

# Enjoy Christmas time and build new memories

Well we have six days until Christmas, so this week I decided it was time to remind you about using ribbons on your tree or in a table decoration to ask those questions for sharing personal insights and stories.

Here are some questions you might ask.

- What is the earliest Christmas present you remember receiving?
- When did you give your first Christmas present where you picked out the item all by yourself? Did you wrap it? Who was it for?
- What was the most memorable present you received?
- What is your favorite song or hymn at Christmas time? What is your favorite story at Christmas time?
- What is your favorite movie that you watched this year? What is your all-time favorite Christmas movie?
- What is your favorite cookie at Christmas? What is your favorite dessert or food at Christmas? What is your favorite recipe to use at Christmas?
- How did you help with Christmas preparations (cooking food or cookies, decorating, wrapping)?
- Do you have a smell, impression or feeling from your favorite Christmas time that you remember from your childhood? What was your coldest or stormiest Christmas time? What is your favorite tradition of Christmas time? What do you look forward to at Christmas time?
- Who is your favorite person in the biblical recounting of the



**Melany Wilks**

• **Library Links**

birth of Jesus? Who is your favorite cartoon or fictional Christmas character?

• What one thing are you thankful for this past year? What book impacted your life or did you really enjoy this past year?

Our Food For Fines campaign at 4:45 p.m. ends Monday. Get your fines paid by Tuesday, Dec. 31, because fines will become 10 cents a day for all books, audio books and magazines overdue on your account beginning Jan. 1. You can redeem your library fines this week by bringing in canned or boxed food that roughly equals your fine and filling out a small form at the front desk so the library staff can remove any fines you have on your record.

Food for Fines does not apply to lost or damaged items. If you have a lost item or damaged item, please come in and talk to our library staff and solve the problem. We will be donating the food items to the Genesis-Thomas County food bank. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at 460-4470.

Check out audio books for your drives to relatives. Many of our patrons come and check out mysteries, thrillers and other genres of audio books to listen to on a long

drive. Some checkout DVDs to play for their children on a long road trip as well. Remember to download your favorite digital eBooks or audio books using the new "Sunflower eLibrary (www.sunflowerelibrary.org) webpage. If you sign in with your Pioneer Memorial Library card number you can easily check these items out. If you want to look at magazines for Christmas ideas go to our website at colbylibrary.com and follow the instructions to sign up for the Zinio Digital Magazines. If you need help, call or come in and we can help you.

If your children get bored remember that during Christmas break we will show a movie daily – the days we are open – until Friday, Jan. 3. The schedule is posted at the library and on our website and Facebook page. This is for kids and teens.

Also, I want to let you know our hours change during Christmas time and the coming New Year. We will follow the established schedule through Sunday. After Sunday, our hours will be: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday; closed Tuesday and Wednesday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Dec. 27; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 28; 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 29; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 31; closed Wednesday, Jan. 1. Regular hours, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. will resume on Thursday Jan. 2.

See you in the library! Merry Christmas!

## Check shopping list twice for safety

This time of year, families are bombarded with catalogs, television commercials, store displays and online advertising for toys and gadgets.

When considering items on your child's list, make sure you and other gift-givers are safety savvy.

**Selecting Toys**

When choosing toys, pay attention to warning labels and manufacturer's guidelines. More than 3 billion toys and games are sold in the U.S. every year, and most of them are safe. Warning labels and manufacturers' instructions tell you how to use the product safely.

"If the manufacturer sets a minimum age or other restrictions, there's a reason," said Cherie Sage, Safe Kids Kansas. "A label reading 'Not appropriate for children under 3' may be present because the toy poses a choking hazard, not because it's too difficult for a 2-year-old."

If you buy toys secondhand or get hand-me-downs, go to www.recalls.gov to make sure the toy hasn't been recalled for safety reasons. Sign up for email alerts on the Consumer Product Safety Commission website www.cpsc.gov or download the commission's Recalls app to your smart phone to keep up-to-date on toy recalls beyond the holiday itself. If a new toy comes with a product registration card, mail it in so the manufacturer can contact you if the item is ever recalled. Report safety concerns about toys to the commission at (800) 638-2772 or

www.cpsc.gov. Your experience could be part of a pattern that might lead to a recall.

Safe Kids Kansas also recommends:

- Make sure to buy age-appropriate toys. Avoid building sets with small magnets for children. Keep rare earth magnets and adult desktop magnet toys out of reach and out of sight of children. Magnets are extremely dangerous if swallowed.
- Identify dangerous small parts. Look at the product labeling for age recommendations. Use a small parts tester or cardboard tube from a roll of toilet paper to identify choking hazards. Do not let small children play with anything that can fit into one of these cylinders. Products that grow larger when placed in water must be kept out of reach of children. These products can be swallowed and become lodged internally, requiring surgical removal.
- Keep batteries out of sight and out of reach. Lithium button batteries are coin-sized batteries that can easily be swallowed by children and can come from many devices, such as remote controls, singing greeting cards, watches, remotes, bathroom scales and flameless candles. If a child swallows a battery, go to the emergency room immediately. Tell doctors and nurses that your child may have swallowed a battery. Do not let the child eat or drink until a chest x-ray can determine if a battery is present. Do not induce vomiting. Call the National

Battery Ingestion Hotline at (202) 625-3333 for treatment information.

• Buy the proper safety gear. Riding toys account for the greatest number of toy-related injuries. Remember the gift isn't complete without a helmet and appropriate protective gear.

• Inspect toys. Check play areas regularly for broken toys and dispose of them. Do not let young children play with toys that have straps, cords or strings longer than 7 inches.

• Actively supervise children. Caregivers should actively supervise children playing with any toy that has small parts, moving parts, electrical or battery power, cords, wheels or any other potentially risky component. Simply being in the same room as your child is not necessarily supervising. Active supervision means giving your child your full attention.

• Practice proper storage. Teach children to put toys away after playing to help prevent falls and make sure toys for younger children are stored separately.

**Shop Safely**

More than 20,000 children ages five and under are injured by shopping carts each year in the U.S.. Falls are the most common cause. Tip-overs and children colliding with the shopping cart are other causes of injury.

Ways to avoid shopping-cart injuries include:

## Raising money for the cause



TAMMI STRUTT

Foundation for Hope members (from left) Deanna Mallory, Carrie Bartlett, Brittany Johnson, Pat Sloan, Karen Pabst, Jacque Bartlett, and Kirstie Strutt looked over a donation for their upcoming event on New Year's Eve with the staff of Essential Bliss. Owner Kirstie Strutt and esthetician Karen Pabst donated part of the fee for each service in October to the foundation, totaling \$850, to help families affected by cancer.

## Higher blood pressure OK?

By **Lindsey Tanner**  
AP Medical Writer

CHICAGO – Many older adults with high blood pressure can be treated less aggressively, which could mean taking fewer pills to get it under control, according to new treatment guidelines from an expert panel. But not all experts are on board with the advice – including the federal agency that appointed the group.

Panel members stressed that

they are not changing the definition of high blood pressure: 140 over 90. For adults aged 60 and older, they are recommending a higher treatment threshold, prescribing medicine only when blood pressure levels reach 150 over 90 or higher.

Too aggressive blood pressure treatment can cause fainting and falls in older patients, or bad interactions with drugs they're already taking for other illnesses, panel members said.

The panel does endorse the lower target of 140 over 90 for younger adults – and for all adults who also have diabetes or kidney disease.

The guidelines released Wednesday are based on a review of the most rigorous kind of medical research – studies in which patients are randomly prescribed drugs or dummy pills – published since the last update in 2003. The research suggests older patients can avoid major health problems like heart attacks, strokes and kidney disease even when their blood pressure is above the current recommended level, the panel said.

For many patients, two or three drugs – or more – are needed to bring their blood pressure down. Many older adults could probably reduce their doses, or take fewer drugs, to reach the new, less strict target, said Dr. Paul James, a panel member and family medicine specialist-researcher at the University of Iowa.

While the guidelines were updated by a government-appointed panel, they don't have the government's endorsement like previous versions. The panel completed its work earlier this year, around the same time that the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute announced that it was getting out of the guidelines business and turning the job over to the American Heart Association and American College of Cardiology. Updated guidelines from those medical groups are expected in late 2014.

In the meantime, the heart association is raising concerns about the new recommendations, saying studies they are based on didn't last long enough to reveal dangers of undertreated high blood pressure in older patients. The panel also overlooked other evidence suggesting the 2003 government-backed recommendations are sound, said Dr. Elliott Antman, the heart association's president-elect. He noted that his group last month published a treatment formula that echoes the 2003 advice.

Dr. Gary Gibbons, the federal agency's director, issued a statement Wednesday emphasizing that his agency has not sanctioned the panel's report, nor has the broader National Institutes of Health. While noting that the panel decided not to collaborate with the heart groups' efforts, Gibbons said his agency would work with those groups.

## Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day  
**Hi-Plains Co-op**

Wheat (bushel)	\$6.46
Corn (bushel)	\$4.16
Milo (hundredweight)	\$7.09
Soybeans (bushel)	\$12.27

## Meadow Lake Bridge Club

Meadow Lake Bridge scores for Tuesday were: first, Ken Ptacek; second, Elaine Ptacek; third,

Billie Keck; fourth, Larry Barrett; and fifth, Sarah Jane Barrett.

*The Colby Free Press wants to maintain an accurate record of our town. Please report any error or lack of clarity in a news story to us at 462-3963.*

## Corrections

**Thank You**

The family of Charles E. Cook would like to thank everyone who sent cards and for all your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

**Thank You**

We want to thank everyone for all of their support and prayers for Brennen. We are truly blessed to be from great communities. The chemotherapy has been going well, and radiation is about to start. Your help and prayers have been a blessing to all of us.

*LeAnn and Jason Ostmeyer and Brennen Dale and Charlotte Manhart Gary and Cheryl Ostmeyer*

**Thank You**

American Legion Riders would like to thank the community involved with our soup supper that raised money for Santa City. It was a success!

We want your local news: e-mail to colby.editor@nwkansas.com

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Centura Health knows that there is much more to you than your physical body. So for over a hundred years, our outstanding doctors and caregivers have been providing comprehensive healing for body, mind and spirit. And inspiring the people, families and communities we serve to live healthier lives.

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