldn't be implemented right away.

The corps said that if it gets any sign of heavy runoff in 2012 it will try to aggressively release water.



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