



COLBY  
FREE PRESS

# Accidents send three to hospital One is transported to Denver facility

By TOM A. DREILING

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At least three Interstate-70 travelers in the immediate Colby vicinity ended up at Citizens Medical Center on Monday as the result of two separate accidents on the slippery surface caused by an early spring snowstorm.

A hospital spokesperson said this morning that one patient was treated and then transported to St. Anthony Central in Denver. The hospital said several others were treated and released.

One of the two injury accidents involved 37-year-old Joni L. Hines of Castle Rock, Colo. She was eastbound on the interstate approximately 6 miles west of Colby when she lost control on the ice, entered a ditch and rolled two times, according to the Kansas Highway Patrol. She was driving a 1998 Chevrolet. The accident occurred at 9:05 a.m.

About a half-hour earlier, Seferino R. Lopez, 27 of Mexico, was eastbound on the interstate near the Colby exit, when he lost control of the 1983 Ford he was driving and it slid off the highway onto the right shoulder and hit a road sign. He, along with one of his passengers, Felipe Morales, 31, also of Mexico, were taken to the hospital, according to the Kansas Highway patrol.

It was not clear which of the three was sent on to Denver.

A rash of accidents on the interstate, and some on other roadways in northwest Kansas, kept law enforcement people busy on Monday. Reports indicate minor injuries occurred in some of the mishaps, but did not require hospitalization.

The storm, which started kicking in during the day Sunday, left a 3-inch deposit of snow in the immediate Colby area and around 6-7 inches in the Goodland vicinity.

An initial mix of sleet/snow left the roadways icy and forced closure of I-70 from Hays to the Colorado line for nearly 12 hours, reopening around 3 a.m. Monday.

In Colorado, the interstate was shut down from Limon to the Kansas line.

# Caution urged in use of kava

WASHINGTON (AP) — People who have liver problems or take drugs that can harm the liver should ask a doctor before taking the popular herbal supplement kava, the government warns.

The Food and Drug Administration said kava may be linked to serious liver injury.

The FDA hasn't concluded if kava, or its use together with some other supplement or medication, is truly to blame.

"This kind of liver damage appears to be extremely rare," said FDA supplement chief Dr. Christine Taylor.

## Listening tour



DARREL PATTILLO/Colby Free Press

First District Congressman Jerry Moran fielded many questions this morning during his stop in Colby at the Ramada Inn. Moran, a Hays Republican, is covering his district from A to Z. His annual "Listening Tour" takes him to all 66 counties in his district, which started several weeks ago in Almena and will wind up in early April in Zurich. About 20 residents turned out for the 8 a.m. coffee stop.

# Afghan quake dead exceeds 1,200

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A powerful earthquake that shook Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan has killed at least 1,200 people, aid officials said today. The Afghan Defense Ministry says 600 bodies had been recovered so far from villages still shaking from frequent aftershocks.

ACTED, a private aid organization, said its estimates came from staffers in the devastated area near Nahrin, 90 miles north of Kabul on the slopes of the Hindu Kush mountains, where Monday's 5.9-magnitude quake was centered. Strong aftershocks were reported overnight, including one measuring 5.0.

U.S. special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad told reporters the death toll may reach 1,800 according to information from interim Prime Minister Hamid Karzai. In Geneva, U.N. spokeswoman Elisabeth Byrs said Afghan authorities told them the toll could reach 4,800.

"We will provide assistance to the interim government and to local Afghans in dealing with this tragedy," Khalilzad said.

By early afternoon, 600 bodies had been pulled from the wreckage of collapsed homes, said Defense Ministry official Mira Jan.

"I can say that 90 percent of Nahrin has been destroyed," he said. "We asked (peacekeepers) and all other humanitarian non-governmental organizations to help the people there because they lost everything. They need tents, medicines, everything."

At the scene, regional commander Gen. Aider Khan said that as many as 1,500 to 2,000 people were missing. Many of Nahrin's residents had to spend the night without food or shelter because nearly all of the homes were destroyed.

Gen. Khalil, a military commander from a town in the area, Pul-e-Kumri, said "we didn't see any houses standing" in Nahrin. Two helicopters from the Defense Ministry had carried about 30 injured people to Pul-e-Kumri.

"But there are a lot of wounded people and we don't have enough helicopters to bring them to any hospitals," he said by satellite telephone. "Everyone is trying to find the members of their families to bring them out of the destroyed walls or collapsed areas," he said. "The earthquake is going on, and each time, the people are very afraid."

The U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colo., said the 5.9 magnitude quake Monday was centered about 105

miles north of Kabul in the Hindu Kush mountains.

Karzai postponed his trip to Turkey set for Wednesday because of the latest quake, an Afghan Minister Haji Mangal Hussain said. Karzai, who was traveling with the health and defense ministers, will soon visit the affected area, he said.

U.N. spokesman Yusuf Hassan said five villages in the area were destroyed. The area, which has been hard-hit by drought and food shortages, is home to an estimated 82,000 people.

The offices of ACTED, a French organization, were completely destroyed.

"Each five or 10 minutes there is a shake still going on," said Shoja Zare, an ACTED radio operator in Kabul who was in contact with colleagues in Nahrin. "There is no hospital, there is no doctor to help these people."

U.N. spokesman Manoel de Almeida e Silva said the United Nations was rushing emergency aid to the scene.

He said preliminary reports indicated more than 200 houses were damaged around the village of Nahrin.

Hassan said aid groups were trying to get tents and other emergency supplies to the homeless there.

# Nearly half of wheat crop ranked poor

WICHITA (AP) — Drought has so stressed the Kansas winter wheat crop that nearly half of it was ranked in poor to very poor condition, Kansas Agricultural Statistics Service said today.

In its weekly crop weather report, the agency said 17 percent of the crop was in very poor condition and 27 percent was in poor condition.

Another 33 percent was ranked as fair. Just 21 percent was in good condition, and 2 percent was reported in

excellent shape.

About 62 percent of the wheat has no wind damage.

However, the agency said the wheat crop was susceptible to additional wind damage because of thin stands and dry soils.

The agency said subsoil moisture is adequate in just 20 percent of the acreage, and topsoil moisture is not much better with 25 percent reported as adequate.

# Big Internet change is coming next week

Users of the **nwkansas.com** Internet system will have to make a couple of changes in their computers next Wednesday as the firm changes Internet suppliers.

Tom Betz, director of Internet service, said every user will need to change the "domain name," or DNS, settings. Instructions were sent out in a mailing this month.

The change has to be made after lunch next Wednesday. If you do it before then, Betz said, your computer won't work until the system changes. If you don't do it about that time, the old numbers won't work.

Help will be available for users with problems at **nwkansas.com** offices in Oberlin, Goodland, St. Francis and Colby. In Colby please call 785-462-3963.

"The actual changeover should take only a few minutes," Betz said, "but sometimes these things are unpredictable."

Because dozens of settings need to be changed, he said, there may be outages off and on at various places all afternoon. Some customers may be without service until evening. The Internet staff expects to stay late, answering questions and helping people with their changeover.

The switch comes after an extended

outage which kept customers off the Internet and blocked e-mail most of the day Monday. Betz said the change had been planned long before then, but the outage did point out problems with the old system.

The service is provided by Carroll's Web of Salina, which last year bought out CJNetworks, owned by the Topeka-Capital Journal and its parent, Morris Communications. Originally, the supplier was the Kansas Press Association, which sold its Internet operations to Morris.

The new supplier will be Southwestern Bell Internet, part of telecommunications giant SBC Corp., said Steve Haynes, president of Nor'West Newspapers, which operates **nwkansas.com**.

"Bell promises us a more reliable service," he said. "We know from experience with our leased lines that Bell responds pretty well to trouble calls."

Service was finally restored at around 9 p.m. Monday evening. Carroll's Web is owned mostly by an assortment of small Kansas telephone companies. A spokesman Monday evening had said the entire Networks system had been shut off by their supplier and they could not say when it would be back. They thought the issue might be resolved by sometime today.

# Outage was not our fault

It's not our fault! Internet service for **nwkansas.com** was out all day Monday. It was off because of a problem between our supplier, Carroll's Web of Salina, and their

supplier, Verio. Internet service was restored Monday evening.

We at **nwkansas.com** have no control over this problem, and can only apologize. We are changing suppliers next week.

# House begins debating committee's budget plan

TOPEKA (AP) — Legislative leaders should know soon how much cutting House members can stomach in trying to close a projected \$700 million budget shortfall.

The House was to begin debate today on a budget plan drafted by its Appropriations Committee. The proposal would eliminate the shortfall — the gap between expected revenues and required spending over the next 15 months — without increasing taxes.

But some Republicans, sensing their colleagues would not accept cuts in education and social services, outlined a proposal Monday for preventing some of the committee's proposed reductions.

Their proposal would dip into state reserves for \$100 million and count on \$83 million in extra federal funds.

The plan calls for taking one-time money and putting it into the budget to finance ongoing expenditures after July 1. That money would dry up after one year.

"These are not normal times," Rep. Tony Powell, R-Wichita, told reporters. "We think in the out years, this is going to right itself."

Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer called the proposal irresponsible.

"They're digging a terrific hole, and just whatever problems we have this year would be magnified next year," he said. "A lot of this is folks who don't know what they're talking about having a news conference."

The committee's plan is predicated on cutting state spending, including reducing state aid to public schools by \$303 per pupil, to \$3,567.

It also includes cuts in higher education and social services, forced unpaid days off for state employees, a one-year suspension of vehicle and furniture purchases and even an 80-day legislative session for 2003, instead of the traditional 90 days.

The committee's plan would break promises for extra money for higher education and highway projects made in previous years. Then, it would cut spending for the next fiscal year \$439 million to \$4.07 billion. The committee fashioned a plan in keeping with repeated House votes two weeks ago against raising sales, income, property and estate taxes.

The alternative outlined by Powell and other GOP legislators would keep state aid to schools at its present \$3,870. Gov. Bill Graves outlined his budget proposal Friday.

## Briefly

### Weather: Much warmer

Temperatures are expected to climb into the lower 70s in the Colby region on Wednesday with winds out of the southwest 10-20 mph under cloudy conditions. Tonight will bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies, lows in the middle 20s and southwest winds 5-10 mph. Wednesday night, expect partly cloudy skies and lows near 30, while Thursday will be a sunny day with highs in the upper 60s. Thursday night and Friday will find clear to partly cloudy skies, lows near 30 and highs in the upper 50s. Colby's high Monday was 32 and the overnight low this morning was 12. The soil temperature at the 4-inch depth is averaging 36 degrees. The records for March 26: 94 in 1907 and 1 in 1965. *(The temperatures and precipitation are provided by the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center, Colby.)*

### Workshop rescheduled to April 2

The Rural Home Owners Workshop, called off Monday due to weather conditions, will be held on April 2 in the Little Theater at the Colby Community Building. RSVP the Thomas County Conservation District at 462-7482, ext. 38.

### Spring turkey permits available

Spring turkey permits are available at the Thomas County Clerk's office in the courthouse. The season dates are from April 10-May 19. There is a youth

season between April 5-7.

### 'Bugz' musical scheduled

First grade students at Colby Grade School will present a musical play entitled, "Bugz," at 1:15 p.m. and again at 7 p.m., Thursday, April 4, in the elementary school auditorium. Everyone is invited to attend the free performance. For questions, call 465-5100.

### AAUW scholarship deadline nears

Female students who have graduated from a Thomas County high school and will be a junior or senior in college for the fall semester of 2002 could be eligible for up to \$1,000 total scholarship money over four semesters. The scholarship offering is being made available by the American Association of University Women, said Vanessa Eicher, scholarship chairperson. Applications are at Pioneer Memorial Library, 375 W. 4th, Colby, and the deadline to file is Monday, April 1, 2002. For questions, call Eicher, (785) 462-7438.

### Youth training rescheduled

The Hazardous Occupational Training, originally scheduled for Saturday at the 4-H Building in Colby, has been rescheduled to May 1-2, from 5-9 p.m. at the Thomas County Extension Office. Please register by calling the Logan or Thomas County Extension offices by 5 p.m. on April 26. This training is for

youth who work on farms.

### Park fee reminder issued

Thomas County Clerk Tracey Perkins reminds that park fees will be going up April 1. If there are questions, contact her office at 462-4500.

### Recycling center takes phone books

The Thomas County Recycling Center is taking old telephone books at its collection site, 720 E. College Dr. in Colby. Those wanting to drop off the books should use the magazine bins, coordinators said.

### Donation drop planned Saturday

Items are still wanted for the Thomas County Alcohol Drug Abuse Council's flea market, scheduled for Saturday, April 13, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. All donations to the council are tax-deductible. Anyone who would like to donate clothes, furniture or other miscellaneous items and need arrangements to have them picked up can call the council office at 462-6111.

### College to host job fair in April

Colby Community College will host a job fair for health care workers from noon to 3 p.m. on Thursday, April 18, in the Robert Burnett Memorial Student Union on campus.

