



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

'No Ordinary Night'



VERA SLOAN

A cast of nearly 40 "angels" – ranging in age from 4 to 18 – presented the musical pageant "No Ordinary Night" at the Colledge Drive Assembly of God Church on Sunday morning to a standing-room-only crowd. The story was about the night Jesus was

born and heaven was all a buzz. The message of Christmas was told in songs that included snappy rock rhythms and soft lullabies.

Businesses, offices close for Christmas

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

City offices will be closed Monday. County offices will be closed Friday and Monday. The transportation van will not be running Friday or Monday. The Recycling Center will close at 3 p.m. Friday and open again on Tuesday.

The Senior Progress Center will close at noon today. It will reopen on Tuesday.

State offices, such as the K-State Experiment Station, will be closed Monday. The Veterans Affairs Office will also be closed Friday.

The Post Office will be closed Sunday and Monday and the Farm Service Agency will also close Monday.

Most banks will close Saturday and Monday. People's State Bank will close at 11 a.m. Friday and Bank West will close at noon.

The *Colby Free Press* office will be closed Monday, and there will be no paper that day.

The Oasis and Bosselman truck stops along with most convenience stores will not close. Petro Lube will be open Saturday.

The garage at Colby Dodge will be open Monday, while Tubbs and Sons will close until Tuesday. Denny's will be open Monday, but will close the next two weekends. P&D Auto will close Monday.

Colby Bowl will close at 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve, but will open at 5 p.m. Christmas Day for evening bowling.

China Buffet and Starbucks will be open Christmas Day. Starbucks will close at 7 p.m.

McDonalds and Arby's will close at 8 p.m. Christmas Eve and reopen Monday. J&B Meat Market and Village Inn will close at 2 p.m., Taco John's at 3 p.m., Wendy's at 4 p.m., Sonic at 5 p.m., Pizza Hut at 6 p.m. and Montana Mike's at 7 p.m. Saturday and will all close Sunday.

City Limits will close Monday. Gambino's Pizza will close Saturday and Sunday. Quiznos and Baskin-Robbins will close Christmas Day.

Walmart will be closed at 8 p.m. Christmas Eve and open again at 5 a.m. Monday. The Pharmacy will close at 6 p.m. Dillons will close at 6 p.m. Christmas Eve and open at 7 a.m. Monday. Palace Drug will be open regular hours.

College leadership expresses support for walking trail

By Kayla Cornett

Colby Free Press
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The Colby Community College board of trustees gave approval to Dr. Stephen Vacik, college president, last Wednesday to write a letter of support for walking trail changes that involve the college campus and to help the walking trail committee receive a grant to build the trail.

The committee would like to run the walking trail around the college's property, through the middle of the trees, and an

additional walkway through the campus. Vacik said he wanted approval to write the letter in support of both of these changes from the board.

"People would also have the opportunity then to walk the walking trail right through the middle of our campus, which we think would be good for visibility and also for our students," Vacik said.

Trustee Dale Herschberger asked if the college would be liable for any injuries or accidents that occurred on the part of the trail that goes through the college's property. Vacik said they always have those

kind of liabilities, but he thinks they are very minimal.

College attorney John Gatz said there is an exemption in the Tort Claims Act for recreational facilities.

"Governmental entities are not liable for injuries that occur, for instance, in parks or on public recreational facilities," Gatz said. "...I think the advantages outweigh the disadvantages."

Herschberger added that the college will be in charge of snow removal for the walkways and Vacik agreed.

"It will be a really neat feature," Vacik

said.

In other business, the board:

- Approved the resignations of Kailee May, assistant volleyball coach, and Amy Torrence, library assistant.

- Approved the sale of two college horses. Horse Program Director and Equestrian Coach Shanda Mattix wanted to sell the horses through a closed sale. Herschberger asked where the money from those sales would go, and Vacik said he believes it goes back into the general fund.

Trustee Nick Wells said he spoke with

Mattix about the sale and suggested that she go through a bidding process, such as running an invitation to bid on the college website. He also said it would keep the college from receiving public scrutiny over the sale. The board motioned to approve the sale of the horses under an invitation to bid on the college website.

- Heard the financial report from Alan Waites, vice president of business affairs. He said the November year-to-date expenses are still on track, there is \$7.7 mil-

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Postmaster asks residents to shovel

When the snow falls and the roads turn icy, many thoughts turn to safety, and the Colby Post Office is no exception. Postmaster Joe Welshon is asking residents to help letter carriers by shoveling a path to their mailbox as soon as possible after it snows.

"We want our carriers to return home to their families healthy each night," he said. "Keeping a path clear to your mailbox will go a long way toward keeping our letter carriers safe and ensuring mail delivery each day."

Carriers make an average of 600 deliveries per day, and they will continue to do their best to deliver

the mail in all weather, Welshon said. However, when mailboxes and walkways are buried in snow and ice, it can make it difficult to deliver letters safely.

Postal customers who receive their mail at the door should ensure their sidewalks, steps and other access ways are clear of snow and ice. Customers with street-side mailboxes or clustered neighborhood boxes should also try to make sure there is a safe and clear path.

"We greatly appreciate the support of our customers in this endeavor," Welshon said. "Your carrier will thank you."

Census estimates say Kansas' population up

By John Milburn

The Associated Press

TOPEKA – Kansas' population is getting larger but at a slower rate than in some neighboring states, according to new estimates released Wednesday by the Census Bureau.

The state added 18,120 residents to grow by 0.6 percent from April 2010 to July 2011. The Census estimates that Kansas has 2,871,238 residents. That rate of growth ranks Kansas 32nd among

the states and the District of Columbia.

Iowa recorded 0.5 percent growth and Missouri saw an estimated 0.4 percent growth. However, Kansas lagged behind Colorado's 1.7 percent clip, 1.1 percent in Oklahoma, 0.9 percent in Nebraska and 0.8 percent in Arkansas.

State Sen. Jean Schodorf, a Wichita Republican, said she was surprised to learn that the state's population is still growing, although some of her high school classmates have decided to retire early and move back home to

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Dreaming of a white Christmas



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

The light dusting of snow Colby received this morning, seen here at a work site on Webster, may be as close as the area gets to a white Christmas. The National Weather Service is predicting sun and temperatures in the 40s this weekend.

Kansas Democrats put forward new jobs plan

By John Milburn

The Associated Press

TOPEKA – Democratic leaders on Tuesday proposed modifying Kansas' 2007 gambling laws to help expand state programs to train unemployed workers, repair infrastructure and help small business.

Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley, of Topeka, and House Minority Leader Paul Davis, of Lawrence, said the state could create new jobs by changing existing gambling laws

to encourage development of a southeastern Kansas casino and slot machines at three race tracks.

Called Kansas Jobs First, the 14-bill package looks to retrain workers who need new skills. It also would share some gambling money with cities and counties for local infrastructure projects. The package would cost the state \$11.1 million in fiscal year 2013 beginning July 1, 2012.

"There's no more important issue, we believe, for the Legislature to spend its time

than the issue of creating jobs for the people of Kansas," Hensley said. "Families are still struggling to keep a roof over their head, to pay for their child's doctor bills, to keep their gas tank full. Kansas workers are still hurting."

The state Department of Labor said Tuesday that the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Kansas was 6.5 percent in November, down from 6.7 percent in October. More than

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