



12 pages

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# Out with cold, in with warmer

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A snow storm and lower than average temperatures have many people wondering what winter will be like. Dave Floyd, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Goodland, said the cold weather this week has been well below normal.

“Basically we had a large Arctic air mass come down,” Floyd said, adding temperatures were at least 25 degrees below normal for this time of year, but it’s not unusual. “We do have records this time of year that are down below zero.”

Normal values in the Colby area for this time of year are low 40s for a high and the upper teens for a low.

Floyd said Goodland hit minus 10 in Goodland Wednesday night, which was a new record for that date.

Goodland, for the past two days, has been 33 degrees below normal.

He attributed the lower than normal temperatures to an Arctic air mass that centered on the area Wednesday and Wednesday night. “It’s starting to retreat to the east,” he said.

Temperatures will be back up to the 40s by Saturday.

The storm over Thanksgiving weekend was unusual for several reasons, including the tornadoes it spawned in eastern Kansas.

Nineteen tornadoes were produced that day, setting a new record for the number of twisters in one day in November.

“That’s the most ever,” Floyd said.

The weather service has been recording such data since the 1950s.

He explained the storm was caused by an intense low pressure area over central Kansas.

The cell moved counterclockwise in the eastern half, with warm air.

The result in western Kansas and

“It was an extremely strong, slow-moving storm.”

Dave Floyd, Goodland meteorologist

eastern Colorado was a severe weather outbreak. Northern winds and cold air from Canada were unleashed.

“It was an extremely strong, slow-moving storm,” Floyd said.

Winds topped out at least 60 mph, and there were reports of gusts of 70-85 mph.

“The snow amount wasn’t that big a deal,” he said, amounting to only 3 to 7 inches.

However, what made things so bad was the wind.

The storm stuck around, and the winds blew intensely for 18-24 hours, which caused conditions to deteriorate.

“It was a tough situation,” Floyd said.

Coupled with a holiday weekend, it created even more problems than usual.

Even though the past two weeks have been less than ideal, things are looking up, Floyd said.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Climate Prediction Center is predicting higher than normal temperatures for December, January and February.

“There’s a good probability temperatures will be above normal,” Floyd said.

“It doesn’t preclude those Arctic outbreaks.”

For example, temperatures in Colby next week will be in the low to mid 40s. He said it’s the balance coming back after the low temperatures this week.

The temperature difference could be as little as one degree, or four, but there’s no way to predict that.

The prediction center bases its predictions for this part of the country on data about temperatures in the Pacific Ocean.

If the water has a warmer or colder tendency, it will have an impact on the weather here.

This year, though, the normal predictors are absent.

“It’s sort of a neutral condition,” he said.

Instead, they’ve had to base their predictions on information on the past 10 winters, which have shown a tendency to be warmer than usual.

The center has data back 125 years, so they know what is a “normal” winter and what isn’t. With a 10-year average, they can reasonably predict what conditions will be like.

Floyd said they base their predictions on the best information available.

He said people tend to forget they’re predicting events that haven’t happened yet.

Without much data sampling over the world’s oceans, it’s even harder to get information.

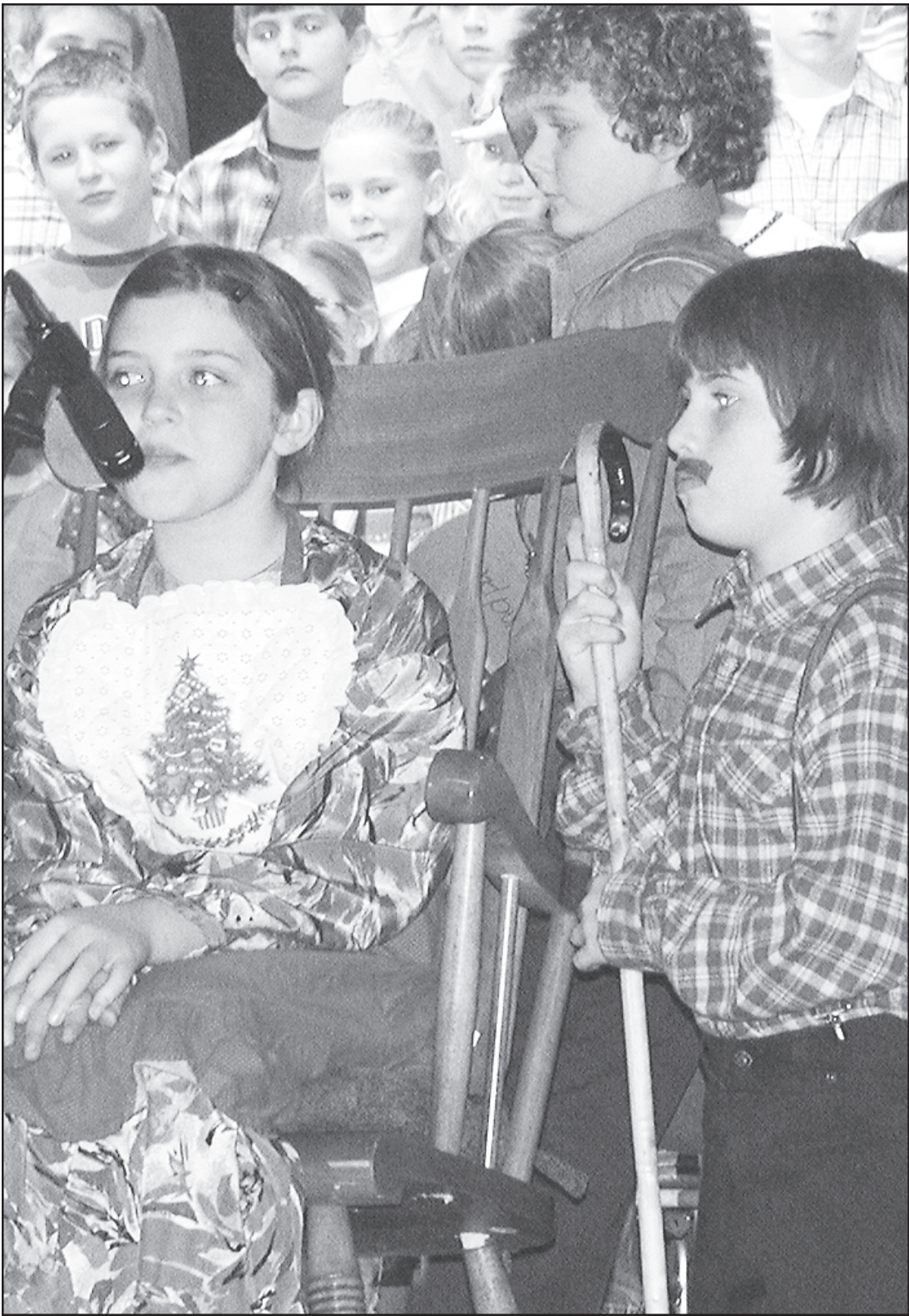
Atmospheric data over land is collected using weather balloons and satellites.

Because there are no launch points on the ocean, and not much done from ships, there is hardly any information collected on the upper atmosphere.

“The oceans are fairly data-void in most respects,” he said.

Earth’s oceans would be ideal to collect data because conditions stay stable longer, and such data would make weather prediction more accurate.

## Santa has mail



TISHA COX/Colby Free Press

Abby Friesen and Hanna Diercks played “Grandmother” and “Grandfather” in the Colby Grade School fourth grade musical program “Santa, You’ve Got Mail” Thursday at the grade school auditorium. The program included songs like “Special Delivery,” “Happy Kwanzaa,” “Hanukkah Lights” and “Reindeer on the Move Tonight.” Director was Jill Nickols and accompanist was Mary Shackleton.

# Area preachers comment on latest Hollywood release

John Van Nostrand

Colby Free Press Publisher

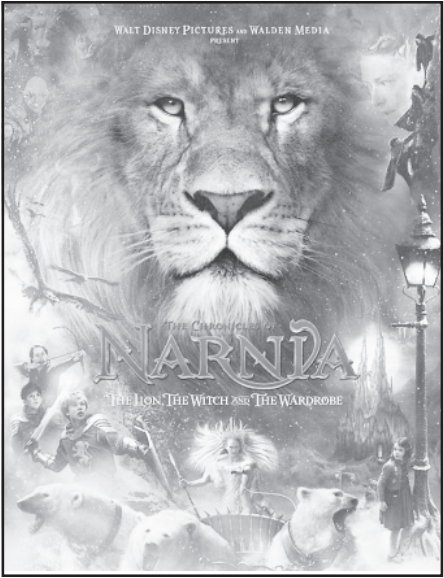
The Bible has been the foundation for Christians since the day the book was finished. But after Friday, another book may also be on the shelf after Christians watch the story come to life.

Friday, the movie “Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” opens. The movie is based on the “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” a fantasy novel written by C. S. Lewis in 1950. It was the first of his “The Chronicles of Narnia” series.

How it will impact Christians, and others who watch the film, is intriguing according to area preachers.

“I don’t know what it will do,” said Colby United Methodist Church’s Rev. James Mardock. “It’s an allegory. Not everyone will pick up on it.”

The story is about four children who find



a fantasy world in the back of a wardrobe closet. While in the new land, they get involved in a battle of good vs. evil. Charac-

ters and the plot symbolize the Christian faith. A lion, named Aslan, can be interpreted as Jesus Christ.

“I’ve read it several times and even used it while teaching,” Mardock said.

Mardock said “Narnia” will tell a different story about Jesus Christ and Christianity than the 2004 hit film “Passion.” That was a controversial, intense, graphic film about Jesus’ crucifixion.

“‘Passion’ was one glimpse of Jesus’ life,” Mardock said.

Rev. Carol Rahn of Colby’s First Presbyterian Church expects “Narnia” to again highlight Christianity and may intrigue non-believer viewers, compared to “Passion.”

“It will put Christianity to the forefront again but with more of a positive expression of what we believe in,” she said. “This will appeal more to the mystery of Christianity.”

She said some people want to make

Christianity so real and concrete, “We lose what it is all about.”

Rahn is optimistic about the effects “Narnia” will have on viewers.

“‘Narnia’ will bring in people because it looks like a beautiful movie. It’s a part of evangelism and planting a seed,” she said. “It may be years, but somebody may say, ‘Oh, I get it.’”

Father Damian Richards who serves Catholic churches in Atwood and Herndon recently finished a study of the book with congregation members. He is confident the movie won’t stray away from Lewis’ writing. Richards saw a preview of “Narnia” this summer in San Diego.

“Hollywood is finally figuring out if you just do the book, you can have a great movie,” he said.

It’s common for films based on books to not exactly follow the book.

Richards said he has used the book to teach Christianity to children.

“Lewis was specific. It’s not a straight allegory,” Richards said. “If Christ would be in this fantasy world, he would be a lion.”

But Richards said there should still be enough in the film to show viewers the Christian faith.

“With Passion, it was much more obvious,” he said. “Narnia, it’s more subtle. But there will be some who will realize they are talking about Jesus.”

College Drive Assembly of God’s Rev. Jeremy Gundling is concerned how Christianity is used in Hollywood. “Passion” and its producer and director Mel Gibson made millions off of the movie.

“My fear is Hollywood will commercialize it and that is not good,” Gundling said. “But if it is used to spread His message, that is good.”

Gundling said even though film studios may continue to make money off of Christian-themed movies, as long as the message is appropriate, “Ultimately it is good.”

## Fair board select grand marshal

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

The theme and grand marshals for the 2006 Thomas County Free Fair parade has been set.

The fair board approved the two at its meeting Thursday, deciding on the members of Colby’s Kansas Army National Guard Unit as the grand marshals for the parade, and a theme of “A Salute to the Keepers of the Heartland.”

Board member Nancy Rundel suggested the Guard unit, because many of its members have been deployed on active duty the past two years and a group of them just came home from Fort Riley last month.

She had also came up with a theme of “Salute to America” but board member Bill Shields suggested the theme they finally approved

The theme will also be used for the second annual window painting contest for the fair.

In other business, the board approved a new roof for the 4-H Building.

A bid of \$11,100 from Rapid Roof of Selden was accepted after a discussion on just what type of roof the building should have.

None of the board wanted to do something temporary, or put up something that would require later repair. They also talked about insurance for the rodeo.

Board member Audrey Hines said she checked around for insurance quotes, and suggested they should possibly just go with insurance from the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association.

That would cost \$1,500. The board didn’t make a decision on it, and she also said they need to get insurance for the demolition derby, or find a policy that would cover all of the fair events.

The board also went into executive session for 10 minutes to discuss non-elective personnel.

When they came back into open session, they approved sending a letter to the county commissioners about board member attendance.

## Moderates form new alliance

TOPEKA (AP) — Moderate Republicans say they’ve formed an organization to take back the party from conservatives.

First on the must-do list for the Kansas Traditional Republican Majority is replacing those on the State Board of Education who want to treat evolution as flawed science.

Among the prominent Republicans in the group is former Senate President Dick Bond of Overland Park, who said Wednesday the state GOP has “taken a drastic turn to the right.”

“The moderates have no one to blame but themselves for letting this party drift so far to the right, and they’ve done that by sitting on their hands,” Bond said. “They don’t go to the polls.”

Invoking the ideals of President Eisenhower, former Gov. Bill Graves and former Sen. Nancy Kassebaum-Baker, moderates are looking to become active in the state board and House races next year. The board has a 6-4 conservative majority, with four of those six standing for re-election in 2006.

“The moderates aren’t going to flip a switch and change things overnight. It’s going to take a lot of hard work and the awareness of the nonpolitical public to understand that some of the basic structures in our state are in jeopardy, in particular education,” said Bond, a member of the State Board of Regents, which oversees higher education.

The Board of Education has drawn international criticism for its

recent changes to science standards for students. Critics say it will permit the teaching of intelligent design, which they call repackaged creationism.

The board also has been criticized for hiring Bob Corkins as education commissioner. Corkins is a former lobbyist with no experience as a teacher or school administrator.

Other named members of the organization are former Sens. Audrey Langworthy of Prairie Village and Mark Buhler of Lawrence, former Senate Majority Leader Tim Emert of Independence, former Congresswoman Jan Meyers, former GOP chairman Dennis Jones of Lakin, former Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer and Ron Wimmer, former superintendent of Olathe schools.