



Postal Service to begin closing plants

WASHINGTON (AP) - The nearly bankrupt U.S. Postal Service is moving ahead with plans to close dozens of mail processing centers - possibly including the one in Colby - saying it can no longer wait for Congress to decide how it should cut costs.

The agency will consolidate 140 mail processing centers within the next year, including 48 this August. Most will occur next January and February, after the busy election and holiday mail season. Another 89 closings would occur in 2014.

The Postal Service had planned to close 252 mail processing centers beginning this summer but was awaiting congressional action. The Senate passed a bill to help the struggling agency, but the House has not acted.

The original plan included eliminating the center in Colby, serving the 677 ZIP code area, already partly closed, and the plant in Salina where much of Colby's work has been moved. Mail from this

area would be sorted in North Platte, Neb., under that plan. Overnight delivery of local mail would end, and First Class letters would take two to three days for delivery.

In Colby this morning, acting postmaster Joe Welshon said he had not seen anything from the Postal Service yet about what will happen with the Colby op-

eration. An announcement was expected from the regional office in Denver.

The closings had been on hold until Tuesday to give Congress time to act. With the legislators stalled over a bill, the mail agency say it is moving forward, but now over a longer time frame.

Agora headed for church lot here in June

By Vera Sloan

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"Agora" is coming to Colby, with shopping galore.

The name comes from the place where early-day Greek merchants displayed their goods in outdoor shops and booths. The agora was also a place where social and commercial dealings took place.

More than 60 spots for outdoor shops and booths will be open for browsing and shopping from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 9, on the south parking lot of the Colby United Methodist Church at 950 S. Franklin Ave.

Homemade crafts and goods, ready-made items, foods and the like will be for sale on the church parking lot, while inside the church, shoppers may browse through a giant rummage sale, choose some of their favorite goodies at a bake sale or just sit down and have a morning plate of biscuits, sausage and gravy.

With merchants coming from Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska, expectations are that Agora will resemble some of the largest art and craft shows in western Kansas.

The Methodist Missions group was looking for a fund raiser to



help with local missions when they came up with the idea for the Agora, members said.

"When someone says the words 'fund raiser,' my light bulb instantly comes on," said Donna Bennett, chairman of the event. "We were trying to think of a name for what we intend to be an annual event, and it was a friend who actually came up with the information about the name for the marketplace.

"We're excited and we think the name is a perfect fit."

Bennett said the event has been in the planning stages since January. The committee, composed of Bennett, LaDonna Sloan and Jatou Denneler, has the day fine tuned, to the point of even checking weather records for June 9 for the past 20 years.

"There are always awesome temperatures in early June," Bennett added. "When a project like

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More than 150 to graduate from Northwest Tech

More than 150 students - including at least nine from Colby - will graduate from the Northwest Kansas Technical College at its commencement ceremony at 1:30 p.m. next Friday in the Max Jones Fieldhouse.

The Class of 2012 includes 156 students receiving diplomas or certificates.

The commencement speaker will be Carol Laws, a member of the college board since 2006. Laws was born and raised in Leoti, graduating from Wichita County High School in 1978. After attending Southwestern College, she spent a year as a custom harvester and many years as a stay-at-home mom with her three children. In 1997, she returned to Leoti to open a truck-repair shop with her husband Terry.

After serving six years as the deputy county treasurer, she was appointed county treasurer in September 2011.

Laws is a member of the Wichita County Amusement Association,

currently serving as treasurer. She is the director of the Community Theater, a past president of the Wichita County Community Foundation, and has served as a parent volunteer, teacher aide, substitute teacher and school board member in both Missouri and Kansas.

Area graduates include:

Colby - Lisa Roberson, cosmetology, associate degree; Skyler Brogan, Matt Lindberg, Chase Moore, Mitchell Ohlrogge, Shawn Phillips, diesel, associate degree; Cloyce Hamilton, respiratory therapy; Randa Lewis, respiratory therapy, associate degree; Danyel Baker, welding, certificate.

Brewster - Aleisha Bremerkamp, cosmetology, associate degree; Seth Edward Ackerman, Devan Selby, diesel, associate degree; Chad Somers, welding, certificate.

Atwood - Chance Marble, auto tech, associate degree, National Technical Honor Society member;

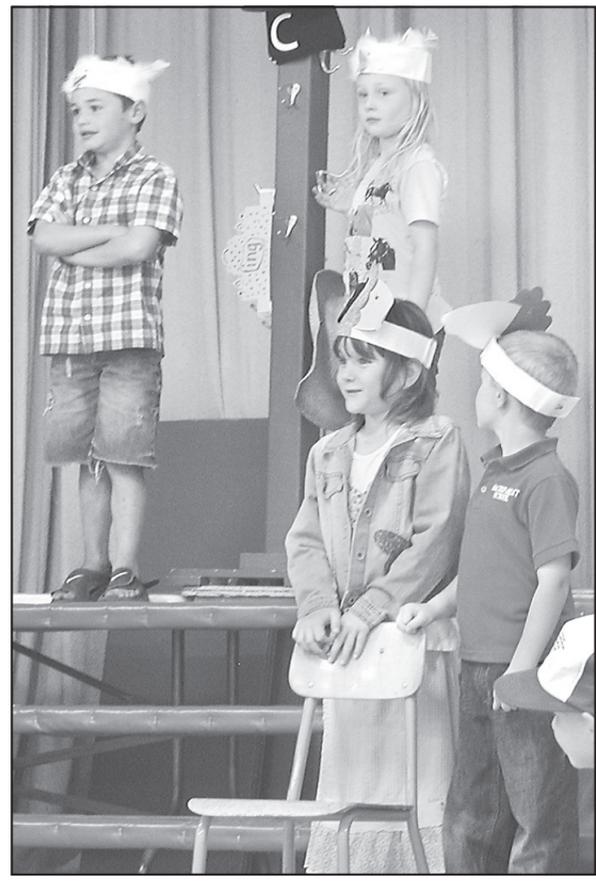
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KATHRYN BALLARD/Colby Free Press

Kids read about cows

The pigs, portrayed by Lexie Schroeder and Amanda Jaeger (left above), were in the pantry; the cows, Riley Voss and Coleman Dainty Guilfoyle, were in the kitchen; but Farmer Tom (Zane Betz) was oblivious, 'cause he was in the hay snoring away. Isaiah Rosales and Anna Brown were hens on the hat stand (right) and Hayden Bellamy and Taden Fiken were sheep on the sofa. Farmer Tom later shoed all the playful animals out of his house during Sacred Heart Kindergarten's Celebration Tea year-end performances last Thursday. The class did some songs and showed off their reading skills; "Cows in the Kitchen" by June Crebbin was one of the top hits.



Billionaire's company buys 63 newspapers

NEW YORK (AP) - Billionaire Warren Buffett's company is making another foray into newspapers, agreeing to buy 63 newspapers from Media General Inc. for \$142 million.

Berkshire Hathaway Inc. is also extending a loan to Media General and taking a 19.9 percent stake in the company, which will keep 18 TV stations. Media General also owns some websites, such as coupon provider DealTaker.com.

Media General today said the deal includes all of its newspapers except the Tampa Tribune in Florida and smaller papers in that market. It's in talks to sell those

newspapers to other buyers. Berkshire Hathaway is buying the Richmond Times-Dispatch in Virginia, the Winston-Salem Journal in North Carolina and the

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Annual Run for the Wall to pass Colby, stop in Goodland this weekend

Hundreds of motorcycles will roar past Colby on Sunday as the annual Run for the Wall passes through on Interstate 70 sometime around 10 to 10:15 a.m.

The cross-country bike ride honors veterans and fallen soldiers and raise awareness for prisoners of war and those missing in action. The bikers will spend the

night in Goodland on Saturday, rolling into town about 6:45 p.m. (Central Time) with a police escort.

They will have dinner at the old armory, where they'll meet and greet the public after a short program.

Sunday morning, the Goodland Rotary Club will be serving breakfast for the riders

at the armory. After a meeting, they will depart at 9:15 a.m. for a parade down Caldwell to 17th Street then out to the east Goodland interchange to continue their journey.

The cross-country ride has two routes, central and southern. Bikers on the central route left Cucamonga, Calif., on

Wednesday, stopping in Williams, Ariz., and Gallup and Eagle's Nest, N.M., before heading northeast to Goodland. From there, they will ride to Junction City on their way to the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington.

About 400 riders participated in last year's event. Many stayed at the armory,

while others may stay at hotels in Goodland or go on down the road to Colby for the night.

