

# Seed catalogs just keep coming; garden plans include local sources

All right, let's see the hands of all you gardeners out there who are as pleased as I am that the seed catalogs seem to be coming our way earlier and earlier each year. Those opposed, same sign. The "pleaseds" win, hands down.

It was the day before last Halloween that the catalog for Pinetree Gardens suddenly appeared in my mailbox, and it was just last week that I received what is surely the final offering of the season in the form of a colorful catalog from the Michigan Bulb Co. All together, 21 wonderful reminders of spring have been studied very thoroughly as I divert my attention from television to visions of beautiful flowers and gorgeous cucumbers.

You know what? After I've digested the contents of all those catalogs, after I see that one or two of my all-time favorite varieties are no longer available, after I carefully study the possibilities of some of the new varieties – only then will I visit my nearest friendly hometown fully accredited garden center and buy the seeds and plants I intend to grow this year.

Please understand that the seed rack at the garden center doesn't always display the varieties of seed that I prefer, but if they do, that's where I will do business. Never mind that in my case, the nearest real garden center is at least 30 miles away from where I live. I'm going there anyway to see if they



**Kay Melia**

• The Gardener

can provide what I want. And also, other needed garden supplies such as fertilizers and bug killers and whatever else I feel like I need.

For me, seed is the problem. I can never remember seeing a packet of YaYa carrot seed on a seed rack, and I must have YaYa carrot seed. I've not seen Megaton cabbage seed on a seed rack, and I must absolutely have Megaton cabbage seed because it has proved to me to be the best I have ever grown. The same goes for Super Tasty tomato seed, Sweet Success cucumbers, and Mirai sweet corn. And yet, for every preferred seed I can't find on the rack, there are always two or three that are always there.

And please understand this. Although I will pay extra if need be to secure the variety of seed I prefer, most packets of seed on the garden center's seed rack are lots less expensive than their counterparts in the seed catalog. Burpee Seed Co.'s regular size packets in the catalog are nearly all \$4.95 this year, and the newest offerings are mostly \$5.95.

You'll have to hunt diligently to find a seed packet that costs more than \$2.50 at the garden center.



MARTIN K. MELIA

Kay Melia showed a heroic stance while posing with his well-used shovel last week, thinking about the gardening season to come.

Never mind that you'll also pay upwards of a \$5.95 minimum for shipping and handling when you order from the catalog.

Still, I'm not about to pass up the varieties of vegetables or flowers I like best. Therefore, a small order goes out to a big seed com-

pany every spring, with my sincere thanks for providing me with valuable information about the seeds and plants that I'll try my best to find at the nearest hometown greenhouse and garden center. Never yet have I returned a seed catalog to the sender.

## Shakespeare Club

Shakespeare Club met Jan. 27 at the home of Joyce Hansen, who called the meeting to order with the club collect and flag salute. Eight members and one guest attended the meeting.

A paving stone at the Prairie Museum of Art and History for the club was discussed. Sheila Frahm said a 4" by 8" paver will cost \$100. It was unanimously agreed to purchase a paving stone to help remember the club; Frahm will contact the museum.

Following the business meeting, Hansen recognized club member and co-hostess Cheryl Brenn, who had the program. Brenn indicated

her pleasure in being a member and called upon Frahm to give the program, which was to recognize and celebrate Hansen's 50th year in the club.



Joyce Hansen

Kathy Calliham presented her with a flower arrangement of crimson and white carnations – Shakespeare Club's colors and designated flower.

Amie Kendrick provided copies and sang her special rendition of the club's song for Hansen – to the tune of O

Sole Mio – modified to recognize Hansen's dedication to the club.

Prior to the meeting, Frahm researched and reviewed previous

club minutes and scrap books for 1961, which was when Hansen was invited to join.

Hansen first became an officer for the 1963 to 1964 club year when she was elected as reporter and auditor. Records indicate she first served as president in 1966 and again in 1983, 1990 and from 2004 to 2006.

Hansen recalled being invited by Mary Smith (Mrs. Jay) and noted how she particularly enjoyed making new friends and talking to longtime members who knew so much about Colby, Thomas County and how the club begun and worked to make Colby a great community.

Frahm gave her a copy of the documents shared during the day

## Online program ranks high at Fort Hays State

U.S. News & World Report, the news magazine that produces one of the most popular annual rankings of universities, has listed Fort Hays State University among the leaders in its first-ever national rankings for online education.

The news magazine evaluated online higher education in six categories: bachelor's programs generally, and master's programs in business, education,

engineering, nursing and computer information technology. Bachelor's programs were evaluated according to teaching practices and student engagement; student services and technology; and faculty credentials and training. The five master's categories were evaluated by similar criteria plus a fourth criterion, admissions selectivity.

## Uzbekistan nixes Valentine's Day shows

ALMATY, Kazakhstan (AP) – Authorities in Uzbekistan are, apparently, unwilling to give love a chance.

The Russian news agency RIA-Novosti cited several local media in the Central Asian nation reporting Tuesday that Uzbekistan has

canceled concerts and other events for Valentine's Day. Instead, residents in the capital of Tashkent can enjoy readings of poems by Mughal emperor Babur, who died in the 16th century.

The unofficial ban on romance-related festivities echoes long-

standing antagonism in Uzbekistan toward the holiday. Last year, the Turkiston newspaper described Valentine's Day as the work of "forces with evil goals bent on putting an end to national values."

Although most people across former Soviet Central Asia are Muslim, many enjoy celebrating what is nominally a Christian feast.

## 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.

## Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day <b>Hi-Plains Co-op</b>	
Wheat (bushel)	\$6.67
Corn (bushel)	\$6.28
Milo (hundredweight)	\$10.75
Soybeans (bushel)	\$10.89

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## Fizzled snow deposited enough for play in park

Well, even if the promised storm this weekend didn't turn out to be everything we anticipated, it's still nice to have snow on the ground!

My children had lots of fun making a snowball so big they couldn't roll it any further – the only problem was that they made it at the park and then wanted me to get it home for them!

Some events were canceled or postponed due to the storm, so we're hoping for good weather and good roads for this weekend.

Don't forget the upcoming activities at the Red Barn this week. You can head over at 7 p.m. Saturday night for a rousing round of bingo. Then, plan to come back at 1:45 p.m. next Monday for the blood pressure screening.

The Girl Scouts are finishing up their orders today. I hope you ordered all the Thin Mints and other goodies you will need



**Gwen Griffiths**

• Rexford Correspondent

to get you through the year.

At Shepherd's Staff, we're hard at work preparing for the Christian Workers Conference, to be held Saturday, March 3, at Heartland Christian School in Colby. We'd love to see you there. If you serve in your church or community in any way, there's a workshop or a vendor that will be of help to you. Contact Shepherd's Staff at (785) 687-2565 if you would like information.

That seems to be it for this week. Don't forget to leave your news item in the jar by the door at the Red Barn, call me at 687-2076, or e-mail [griffithsgang@gmail.com](mailto:griffithsgang@gmail.com) so that we can publish your events, too.

## January temperatures twelfth warmest ever

It wasn't your imagination – January in Kansas didn't feel like January in Kansas.

"With the mild conditions that prevailed in January, people are asking 'was this a record warm winter or a record warm January?'" said Mary Knapp, State of Kansas climatologist.

January, 2012 temperatures were much above normal, Knapp said. Preliminary data has the statewide average temperature at 35.2 degrees F, which is 7.9 degrees warmer than the 1981-2010 average, or 6.2 degrees warmer than the 1895-2011 average. It ranks as the twelfth warmest January since 1895.

Knapp, who directs the Kansas Weather Data Library, based at

Kansas State University, said the warmest January was in 2006, when the statewide average temperature was 41.2 degrees, 12 degrees above the long term average. As for the November-January average, it ranks as eleventh warmest, at 37.6 degrees.

She said it's difficult to say if the trend will continue, adding that February is generally warmer than January.

"However, of the 11 years with the warmest Januarys, eight saw colder temperatures in February," Knapp said.

Information about Kansas weather is available on the Weather Data Library website: [www.ksre.ksu.edu/wdl/](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/wdl/).

Send local news to [colby.society@nwkansas.com](mailto:colby.society@nwkansas.com)

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY**

February 14

Publishes Monday, February 13, 2012

**1x3 BOX ad (includes photo/special message... Choose from 4 styles...PRICE \$23.85**

Ad #1: Retro Heart

Ad #2: Simple Heart

Ad #3: Heart Cluster

Ad #4: Pet Paws

**Basic Ad 1x2: Option 1**

XOXOXO Graphic and text

A.R.  
You are the light of my life.  
Love, R.R.

PRICE: \$15.90

**Basic Ad 1x1: Option 2**

Choice of 1 graphic and text

To my true love,  
Amy...Happy Valentines Day!  
Love, A.B.

Choice of 1 Artwork:

PRICE: \$7.95

☐ **1x3 BOX AD: \$23.85**

Select style ☐ Ad 1 Retro Heart ☐ Ad 2 Simple Heart ☐ Ad 3 Heart Cluster ☐ Ad 4 Pet Paws

☐ **Basic ad 1x2 (Option 1): XOXO Graphic & text...\$15.90**

☐ **Basic ad 1x1 (Option 2): 1 Graphic & text...\$7.95**

Select graphic ☐ Teddy Bear ☐ Love heart ☐ Lips

**Deadline February 9 at 3 p.m.**

155 W. 5th St., Colby, KS 67701

Photo, message and payment must be received at our office by Thursday, February 9, 2012. Ads must be pre-paid. For good reproduction, photos must be clear. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for return of photo.