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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

## Heartland holds Christmas concert

The Heartland Christian School choir (above) performed during the school's Christmas program Thursday. Pictured are (from left) Reiley Wilson, Amy Myers, Ariel Regier, Rachel Myers, Mary Beth Myers and Natalie Morris. The program featured groups including the guitar trio of (right photo, from left) Austin Bear, Ashton Russ and Austin Russ, who provided preconcert music while the audience came in.



## Cancer patient groups join forces to plan events in northwest Kansas

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press  
vsloan@nwkansas.com

A group of people whose lives have been touched by cancer have joined with Partners for Cancer Victims to form the Northwest Kansas Foundation for HOPE, which stands for Help Offset Patient Expenses, to raise money for cancer victims.

"The reason for partnering with (the national group) was because that group's nonprofit requirements were already in place," said Carrie Bartlett, one of the organizers. "We can work through them to raise funds for grants that will stay in the nine counties of northwest Kansas to help families who are struggling with cancer."

The group will serve Cheyenne, Decatur, Gove, Logan, Rawlins, Sheridan, Sherman, Thomas and Wallace counties.

It plans a New Year's Eve benefit dinner, dance and auction from 6:30 p.m. to 12:45 a.m. on Dec. 31 at the City Limit's Convention Center in Colby.

"Our first goal is to get the word out," said Bartlett, "and we're really excited that the funds raised will all stay local."

The Jimmy Dee Band will play for the dance, she said, and Richard Homm will be the auctioneer.

Auction items include a lifetime Kansas hunting license, KU basketball tickets with parking pass, a flat screen television, a Las Vegas trip, jewelry from Donelan's and a set of pink chaps like the ones worn on "Pink Night"

at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas. There also will be a silent auction and a drawing for two free rooms at the Comfort Inn.

Bartlett said the group's first project was when Up Town Style beauty salon did a "cutathon" earlier this year, with all the proceeds going for grants to buy wigs.

Only a limited number of tickets are available, she said, so partygoers need to buy them early.

Corporate tables for eight are available for \$240. All other tickets are \$40 a person, with sales going until space is no longer available. A ticket purchase is good for dinner, the dance and champagne at midnight.

To buy tickets, to donate to the auction or for questions call Pat Sloan at Homeland Realty, 462-8255.

## Governor may offset cuts with tax hikes

By John Hanna

AP Political Writer

TOPEKA — Gov. Mark Parkinson's efforts to keep Kansas' budget balanced appear to continue his administration's drift toward proposing higher taxes next year.

The Democratic governor imposed \$259 million in cuts and other budget adjustments last month to prevent the state from having a deficit when the fiscal

year ends June 30.

He avoided even deeper reductions in aid to public schools and other spending by tapping \$86 million in federal stimulus money. Those dollars had been set aside by him and the Republican-controlled Legislature for the fiscal 2011 budget.

Parkinson did inflict some real pain this time: Schools and universities will get less money than they were promised; social pro-

grams took a hit, and the state will do fewer highway repairs. But he also pushed part of the state's problems from the current year into fiscal 2011.

And problems in fiscal 2011 can be addressed by raising new revenue, as unpopular as that now seems among legislators. Some Democrats, educators and social service advocates already are talking about closing sales tax exemptions and what they view as

business tax loopholes granted in years past.

Kansans shouldn't be surprised if Parkinson proposes some revenue-raising measures after the Legislature opens its session on Jan. 11. For now, of course, his aides are not saying much.

"We're reviewing all options available for responsibly balancing the 2011 budget," spokesman

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## Colby armory escapes cuts, gains soldiers

By Vera Sloan

Colby Free Press  
vsloan@nwkansas.com

Colby's National Guard Armory will not be one of the 18 around Kansas that will be closed because of state budget cuts.

Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Allen, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Colby armory, said he learned Friday that his building had escaped the list of closures. Allen said he had been holding his breath until he got the word since Gov. Mark Parkinson announced the closings on Nov. 23.

Three armories in northwest Kansas — those in Goodland, Phillipsburg and Russell — will be closed, Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the state adjutant general, announced at a press conference later Friday afternoon.

"It was a real relief for us here, and at least as of now, we are still scheduled to remain open," Allen said. "There may or may not be another round of cuts, but for right now, we're in the list of those that are staying open."

Allen said he got the news during a conference call Friday that joined all 56 armories by phone.

Allen said 30 soldiers in Colby are assigned to the 170th Maintenance Unit. The unit had been spread across four armories, but

with Goodland's armory closing and consolidating with Colby, he said, that could add another 30 soldiers. The armories house the unit's equipment when not in use and serve as training facilities.

The Colby armory also houses two state offices, for Jason Moses, inter-operability communications coordinator for the adjutant general's office, and J.L. Ellis, a communications trainer for the state.

Bunting said the closings were a result of the state's budget crisis. The cuts will affect 29 full-time guard staff, and 412 citizen soldiers who train at the 18 armories. They will join other units in Kansas and will not be without jobs.

Immediate savings of \$156,600 will come from current operating budgets, and additional savings will result from consolidating operations by no longer maintaining or inspecting facilities.

Guard officials said eventually, all the closed armory buildings will be turned over to the communities where they're located.

The other armories to close are in Atchison, Burlington, Chanute, Cherryvale, Council Grove, Fort Scott, Garden City, Garnett, Horton, Kingman, Larned, Sabetha, Salina East, Troy and Winfield.

Prior to Fridays announcement, 14 armories have been closed since 1982, the state said.

### Vocal duet



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Colby Community College student Jenny Dickman and another student sang a duet during the college choir's performance of Journey's classic 1980s ballad "Open Arms" at the annual vocal concert Thursday. The concert included several other '80s songs.

## Briefly

### Fourth-grade program delayed

The Colby Grade School fourth grade music program, postponed because of snow last week, will be offered at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thursday in the grade school auditorium. For information, call the school at 460-5100.

### Moran advisor to hold meeting

Brian Perkins, health care policy advisor to Rep. Jerry Moran, will hold a town hall meeting on health care reform proposals in Congress from noon to 1 p.m. Wednesday at the Pioneer Memorial Library. Perkins will give an update on current bills and listen to ideas from voters. For information, call Moran's office at (620) 665-6138.

### Dance team cooking soup, chili

The Colby High Dance Team will have a soup supper from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Community

Building before the Colby-Oakley basketball game, offering soups, chili, cinnamon rolls, tea and lemonade. Donations will be taken to help cover expenses when the team travels to Memphis to perform in the Liberty Bowl halftime show Saturday, Jan. 2.

### Pets available for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a range of adult cats, male and female, long hair and short hair, available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

### Bible, lunch merge for Advent

The Thomas County Ministerial Association is sponsoring "Advent Brown Bags and Bible" from noon to 12:50 p.m. Wednesdays in the Fellowship Hall of the Colby Presbyterian Church, 515 W.

Fourth St. The theme is "Joy to the World." Jarrod Spencer of the Church of Christ will speak Wednesday, with Larry Booth on Dec. 23. For information, call 462-6342.

### Native American talk Thursday

Dr. Linda Davis-Stephens will speak at the Prairie Museum of Art and History's "Food for Thought" lecture series at noon Thursday at the museum. Davis-Stephens, an instructor at Colby Community College, will talk about the history of the Plains Indians. For information, call the museum at 460-4590.

### Fatherhood program to start soon

The Northwest Kansas Regional Prevention Center's "24/7 Dad" fatherhood program will be offered again starting at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 5, at the First Presbyterian Church in Colby. For information, call the center at 460-8177.

### For latest flu info, call 460-4599

A hot line for questions on seasonal influenza and the H1N1 flu strain will be available throughout the flu season at (785) 460-4599. The Thomas County Health Department posts information about the status and availability of vaccines, priority groups and the like at this number.

### Hospital auxiliary needs help

The Citizens Medical Center Auxiliary is looking for volunteers to greet visitors, operate the gift shop and help patients and their families. If you'd like to get involved, call Tama Unger at 460-1214 or Mary Smith at 462-3387.



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