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Legislators proposing deeper cuts

By John Milburn
The Associated Press

TOPEKA — A legislative spending panel backed cuts to the state budget Tuesday that are even deeper than those proposed by Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback, an effort conservatives say would provide a much-needed financial cushion.

The House Appropriations Committee approved the measure by a voice vote, sending it to the full House. The bill would reduce state employee salaries and wages, including elected officials and judges, by 7.5 percent through June 30. It also ends a pay program that sought to raise the wages of some state employees to that of their private sector counterparts.

“The state is bleeding and we have to start making some tough cuts,” said Rep. Anthony Brown, a Republican from Eudora.

Conservative Republicans make up the majority of the members of the budget-writing committee. In

backing the spending cuts, they said it was important for Kansas government to realize as much savings as possible.

“The goal here is to move money to the bottom line,” said Rep. Pete DeGraaf, a Mulvane Republican.

As written, the bill would leave Kansas government with an ending balance of about \$45 million as of June 30. Kansas faces a projected budget shortfall of \$550 million in the next fiscal year.

Jane Carter, spokeswoman for the Kansas Organization of State Employees, said the cut in state employee pay and eliminating the planned increases in the current and future years sends the wrong message.

“To cut their pay is a disgrace to the services that state employees provide,” Carter said.

She said the cuts would end a bipartisan agreement reached in previous years to raise state employee wages comparable to the

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In storage



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Grain piles like these in Gem are a common sight around northwest Kansas this year after last year's bumper crop.

Heartland Christian teacher plans city-wide musical

By Vera Sloan
Colby Free Press
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Richard Ogle, music and drama instructor at Heartland Christian School said Monday he is searching for people who are willing to take part in a theater production of “Three Days.”

Three Days, published by Word Music, is a musical about the final events in the last three days of Jesus’ life. It will be performed at 7 p.m. Thursday and

Friday, April 14 and 15, and at 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 16, at Heartland Christian School, 1995 W. Fourth Street in Colby.

The first informational meeting will be at 6 p.m. Monday in the Heartland Christian School cafeteria.

Ogle asked people coming for the initial meeting to bring “finger foods” for a potluck style meal during the informational meeting. He noted rehearsal schedules and more information will be discussed at the meeting.

Ogle said he is looking for volunteers

for props, costumes, seamstresses, make-up and hair, singing, drama lighting, sound, set design, advertising and prayer. He noted that all the back drops will be on frames, so painters are needed to paint scenes.

“We are also looking for characters to play Jesus, Satan, Roman soldiers and other individuals, besides all the townspeople,” he said.

Ogle added that the students at Heartland have been listening to the music in the production for several weeks now,

and he is seeking volunteers who would be willing to sing as a group.

He described the opening scene of Jesus baptism by John The Baptist, and the introduction as being a synopsis of Jesus’ ministry, healings and teachings, followed with the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and then is fast paced to the scenes in the garden, followed by his trial.

“The audience will get caught up in how Jesus is treated by the Roman soldiers, and in the whipping post scene,” Ogle said.

He cautioned that some of the scenes might be too harsh for young viewers.

“Jesus will carry his cross through the crowd and up the to stage (hill),” he said. “After he has been placed on the cross it will be raised up with him on it.”

Child care will be provided for children up to third grade during all three performances. Ogle encouraged families to participate in the production because it would add to the realism.

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Melted by the afternoon



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Colby residents were treated to a serious-looking flurry Monday morning that turned out to be anything but serious. The area got about two tenths of an inch of snow, most of which melted in the afternoon.

More candidates file for office

A few more candidates filed for local office before Tuesday’s deadline.

Dr. Angela Dijanic-Rogers, director of the Colby Community College Forensic Investigations Lab, and Nick Wells, college endowment foundation director, filed for the college Board of Trustees.

Stan Schmidt filed for Colby city councilman

from Ward III, making him the only candidate for that ward.

Clinton Felzein and Robert Lehman filed for Brewster School Board.

Matt Vogler filed for Rexford City Council. Joe Broeckelman, Jeremy Schiltz, Matt Vogler and Brandi Wark have filed for Golden Plains School Board.

Oberlin kennel owner gives up license

The owner of a kennel near Oberlin who signed 1,200 dogs over to the state in December to be euthanized has surrendered his U.S. Department of Agriculture license, which allowed him to ship dogs across state lines.

Dr. Bill Brown, state livestock commissioner and head of the state Department of Animal Health, said Jeff Fortin, who owns Beaver Creek Kennels, had surrendered his license. Basically, said Dr. Brown, Fortin can’t sell dogs to distributors or brokers. He can’t sell them in retail since he surrendered that license.

Dr. Brown said he’s not sure

what Fortin negotiated with the Department of Agriculture, but said surrendering this license could be part of a consent agreement.

Fortin, said Dr. Brown, still has a license through the state which would allow him to breed dogs and sell them in this area.

In the middle of December, the kennel was emptied because of a distemper outbreak. After the 1,200 dogs were put down, Dr. Brown said, Fortin was told not to have any dogs at the kennel near Cedar Bluffs for six months. After that time, he said, Fortin can only start with 50 animals.

Once that small population is in place, other criteria will have to be met before the department will ever let him ramp up again and allow for additional numbers, he said.

There are lots of unknowns, Dr. Brown said in December, including what numbers the owner will be comfortable with and what he can afford to keep. That’s the main question, because of the health and safety of the dogs.

If he can’t meet the state’s criteria, Dr. Brown added, the numbers won’t increase. He didn’t go over

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Briefly

Heartland plans annual barbecue
Heartland Christian School will hold its annual barbecue from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday at the school. The meal will include barbecue pork, corn, salad, baked potatoes and dessert. Donations will be accepted. For information, call the school at 460-6419.

Exercise class will help arthritics
Arthritis Foundation exercise classes will be offered from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday evenings from next week to March 10 at the Sacred Heart School gym. There is no sign-up deadline; members can start anytime. For information, call Brenda Mazanec at 443-4010.

Sign up for baseball on Feb. 6
American Legion Baseball will have a sign-up day from 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 6, upstairs at the Colby

Community Building for eligible players aged 16 to 19. Coach Jeff Krzycki said all interested players must sign up at the meeting. For information, call Krzycki at 443-2542.

Scrapbook day Feb. 5 at school
Heartland Christian School will hold a scrapbooking party on from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 5, at the school. The cost is \$30 for adults and \$15 for students for a full day, and \$15 for adults and \$8 for students for half a day. Meals are included. To make a reservation, call Lucy Wood at (785) 460 2721 or the school at 460-6419. To preorder supplies, please call Sally Runnalls in the evenings at (785) 672 4910.

Senior group offering tax help
The American Association of Retired Persons will offer tax preparation help for low and middle income taxpayers – with preference to those 60 or older – by appointment from early February to April 15. For

information or to set up an appointment, call Earle Rice at 462-2990.

Wesleyan offers regular study
Colby Wesleyan Church will hold a weekly ladies Bible study, “Discerning the Voice of God,” by Priscilla Shirer, each Wednesday beginning Feb. 9. Two sessions are available, 9 to 11 a.m. at the church, 320 W. Pine, and 6:45 to 8:15 p.m. at the Pioneer Memorial Library. For information or to register, call Joy Rothfuss at 462-8391 or e-mail at wesleyan@st-tel.net.

Orchestra plans concert Feb. 13
The Pride of the Prairie Orchestra, made up of musicians from the tri-state area, will perform at at 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 13, in the Frahm Theatre at Colby Community College. Jan Wolf will conduct the concert, featuring selections from “The Moldau,” “Dances With Wolves,” “Finlandia,” Brahms’ “Con-

certo in A Minor for Two Violins” – with soloists Kendra and Josiah Akers – and more. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$3 for children and senior citizens. Punch and cookies will be served at intermission. For information, call President Mary Shoaff at 462-2159 or e-mail comments@prairieorchestra.com.

Oakley Chamber plans banquet
The Oakley Area Chamber of Commerce will have its annual banquet and meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, at the Logan County 4-H building, on the corner of Second Street and Kahler Avenue. Former National Football League player Steve Tasker will speak. Tickets are \$15 in advance. For information, call Jodie Wright at (785) 672-4862.

