



COLBY FREE PRESS

Little lambs



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Sacred Heart Catholic School students above, Alyssa Kraft; top right, Austin Reed and Shayleigh Bland, bottom right, performed Tuesday during the kindergarten and preschool Christmas program "The Crippled Lamb." The students sang traditional Christmas songs and other tunes in the program, inspired by the book "The Crippled Lamb" by Max Lucado.

Colby merchants say

Holiday business good

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Christmas shopping is in full swing and for the most part Colby businesses are having a good holiday season.

David Keck, owner of Colby True Value, said the season has been good so far.

"Things are going fine," he said. "We're having a good season and we're having a lot of fun."

Keck said it's going as he had hoped. He added a variety of items are moving well, but furniture seems to always be a popular item.

Eugene Wieland, owner of Office Works and Home Furnishings, said furniture is also a popular buy at his store. Recliners, end tables and corner curios are doing well.

Overall, the season is going as he expected, or average when compared to other years.

"We've still got two weeks," he said, but he is hoping for a change in the weather.

Wieland said with nicer weather, people take longer trips to bigger towns but inclement weather would encourage people to shop locally.

Another business having a good holiday season is Beringer Hardware.

Mike Shirley said things are going well so far and sales are up over last year.

He said the store's annual open house was held the weekend of Dec. 4-5 and it drew a large crowd.

"It was the best one we've ever had," Shirley said. "We're guardedly optimistic that it's going to be a great Christmas season."

Business at Golden Hardware has been about the same as last year, said manager Calvin Sharpe.

"It's been pretty steady," he said.

Ralph Pitner, manager of Stan's Automotive, said business has been fair and some gift items are proving more popular than others. He said pocket knives, tool sets and jacks have all been sought-after gift ideas.

Local implement dealers are also getting a few Christmas shoppers.

Larry Ummel, parts manager at Colby Ag Center, said it's slow right now but he hopes business picks up as Christmas nears.

He said work on the building's roof is could be deterring customers but he wants everyone to know they're open for business and have plenty of items in stock that would make good Christmas gifts.

Helmets and toys are at the top of the gift list, but Ummel said they have motorcycles, four-wheelers and scooters, which would also make good gifts.

Jim Dougherty, one of the owners of Dougherty Implement, said it's business as usual. He said business is about the same as always, but they will probably see a few toys and some apparel sold before Christmas.

Byan Ortman, manager at Colby Implement, said the business has a few toys that attract interest but beyond that, it's hard to gauge how much Christmas traffic they're getting.

Another business experiencing a "fair" stream of business is Great Western Tire. Manager Steve Wolf said so far they've sold a few

ranges, washers and dryers.

He said business should pick up as the month goes on and hopes a sale this weekend helps it along.

Other businesses also expect to see more customers as the month progresses.

Radio Shack owner Gary Baumfalk said business is comparable to years past.

"It's been steady," he said, adding the interest this year has been mainly anything digital and cell phones.

Baumfalk said everything digital from mp3 players to digital photography are on people's wish lists.

Customers at Sears are also interested in the latest technology. Owner Sherry McDonald said DVD players are moving quickly off the shelves.

She also expects business to pick up as Christmas gets closer because now, and business has already been steady.

Technology isn't the only gift shoppers are looking for.

Nathan Harter of the Sports Shoppe said customers are looking for gifts that show off team colors with team apparel and hooded sweat shirts as much-desired gifts.

He added business has been steady and he expects the store to get busier as the season goes on.

Shopping for something other than gifts have kept the staff at Someplace Special busy. Owner Jackie Wiens said people have been buying items for home decor for the holidays but she said after Dec. 15, people usually start looking for gifts instead.

Woman's death in Colby ruled natural

By PATTY DECKER

Free Press Editor

Results from an autopsy late last week indicated that the death of a 35-year-old woman behind a Colby restaurant during the latter part of October was from natural causes.

Reyna Cruz Hernandez and her 15-year-old son, Eugino Lugo Hernandez, were traveling on a Greyhound Bus early Friday, Oct. 29, when she began complaining to him that she wasn't feeling well.

The mother apparently saw Ruiz Restaurant, 885 Davis Ave., and thought it would be a place where

she could communicate that she needed help to Spanish-speaking people, said Gary Shull, police investigator.

Once the two got off the bus, the woman passed out behind Ruiz Restaurant, Shull said, and her son could not wake her.

The boy ran to the Sonic Drive-In and tried speaking with Shannon Martin, manager, for help at about 9 a.m. Shull said that Martin followed the boy to see if he could help his mother while an employee at Sonic called "911."

Shull said the boy did not speak

English and after Colby Police Officer Kevin Diercks arrived followed by off-duty firefighter, Lynn Marker, CPR was administered.

"Since the boy could not communicate with the first responders (and no translator was readily available)," Shull said, "the scene was treated as an unattended death crime scene."

However, after transporting Reyna to Citizens Medical Center, she was pronounced dead on arrival, he said.

"When her son found out that his mother was dead, Kelly Kriegs-

hauser a social worker at Citizens Medical Center, did a wonderful job," Shull said Monday.

"Kriegshauser worked with the interpreter in comforting the boy, contacting family, and finding an emergency foster home with a family in Rexford that speaks Spanish," he said. "That family went above and beyond what was necessary to care for the boy until family members arrived from the east coast."

Reyna and her son were apparently illegally in the United States, he said, coming from Mexico and heading to New Jersey.

Board leaves creationism out of standards

TOPEKA (AP)—Conservative members of the State Board of Education on Tuesday attacked a committee it appointed to revise the state's science education standards and how evolution is taught, saying

Creationism and its related idea, "intelligent design," aren't currently a part of what Kansas students are taught.

Current standards treat evolution as central to the science curriculum

views about creationism weren't properly considered.

Board member John Bacon, of Olathe, said those who favor teaching creationism as another theory alongside evolution were ignored.

All viewpoints were being considered but that deadlines for producing a first draft dictated that it include only evolution, which the state board has previously OK'd as a part of the science curriculum.

Commissioners talk about road project grant

By TISHA COX

Colby Free Press

Getting a state grant for road work was on the agenda at Monday's Thomas County Commissioners meeting at the courthouse.

Road department supervisor Clair Schrock was there to discuss the matter.

Commissioner Ron Evans said Schrock has yet to apply for the

grant, which would be used to pay for paving Country Club drive from where it ends at the I-70 overpass to Horton Avenue.

"That's going to be the county's project," Evans said. "We don't know what we're getting or when we're getting it."

Road projects of a different kind were also on the agenda.

The commissioners approved a

contract with Alan Jones for sand for 50 cents a cubic yard.

"We're opening up a new sand pit to help us on our county roads," Evans said.

The commissioners also discussed two upcoming receptions to honor outgoing county officials.

Evans said they want as many people as possible to come to the receptions, the first of which is for

outgoing county attorney Alan Taylor and county clerk Tracey Perkins. It will be from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 29 in the commissioners room at the courthouse.

The second reception to honor outgoing commissioners Glen Kersenbrock and Duane Dawes and sheriff Tom Jones will be from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday, Jan. 10 at the courthouse.

Soup supper planned Thursday

The Colby High School Forensic team is sponsoring a soup supper, Thursday, from 5:30 to 6:45 p.m. in the commons area.

The soup supper is in conjunction with the Colby High School play following at 7 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the Forensics team, said Nancy Rundel, head Forensics coach.

FFA selling fruit, meats, cheeses

The Colby FFA has extra fruit, meats and cheeses for sale. Boxes come in 20 and 40 pounds. FFA members said all items available will be sold on a first-come first-served basis.

For questions or to order, call Mike Wetter at the Colby High School ag shop, 460-5320. Proceeds to aid the FFA cause.

Library plans holiday activity

Pioneer Memorial Library is sponsoring a 'Make 'n Take' ornaments activity for youth ages 9-13 through the holidays.

The next activity will be Monday, Dec. 20 at 4 p.m. For questions, call the library at 462-4460.

Briefly

No trash pickup Dec. 24

The City of Colby Sanitation Department will not be operating on Friday, Dec. 24, due to the Christmas holiday. For those with a normal trash day on Friday, it will be picked up on Thursday, Dec. 23, along with the Thursday route. Please have all trash at curbside by 8 a.m. For questions call the Public Works Department at 462-4420.

Santa City open late

Santa City is has expanded hours from now until Christmas Eve. Children can visit Santa from 6-8 p.m. weeknights from Dec. 8-10 and Monday, Dec. 20-23. It will be open from 1-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and from 1-3 p.m. Christmas Eve for those last minute Christmas wishes.

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Rehearsing



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Robyn Schmid and Adam Horinek rehearsed their parts for the high school drama department's presentation of four short plays Thursday. Language arts teacher Katy Edmondson said the students chose the four plays — "Seven Menus," "Sure Thing," "Dead" and "Plaza Suite." The drama starts at 7 p.m. Admission for the play is \$5 at the door and the soup supper is a free will donation.

Colby Hoxie Oakley



Some clouds...some sun

Tonight...Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of rain showers then partly cloudy after midnight. Not as cool. Lows in the upper 20s. Northwest winds 10 to 20 mph. **Thursday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s. North winds 10 to 20 mph. **Thursday night...**Mostly clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 20s. West winds around 10 mph. **Friday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 50s. Northwest winds 10 to 20 mph. **Friday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 20s. **Saturday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 50s.

The numbers

Tuesday's high, 48
Low this morning, 19
Year ago today, 38 and 25
Records for this date, 70i n 1946 and -12 in 1989
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00
December, 0.00
Snowfall, 0.00
Soil temperature, 33

The sources:

The forecast is from the National Weather Service, and other numbers are from the Northwest Research-Extension Center, Colby. A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

