



STEVE HAYNES/Colby Free Press

A pig made a short-lived bolt for freedom Wednesday morning while on the way to the Grinnell Locker. Nick Wells, director of the Colby Community College Endowment Foundation, said he was taking several pigs to be processed into sausage for the next fund raiser. He went home and showered after loading the porkers, then discovered he was short one. Meantime, Nick Throckmorton, a Kansas Highway Patrol truck inspector, and a Colby police officer were wondering what a confused pig was doing wandering down East Fourth Street (U.S. 24) with road rash on its rump. The pig settled down beside the road until Mr. Wells arrived and herded it into a covered trailer.

Democrat gains might not survive

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tive chambers for the only time in history.

Democratic nominees for governor have prevailed most often when a Republican incumbent is unpopular or has angered either the GOP's moderate or conservative wing: George Docking in 1956, Robert Docking in 1966, John Carlin in 1978 and Joan Finney in 1990.

Sebelius appeared to break the pattern in 2002, winning an open seat after a popular Republican, Bill Graves, couldn't run again. She exploited divisions within the GOP to woo moderates away from a conservative nominee, state Treasurer Tim Shallenburger.

The talk about Kansas going purple intensified in 2006, when she won re-election by a wide margin and Paul Morrison unseated GOP Attorney General Phill

Kline. Democrat Nancy Boyda ousted Republican Rep. Jim Ryun in the 2nd Congressional District.

Democrats saw other good signs this year. The number of registered Democrats was nearly 7 percent higher than it was in 2004, and the number of unaffiliated voters had climbed nearly 9 percent. Meanwhile, the number of registered Republicans slipped 1.5 percent.

"I think you see improvement in the Democratic column," said Mike Gaughan, the state Democratic Party's executive director. But if Democrats are seeing gains, they have little to show for them after last week's election.

Boyda lost to state Treasurer Lynn Jenkins, and some of Boyda's fellow Democrats are second-guessing her campaign tactics. They also have to wrestle with the question of whether her 2006 election was voters' collective protest against Ryun rather than an endorsement of her.

Democrats did pick up a seat in the Kansas House, and the results of two close races won by Republicans could be reversed. But at best, Republicans would still have 75 of 125 seats.

And Democrats lost a seat in the Senate, dropping to only nine of 40. They held a third or less of the seats there since 1992.

Morrison seemed unlikely to face a serious GOP challenge for re-election in 2010, but a sex scandal forced him from office after a year.

And, finally, there's the question of what happens after Sebelius leaves the governor's office, either because she takes a job in Obama's Cabinet or her term ends in January 2011.

Lt. Gov. Mark Parkinson is a natural heir, but he's a former Republican state chairman still viewed with skepticism by at least a few Democratic activists.

Could he raise the \$5 million-plus that Sebelius did for her last gubernatorial race?

Meanwhile, Republicans can name four or five who could raise that much for a statewide race. Roberts did it this year, and Sen. Sam Brownback probably can if he runs for governor in 2010 as expected. Also, it's easy to see Reps. Jerry Moran and Todd Tiaht hitting the mark; perhaps Secretary of State Ron Thornburg, too.

Even if Republicans' registration numbers have slipped, 45 percent of the state's voters are still affiliated with the GOP, and unaffiliated voters lean that way.

And, Bob Beatty, a Washburn University political scientist, noted that party affiliation remains the most reliable predictor of how someone will vote.

"It's hard to get a big bench when you have to argue to up-and-coming politicians, 'Yeah, your first victory is going to be very, very difficult,'" Beatty said.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Political Writer John Hanna has covered Kansas politics since 1987.

Clubs

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Circle of the Daughters of Isabella met in the Sacred Heart Catholic Church at 7 p.m. Nov. 6.

Ceanne Rinehart called the meeting to order. A prayer ceremony for deceased member Bo Curtin was led by Ceanne.

The opening ode was sung as a group. The pledge to the flag was made.

Thresia Aschenbrenner was welcomed as a new member. Loretta Zerr read a short spiritual reflection.

Ceanne introduced Angela Zimmerman, who is on the team bringing Matthew Kelly to Colby in February. He is a best-selling author and speaker from Australia. His talks will be free to everyone, as they will be paid for by anonymous donors.

This morning's Mass was for the deceased members; there were 10 members present.

Various people were mentioned as needing prayers. Martin Rinehart is having rotator cuff surgery in Denver. Emma Hamel is in the

hospital. Remember Jay Hawk, Cathy and family, as Jay is getting treatment in Denver. Joan Ziegler visited people in the nursing home.

Theresa Baker reported for the Christmas party committee, which consists of Theresa Baker, Pauletta Bieker and Gail Bremenkamp. The party will be at 6 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 4, at the Quality Inn restaurant. Crazy bridge will be played after the meal. Please bring a donation for Genesis.

The closing ode was sung and the meeting adjourned. Pumpkin cake and coffee were served by hostesses Fawna McFee and Darline Hutflis.

— Margaret Denneler, scribe

Markets

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Weather Corner

National Weather Service

Tonight: A chance of rain and snow, mainly after midnight. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 34. North wind between 5 and 10 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent. Little or no snow accumulation expected.

Friday: A 20 percent chance of snow showers before noon. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 46. Windy, with a north wind 15 to 20 mph increasing to between 25 and 30 mph. Winds could gust as high as 40 mph.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 24. Blustery, with a north wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 44. Breezy, with a north wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 23.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 60.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 26.

Monday: Sunny, with a high near 52.

Monday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 26.

Wednesday: High, 57; Low 33
Precip: Wednesday, 0.00 inches
Month: .74 inch
Year: 20.62 inches
Normal: 19.95 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)

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