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Chimney fire smokes up rental house

By Kevin Bottrell
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A small house fire Sunday night provided a lesson for homeowners about keeping chimneys clean. Fire Chief Bob McLemore said the chimney of a house on Eighth Street caught fire at 10 p.m. Sunday, and the blaze spread to the attic. Two trucks were called to the scene, including a pumper and a ladder truck, and police officers came to control traffic on the nar-

row road. An ambulance was on standby. Firefighters had to operate from the aerial ladder because there was no flat surface on the roof. McLemore said it was cold that night – the low was reported at 7 degrees – that the water they sprayed on the fire turned to ice. Firemen had the flames out within about half an hour. They had to cut into the chimney and attic to get access to the fire. McLemore said Jason Stegeman

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Drew the short straw



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

Ben Griffin had a smile for the camera Tuesday, though he had a cold job moving 2x4s for the inside work crew for the expansion at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Colby got 5 to 6 inches of snow Monday and Tuesday. Roads remained open during the storm, but the wind chill dropped to about -17.

Immigrant tuition law under fire

By John Hanna
AP Political Writer

TOPEKA – Opponents of a law allowing some illegal immigrants who graduated from Kansas high schools and seek citizenship to pay in-state tuition at state colleges renewed their push against it Tuesday, encouraged by a political shift in the state House and support from a new secretary of state. But doubts remained about whether a bill repealing the state’s 2004 immigrant tuition law can clear the Senate, and new Gov. Sam Brownback hasn’t taken a position.

The House Federal and State Affairs Committee began considering a repeal bill on Tuesday, hearing from Kansans who argue the state policy violates federal law, encourages illegal immigration and is unfair to out-of-state and foreign students. Witnesses included Secretary of State Kris Kobach, a Kansas City-area law professor on leave, who once unsuccessfully challenged the state law in federal court. He helped draft a law enacted in Arizona last year empowering police to question anyone they suspect of being in the country illegally and has become a national figure for advising city officials and

legislators in other states wanting to crack down on illegal immigration. Kobach, a Republican, received 59 percent of the vote in last year’s election. Also, Republicans increased their majority in the House, and many of the 33 new GOP members are sympathetic to the “tea party” movement. The freshmen include Rep. Caryn Tyson, of Parker, the lead sponsor of the bill to repeal the immigrant tuition law. “It was a major issue in my campaign,” Tyson said, adding that other GOP freshmen he’s

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Meeting will cover upcoming Honor Flight

By Vera Sloan
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A talk on the Kansas Central Prairie Honor Flight program, which flies World War II veterans to Washington, will begin at 7 p.m. Thursday at the Thomas County Office Complex meeting room, 350 S. Range Ave. in Colby. LaVeta Miller of Great Bend and Mark Rine of Tribune will talk about Honor Flight, which has taken more than 1,000 Kansas veterans of World War II to Washington to see memorials honoring their service. The idea for the flights was conceived by Earl Morse, a physician assistant for the Department of Veterans Affairs and retired Air

Force captain, who wanted to honor the veterans he had taken care of for 27 years. In May of 2004, the World War II Memorial was finally dedicated in Washington, and, Morse said, it quickly became the topic of discussion among his World War II veteran patients. His said he realized that most of the aging veterans would never be able to visit the memorials without help. Since then, over 36,000 vets have gone on Honor Flights. Miller, chairman of the Central Prairie Honor Flight Committee, is the liaison for the National Honor Flight Network. The program is being sponsored by Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development. For information, call the office at (785) 462-7671, extension 5.

Forensics team gets first at Sterling

The Colby High varsity won the Sterling High School Forensics Invitational on Saturday, pulling ahead in a close race with a central Kansas school. Coach Nancy Rundel said the team was neck-and-neck with Moundridge High School for most of the tournament. The two were tied going into the final round with 138 points each. Eleven of the Eagles’ 16 entries advanced to the finals, and the team ended up beating Moundridge by 23 points. Ellinwood High School took third. Individual placings included: Poetry: Christina Ostmeyer,

first; Hannah Matchell, third. Prose: Blake McNinch, fourth. Humorous Solo Acting: Tomi Miller, fifth. Improvised Duet Acting: Ostmeyer and Cameron McLaughlin, first; Tomi Miller and Colton Rundel, fourth; Matchell and Jennifer Schwanke, fifth. Informative Speaking: Bailey Koerperich, fourth. Serious Solo Acting: McLaughlin, third; Audra Fleming, fourth. Duet Acting: Madison Gawith and McNinch, second.

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Presidential hopeful says challenges won’t go away

By Kevin Bottrell
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Seventeen citizens, college board members, staff and teachers came to the Colby Community College student union Monday to meet Randy Smith, the fourth and final candidate to interview for college president. Smith is president of the Rural Community College Alliance, of which Colby College is a member. The group serves as an advocate for rural colleges with policymakers and provides information to colleges about

the challenges they face. Smith was candid about those challenges, including decreasing state money and enrollment. “I don’t see them getting any easier,” he said. A new president won’t solve all the college’s problems, he added, saying it will take a group effort to get the college through them. “A lot of colleges are having opposite problems,” he said. “They are dealing with enrollment increases of 10 percent and they don’t have the budget

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Briefly

Seniors offer potluck Thursday

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck dinner for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Thursday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share; table service and beverage will be provided. For information, call 462-6342.

Orchestra plans concert Sunday

The Pride of the Prairie Orchestra, made up of musicians from the Tri-State Area, will perform at at 3:30 p.m. Sunday in the Frahm Theatre at Colby Community College. Jan Wolf will conduct. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$3 for children and seniors. Punch and cookies will be served at intermission. For information, call President Mary Shoaff at 462-2159 or e-mail comments@prairieorchestra.com.

Conference focuses on marriage

The Mingo Bible Church and Heartland Christian School will hold a “New Love and Respect” video marriage conference from 8:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday and 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday at the school, open to singles, dating couples and married couples. Cost is \$20 per person. For information, call the school at 460-6419.

Chamber banquet coming up

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

Genesis to meet on Feb. 17

The annual meeting of Genesis-Thomas County Inc. will begin at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 7, at the Thomas County Office Complex conference room, 350 S. Range Ave. Anyone interested in attending is invited. For information, call President Wynn Duffey, 462-6342.

Storm spotter class here March 7

The National Weather Service will offer its annual Storm Spotter Class at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 7, downstairs at the Community Building. For information, call the Goodland weather office at (785) 899-7119.

Enroll early for preschool

Early enrollment for the Little Angels preschool

and prekindergarten at Sacred Heart Catholic School will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday at the school. Come to the preschool classroom by the east school doors. For information, call Sharon Shirley at 460-2813.

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 until April 15. For information or to set up an appointment, call Earle Rice at 462-2990.

