



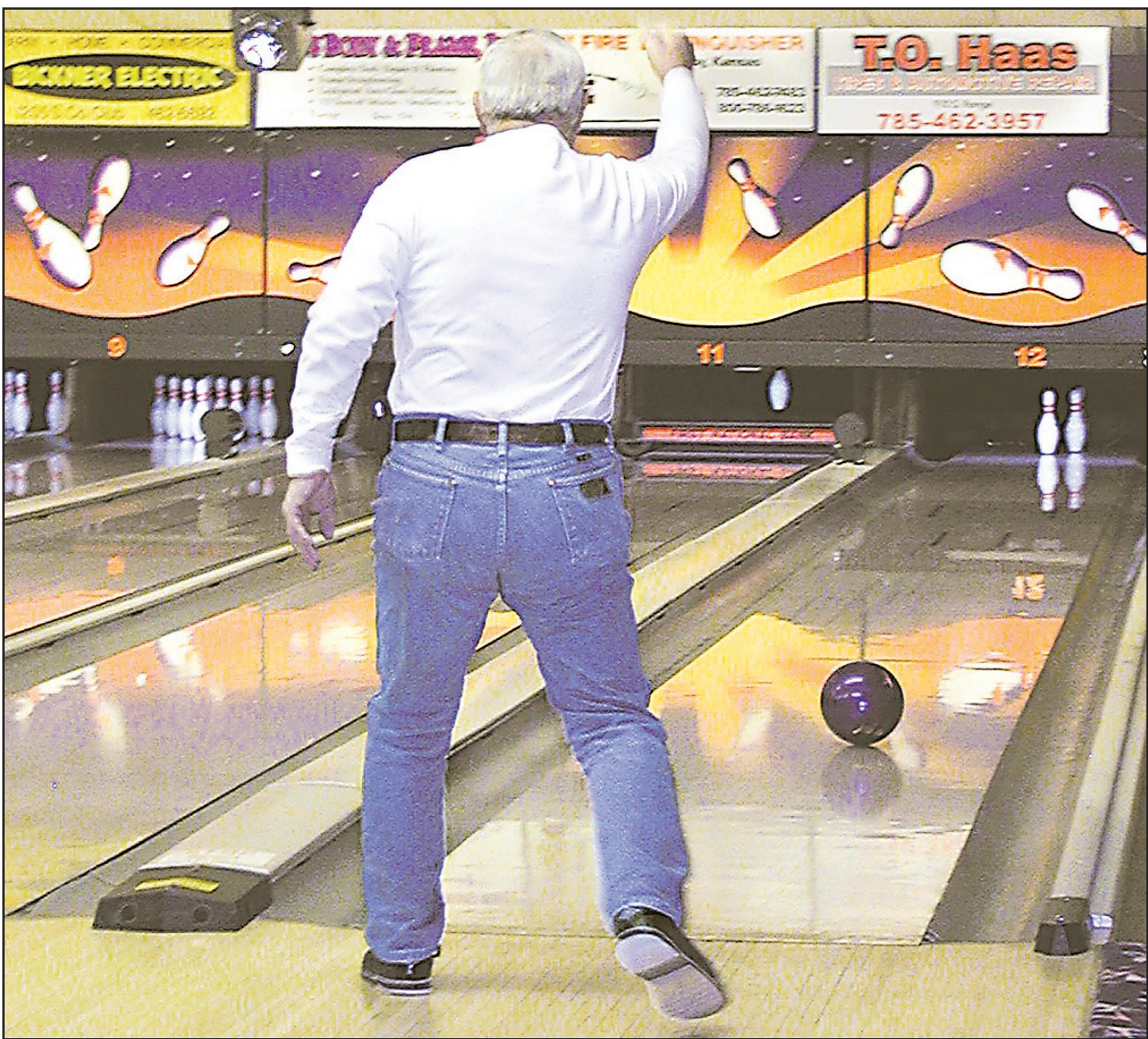
10 pages

# COLBY FREE PRESS

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Friday

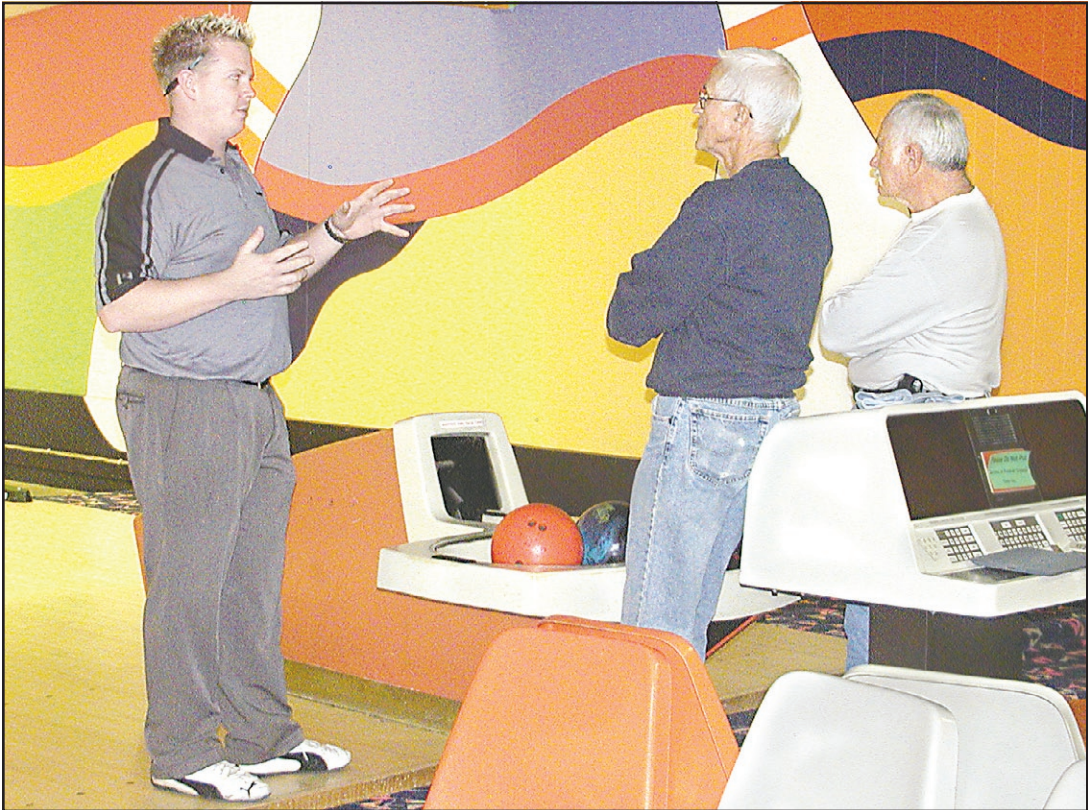
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## Pro gives bowling lessons

Richard Adolph (above) practiced earlier this month at the Colby Bowl and Fun Center. Brent Bowers (at left in right photo), a competitive bowler from the Wichita area, dropped by the afternoon of Dec. 7 to help people improve their game, and Alvin Koenig (center at right) and Adolph took the opportunity to pick up a few pointers.

SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press



## Businesses will close for holiday

The kids are out of school and there's snow on the ground, so it must be time for Christmas break. Most businesses and government offices will be taking at least one day off for the holiday next week, and many will take two.

City and county offices, including the courthouse, will be closed Monday and Tuesday. The Senior Progress Center will be closed Monday and Tuesday, which means no senior lunch those days and the transportation van will not run.

Among state agencies, the K-State Experiment Station will be closed all week and into the next week, from Monday to Wednesday, Jan. 2. The state Department of Revenue driver's license office will be closed Monday and Tuesday, while the Veterans Affairs office will close Monday through Wednesday.

The U.S. Farm Service Agency

and Natural Resources Conservation Service and the post offices will be open Monday, but will close Tuesday. There will be no mail delivery except last-minute Express Mail packages. Brian Sperry, regional spokesman, said most post offices will shorten their hours on Christmas Eve, but said Colby's office will be open all day.

People's State Bank will be closed both Monday and Tuesday, but most banks will have shortened hours on Monday and close Tuesday. Farmers and Merchants Bank, both the main and Dillon's locations, will close at noon. Bankwest will be open from 10 a.m. to noon, Sunflower Bank will close at noon and The Bank will close at 11 a.m.

The Colby Free Press office will be open Monday from 8 a.m.

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## City approves fiber-optic lines

By Sam Dieter

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After weeks of discussions, the Colby City Council approved a franchise agreement Tuesday with allowing Wildflower Telecommunication to run fiber-optic lines through the city – but with a catch.

City Manager Tyson McGreer came to the council with an amended version of the original contract, saying that the city does not have to agree to have the company's lines on city power poles.

"It was kind of decided by myself and staff they the couldn't be

on our poles (without asking permission later)," McGreer said.

Daniel Friesen, president of Wildflower's parent company, Ideatek, based in Buhler, came to several earlier council meetings where the contract was discussed. During those meetings, McGreer said that he didn't like a provision of the contract allowing the firm to attach its lines to city poles.

The manager noted that other communication companies were not allowed to have their lines on city utility poles at will.

City Attorney John Gatz said he reviewed the contract before the

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## Next snowstorm may land in area Christmas Day

By Sam Dieter

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Colby has a chance for a white Christmas after a storm Wednesday left the streets icy and the ground covered with snow.

The National Weather Service predicts clear days and cloudy nights for the weekend. Christmas Eve should be partially cloudy, with a 20 percent chance of snow that night and a 40 percent chance of fresh snow on Christmas.

Temperatures are predicted in the teens at night and in the 30s and low 40s during the day.

Colby's last white Christmas was in 2009, when three inches of snow fell, said Fred Stasser, a meteorologist with the Goodland office of the National Weather Service.

Two inches fell on Christmas in 2008 and one inch in 2007.

City Public Works Director Omar Weber said that workers should wrap up snow removal on city streets today or tonight. Only the city streets needed work, he said, and things went well except for a truck that was down for about 15 minutes.

He said that workers are plowing secondary and emergency routes, but are not plowing residential streets. He said those would have been plowed only if they were clogged.

Clair Schrock, county road and bridge supervisor, said county's roads were blocked in places by snow drifts and had some ice on them. The cleanup lasted from about 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Thursday, he said, adding that county had few other problems from the

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## County OKs money transfers

By Christina Beringer

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Thomas County commissioners approved money transfers Monday morning, including one to cover a negative balance in the ambulance account.

Commissioners approved transferring \$60,000 from the capital

outlay fund, which left a balance of \$108,000. Commissioner Paul Steele reported that the ambulance service account had a negative balance of \$29,000 at the end of October and said the transfer should cover this, plus ensure enough to cover expenses through the end of the year.

The board transferred \$2,000 to the community van fund from the county general fund. Commissioners noted this transfer is done every year since the van does not

have a tax levy.

Three other transfers were tabled for action at the next meeting on Monday, Dec. 31. During that meeting, commissioners will consider amendments to the employee benefits, jail and road and bridge funds.

"We can't make any motions now on the employee benefits fund," said Steele, "because I don't know what it'll cost us at the

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## Classy snow suit



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

Darryl Henry was outside shoveling snow from the blizzard Wednesday off the sidewalk at Edward Jones investments on Thursday afternoon.