

# Quiet takes over frozen garden as it settles down to winter rest

Quiet now prevails in the garden. The freshly frozen leaves on the remaining tomato vines are still doing their best to cling to their stems, and somehow retaining a dark green color, but fighting a losing battle. The remaining leaves on the cornstalks are tan-ish-white and as brittle as snake skins, and seem to have dried in the fluted forms of their green growing days. The garden earth has seen its fertility transferred to spent bean plants and beet tops.

Most of us have salvaged the last phase of the plants that served us so productively during the summer heat. Garlic hangs in a braid; paper-skinned onions hang in the dark coolness of a quiet room; stacks of homemade crates hold Yukon Golds and Red Pontiacs; basement shelves are lined with



**Kay Melia**  
• The Gardener

jar after jar of goodness.

In the garden, only husks and stems and spent vines of every description remain. And very soon now, my trusty mower will be sent out to reduce the dry, once beautiful vegetation to small pieces of material that will then be plowed back into the tired soil. We now must spend some smart time to renew the soil for tomorrow. We must return to the earth what we borrowed from it. It is indeed the period of regeneration!

In this, my final report, my greatest wish is that gardeners ev-

erywhere spend the winter quietly making plans for the new season. We all learned many things last summer, not the least of which was that gardens, with a little help, can still provide unbelievably large amounts of fresh, healthy food, despite 28 days of a hundred degrees or more, and less than five inches of rain from June 1 through Sept. 30 in many of our gardens.

Think about it for a moment. Look around you. The most productive gardens were those that received the richness and fertility of the regenerative materials we added to the soil. Without a well-tended and well-amended soil, our gardens will show mediocrity.

Here at the end of the season, my garden plan for last summer is basically forgotten, and my illusion of last season's stewardship

is being "reworked" in my mind. What happened in the garden last summer, happened. I learned from it, but is now just another year's memory, swept like a leaf from my own small visions and into the vast possibilities of the future.

Late autumn is like a long, deep breath taken after a successful past endeavor of great intensity. It is the end of the season, the beginning of the regeneration of the next.

Thank you dear friends for occasionally reading what I have written. Please do not hesitate to send me a letter, an e-mail, or a phone call, anytime. I love to visit about gardening of any kind, anytime. Have a wonderful winter!

## Deaths

### Alfrieda 'Fritz' Ostmeyer

Alfrieda "Fritz" Ostmeyer, 90, Colby, died Sunday, Oct. 21, 2012, at her home.

Services are pending with Kersenbrock Funeral Chapel in Colby, 462-7979.

## Colby Rotary Club

Colby Rotary Club met Tuesday at Colby Community College with 50 members and guests attending. Guests included Larry Barrett, Mike Baughn, Christina Beringer, Rick Billinger, Ward Cassidy, Ken Christiansen, Jim Cross, Sheila Frahm, Tracey Galli, Shelly Harms, Randy Jones, Barry R. Grissom, Jean Johnson, Tyson McGreer, Steve Newell, Ralph Ostmeyer, Brenda Platt, Joy Rothfuss, Rod Taylor, Kevan Trenkle, Dr. Stephen Vacik, Frank Weaver and Leroy and Joan Ziegler.

President Melany Wilks gave the welcome and club announcements. Fall trash pickup is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Tuesday.

The program was Barry R. Grissom, U.S. Attorney for Kansas. Grissom was appointed by President Obama in 2010. He is in charge of 50 assistant U.S. attorneys in offices in Wichita, Topeka and Kansas City.

Grissom reviewed his priorities which include protecting the nation from terrorism, defending civil rights and human rights, and upholding public safety and immigration. He reviewed a variety of cases in each area that he and his assistants have been successful in prosecuting throughout the state.

Rotary meets weekly in Room 106 of the Student Union.

— Relda Galli

## Grant goes to Rawlins County group

The Rawlins County Extension Council has received a \$36,575 grant from the Kansas Department of Agriculture for "Feasibility of Expanding Vegetable Production in Western Kansas." This project will study different production methods for vegetables.

The department awarded grants to organizations across the state to promote education about and consumption of fruits and vegetables through the Specialty Crop Block Grant program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The intent is to improve the Kansas specialty crop industry.

"These grants will help specialty crop producers improve their production practices, expand their operations and connect with new markets and new customers," said Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Dale

Rodman. "Local producers and specialty crops are an important component of agriculture in Kansas."

Grants were available to projects involving research, nutrition, trade enhancement, food safety and security, pest and disease education, "buy local" programs, promotion, marketing, more efficient and cost-effective distribution systems, environmental and conservation concerns, product development and developing cooperatives.

Sixteen organizations submitted a total of 23 proposals.

To learn more, go to [www.ksda.gov/kansas\\_agriculture/content/281](http://www.ksda.gov/kansas_agriculture/content/281) or contact Local Foods and Rural Outreach Coordinator Sarah Green at Sarah.Green@kda.ks.gov or (785) 296-4172.

## Fall mowing leads to healthier spring lawns

Continuing to mow grass throughout the fall in preparation for cold weather yields healthier grass in the spring.

While rumors claim that allowing grass to grow tall will insulate it against the cold winter weather, K-State Research and Extension horticulturalist Ward Upham said tall grass will provide little protection against winter. In fact, canopies that are too tall may even cause damage if they become mat-

ted down and harbor snow mold.

"The lawn will benefit more from continuing to mow at the recommended height than from trying to gain some insulation against winter cold by allowing it to grow tall," Upham said.

He said the recommended heights for grasses in Kansas is as follows:

- Tall fescue, 2.5 to 3.5 inches.
- Kentucky bluegrass, 2 to 3 inches.

- Perennial ryegrass, 2 to 3 inches
- Buffalograss, 2 to 3 inches.
- Bermudagrass, 1 to 2 inches.
- Zoysiagrass, 1 to 2 inches.

Mowing grass at the higher end of these ranges during early fall helps the grass store more carbohydrates for the winter, Upham said.

For information about healthy lawns, visit [www.ksre.ksu.edu](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu).

## On the Beat

### COLBY POLICE

#### Wednesday

2:32 a.m. — Security check to the downtown businesses.

4 a.m. — Security check at Wal-mart.

7:39 a.m. — Security check at Sacred Heart School.

5:40 p.m. — Civil standby.

6 p.m. — Civil standby.

6:05 p.m. — Business reported gas skip. Everything OK. Subject came back.

6:43 p.m. — Report filed for phone stolen from locker at middle school.

9:05 p.m. — Report filed for theft of signs from Pine and Franklin.

#### Thursday

12:51 a.m. — Noise complaint. Subjects advised to keep the noise down.

10:48 a.m. — Subject came to station about temp tag lost from vehicle on Sept. 24. Entered in na-

tional Crime Information Center.

11 a.m. — Rape report filed.

9:41 p.m. — Caller reported a cow out. Unable to locate.

10:38 p.m. — Caller reported possible domestic problem. Everything OK.

### THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF

#### Wednesday

10:05 a.m. — William Marshall Vasbinder II arrested on warrant at 3:20 p.m. Tuesday.

10:05 a.m. — Report filed for subject who came to station about loss or theft of license plate.

4:30 p.m. — Provided car seat check.

#### Thursday

12:13 p.m. — Helped Highway Patrol on semi rollover eastbound I-70 mile 37.

12:20 p.m. — Steer loose just north of 1900 N. Range. Unable to locate.

12:26 p.m. — Helped Highway Patrol, ambulance crew and rescue squad on injury accident at eastbound I-70 mile 62.

2:25 p.m. — Criminal threat/criminal restraint report filed.

2:17 p.m. — Allison Paige Grimmett arrested on warrant.

2:41 p.m. — Dray Todd Meridith arrested on warrant.

3:10 p.m. — Brian Meridith arrested on warrant.

3:30 p.m. — Driving under the influence report filed for incident at McCarty Dairy.

5:05 p.m. — Caller reported cattle out at U.S. 24 and County Rd. 13. Owner contacted.

7:38 p.m. — Booked Kelly Don Smith.

10:35 p.m. — Helped Highway Patrol with travel control for an injury accident 12 miles south on K-25.

## Giant tortoise startles town

LOGAN, Utah (AP)—Residents in Logan were startled to see a 127-pound giant tortoise wandering down a street after it escaped from its owner.

Assistant police chief Jeff Curtis says the African spurred tortoise spotted was 3 to 4 feet wide.

He says it was so large it took two animal control officers to load it into a vehicle and take it to the Willow Park Zoo, where it was quarantined until owner Curtis Baird claimed it.

Baird says he owns nine tortoises and recently moved to Logan.

He says Timmy the 21-year-old tortoise escaped twice in a week and he doesn't know how the animal is getting out.

## Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day Hi-Plains Co-op	
Wheat (bushel)	\$8.43
Corn (bushel)	\$7.66
Milo (hundredweight)	\$13.14
Soybeans (bushel)	\$14.44



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### To my Customers,

I want to explain to my customers why their papers are so late.

The *Colby Free Press* is installing new equipment for the press in Goodland. I do not get my papers until 6 p.m. to start my routes, and I am delivering them as fast as I can. I have no idea how much longer this will last, but I assure you I am doing the best I can.

I do apologize for the inconvenience. Hopefully for your sake and mine they will get everything up and running soon.

- Roberta

## Kansas City diocese settles two lawsuits

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — The Catholic Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph has settled lawsuits brought by a former worker who claimed sexual harassment and a former contractor who claimed the diocese retaliated against her by making it impossible to do her job, attorneys for the plaintiffs and diocese said.

Attorneys for plaintiffs and the diocese declined to discuss details of the settlements, the *Kansas City Star* reported today ([bit.ly/QBDQz8](http://bit.ly/QBDQz8)).

"Both cases have been resolved to the parties' mutual satisfaction," said Rebecca Randles, the Kansas City lawyer whose firm represents the plaintiffs.

Diocesan spokesman Jack Smith said: "Both of these cases have been resolved to the satisfaction of all of the parties."

The diocese denied the allegations after each lawsuit was filed.

In one, Margaret Mata, a former independent contractor, alleged that the diocese and Bishop Robert Finn retaliated against her for

advocating on behalf of victims of the Rev. Shawn Ratigan, who pleaded guilty last month to federal charges of producing and attempting to produce child pornography. She also said she pushed the diocese to change its policies to prevent further child sexual abuse.

Mata said the diocese made it impossible for her to do her job by disabling her e-mail, taking away her laptop and confiscating her business cards. She eventually resigned and then sued in October 2011, claiming retaliation, wrongful dismissal and invasion of privacy.

After the lawsuit was filed, the diocese said in a statement that it "categorically denies it ever prevented Mata from performing any work that was within the scope of her agreement as a contract worker."

The second lawsuit was filed by Larry Probst, a former worker

at the diocesan archives. He alleged he was dismissed after complaining about sexually offensive language, sexual advances and pornography on the computers at work.

In a lawsuit filed in January in U.S. District Court, Probst also alleged a co-worker left sexual e-mail messages on the diocesan archives computer and that the messages were "obvious to anyone who entered the archives."

The diocese said at the time that Probst's part-time position was eliminated at the end of the diocesan fiscal year "solely for budgetary reasons."

## 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.*

## PRESCOTT'S LAW: THE ADVENTURES OF A HIGH PLAINS SHERIFF

Keith Coplin's vivid collection of thirteen stories features Will Prescott, the sheriff of Clayton County, an elected position he has held for 32 years. Set on the high plains, these are stories of small town life, which is, for the most part, tranquil and easy going. But even in small towns there is plenty of human drama to go around.

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Send check or money order with your email address to: Keith Coplin, PO Box 32, Colby, Kansas 67701

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