



COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

Post Office moves mail to Nebraska

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services will stay in place, and people can still mail letters from Colby.

The Colby Post Office will stop processing mail early next year as the U.S. Postal Service implements plans to consolidate operations. All mail from Colby and surrounding towns will be shipped overnight to North Platte, Neb., for sorting.

Most letters will take the same time to deliver, he said, because the post office maintains a standard of being able to deliver a letter anywhere in the country in one to three days.

"The post office does not have the mail volumes to justify the size and capacity of our operation," said Brian Sperry, a regional spokesman for the service based in Denver. "We must match our network to the size of our workload."

There will, however, be two fewer employees working at the Colby office, after the consolidation process Sperry said.

The mail processing is scheduled to move on Feb. 26, Sperry said. North Platte is about 120 miles north of Colby on U.S. 83.

In Colby, Postmaster Jean Johnson said the post office might already be down to the number of employees who should be working after the consolidations.

Customers shouldn't notice much difference in counter service at the post office, he added.

The service tries to reduce the number of employees through attrition – retirements and resignations – and not layoffs, Johnson said, which means there is no set date for the number of employees dropping.

"The building will remain open and continue to function as a post office," Sperry said.

A \$15,000 buyout deal is being offered to any employees in the post office unions, Sperry said.

This means that all the basic

Sperry said his understand-

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Hunters, guests enjoy reception

Maj. Andrew Thueme (above right), Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Allen and Capt. Tad Slatter from Fort Riley enjoyed dinner after a day of trap shooting Friday as special guests at the Governor's Reception and Banquet at the new Buffalo Bill Cultural Center. The dinner brought in an overflow crowd of sporting enthusiasts, politicians and land owners. State Rep. Ward Cassidy (below left) and state Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer spent time talking with the crowd. Gov. Sam Brownback (left) spoke during the program and took some good-natured ribbing about his purple shirt. "It just jumped out of the closet," he said.

SHARON FRIEDLANDER/Colby Free Press



Islam professor to speak here

Dr. Andrea Stanton will speak at the Dr. Max Pickerill Lecture Series at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27, in the Northwest Kansas Cultural Arts Center on the Colby Community College campus.



A. Stanton

Dr. Stanton is an assistant professor of Islam at the University of Denver. Her courses include a first-year seminar class on the life and influence of Muhammad and an introductory-level course on Islam in the United States. The course connects the early presence of enslaved African Muslims and colonial-era debates on whether a Muslim could be president to U.S.

Muslim communities of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

Trained as a historian, Stanton focuses her research on Islam in the Middle East, looking at expressions of faith and religious identity in print and broadcast media, and investigating the

sometimes conflicting, sometimes cooperative relationships between new technologies and claims to religious authority.

Her most recent work examines government management of religious broadcasts in Palestine in

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Holiday homes prepped for tours

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A popular draw for those looking for decorating ideas and inspiration is the annual Holiday Home Tours. This year, it's being presented by the Colby United Methodist Church women and three Colby homes will be featured on the tour, from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 2.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children in grades 5 to 12. Tickets can be bought from any church woman; at the church office, 950 S. Franklin Ave.; at Horlacher Jewelers, 442. N. Franklin; or at any of the three homes during the event.

People can visit the homes in any order for this come-and-go, open house fund raiser. Being showcased this year are the homes of Evan and Regina Barnum, 770 N. School; Dr. Stephen and Candace Vacik, 540 Woffert; and Mike and Jeanene

Brown, 1070 W. Third St. "We so appreciate all of the homeowners," said member Peg Tole. "It is a lot of work for them, but it means so much that they have agreed to share their holiday decorating with the community."

"All of the proceeds from the Home Tour will benefit our mission projects: local projects and missions statewide and nationally. Locally, proceeds will help provide part of the cost for campers to attend Camp Lakeside. It is a Methodist Church camp in Scott City that many of our kids go to."

Tole said that most years, organizers seek out homeowners to participate in the tour, but last year the group was approached by Barnum, who said he and his wife were interested in showcasing their home and decorations.

"All of the homes are nice houses, but we wanted to show what the average person can do with homemade crafts and 50 percent-off purchases when decorations go on sale after the holidays," he said. "Our theme is decorating on



Candace Vacik put the finishing touches on a Christmas tree next to the fireplace of her family's living room. It is adorned with photo ornaments of her children and other special pieces that have been collected over the years. People attending the Holi-

day Home Tours this year will get to see her decorations, many of which have been passed down through her family and others that have been purchased here.

CHRISTINA BERINGER/Colby Free Press



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