

# Post office to hold meeting on changes

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moved up two hours to 11 a.m. on Monday and Thursdays.

If the Postal Service makes this next change, trucks will have to go 230 miles instead of 200 to get to the processing facility, which may necessitate moving truck departure times up even earlier.

Trucks from some northwest and north central counties that previously went to Hays had their truck departure times moved up by a half hour or more when processing was moved to Salina. The Norton Post Office moved its departure time up from 4 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. If Salina processing is moved, the trucks would have to go about 86 more miles to get to Wichita. The Hays public meeting was held Tuesday.

These moves have concerned businesses that send out large quantities of mail.

"I fear the Postal Service has embarked on a course that will drive the remaining First Class mail out of its system," said Steve Haynes, owner of Haynes Publishing. "I know our customers are not going to be pleased if their papers are delayed by two to three days. We may have to look elsewhere for answers."

Haynes publishing, which owned the Star-News, Colby Free Press and four other area newspapers, sends out 20,363 newspapers a week in addition to other mail.

Mail processing isn't the only

area where cuts are being made. In what it calls an "Expanded Access Study," the service is looking at closing 3,700 post offices nationwide, including many in Kansas. On the chopping block in northwest Kansas are Edson, Kanorado, Long Island and Norcatur. Public meetings have been held in each of these towns, but no announcements have been made.

Kansas Sen. Jerry Moran introduced an amendment to the 21st Century Postal Service Act, which would halt the closure of any post offices until Postal Service to develop "standards of service." These standards would require the service to look at the time customers have to travel to get to a post office, population density, age demographics and distance to other post offices. It would require the service to serve remote or difficult to reach areas.

The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee announced voted the bill out of committee on Nov. 9 on a 9-1 vote. Among other things, the bill commits the post office to keeping six-day delivery for at least two years, refunds a \$7 billion overpayment from the Federal Employee Retirement Health System and reforms worker compensation benefits.

Moran's amendment to save rural post offices was adopted as part of the committee bill, but the bill has not yet made it onto the Senate floor.

# City adds light at VanGogh Park



City utility workers gathered around a power box as they worked to add a circuit near the Van Gogh painting to handle the extension of holiday lights being strung on the trees. The efforts of the city crew can be seen at night with holiday lights on 11 trees in the Van Gogh area to compliment the one in Pioneer Park.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

# Governor reveals Ogallala Aquifer legislation plans

Governor Sam Brownback announced Thursday his administration's legislative proposals to promote water conservation, grow the economy and create jobs in western Kansas.

A public meeting about the governor's water proposals will be held in Colby at 1 p.m. (mountain time) on Friday, Dec. 13, at the Colby Community College Cultural Arts Center/Frahm Theatre. This is one of four public meetings to be held around the state with one in Wichita, one in Topeka one in Garden City and the fourth in Colby.

"Without the Ogallala Aquifer, agriculture and all of its related businesses could not be sustained, manufacturing could not continue, recreational opportunities would diminish and the towns in the area would cease to exist," Governor Brownback said. "Our proposed legislation will help to conserve and extend this vital resource so important to our state's economic future."

Brownback said the work on the propos-

als began at the Governor's Economic Summit on the Future of the Ogallala Aquifer in held Colby in July. The Summit provided a forum for stakeholders to discuss their concerns, ideas and visions for the future.

Following the Summit, the Kansas Water Authority appointed the Ogallala Aquifer Advisory Committee, a 21-member group consisting of Kansas Water Authority members and Ogallala stakeholders, to review short and long term solutions.

"The Ogallala Aquifer is the primary source of water for the western third of Kansas," Water Authority Chair Gary Harshberger said. "It is essential to find ways to help extend and conserve the life of the aquifer."

Following the committee's and stakeholder input, the water authority developed the recommendations for the Governor's water legislation proposals:

- Amend appropriation act to eliminate "use it or lose it" for groundwater rights in

areas closed to new water right development to protect those rights from unintentional forfeiture.

- Support legislation to provide a process for a proactive conservation plans (called Local Enhancement Management Plans, or that can have mandatory reductions, if supported by the Groundwater Management District, has corrective measures that address conservation needs, and is approved by the Chief Engineer.

- Allow development of additional groundwater Water Banks for a market-based program to relocate water use and provide conservation in water short areas.

- Amend the multi-year flex accounts to give irrigators expanded capabilities to manage their crop water over a five year period, a useful tool when there is limited water.

"The proposals are an important step towards addressing the depleting aquifer issues," said Tracy Streeter, Kansas Water

Office Director and Kansas Water Authority Secretary. "The advisory committee will continue to meet to further discuss options to define and reach the goal to conserve and extend the useful life of the Ogallala aquifer as it is stated in the Kansas Water Plan."

Governor Brownback made the Ogallala a high priority while he served as the Secretary of Agriculture more than 20 years ago. Current Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Dale Rodman understands the importance of implementing water legislation.

"We need to build the Kansas agriculture economy and agribusiness opportunities in our state while extending the Ogallala Aquifer for future generations of Kansans," Secretary Rodman said. "The Department of Agriculture, along with the rest of the Brownback administrative team, has worked diligently to listen to our stakeholders on how we can develop solutions that work for Kansas farmers and ranchers. We look forward to continuing to work with

Kansans as we move towards implementation and consider future alternatives for balancing conservation and economic development."

The Kansas Water Office and Kansas Department of Agriculture staff will hold four public meetings around the state so stakeholders can learn more about the proposed legislation.

- Thursday, Dec. 8 in Wichita, 2:30 to 5 p.m. (central time) REAP Policy Summit, Drury Plaza Broadview Hotel.

- Friday, Dec. 9 in Topeka, 10 a.m. (central time) Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library, Marvin Auditorium.

- Tuesday, Dec. 13 in Garden City, 8:30 a.m. (mountain time) Lee Richardson Zoo, Finnerup Center for Conservation Education. In Colby at 1 p.m. at Community College, Cultural Arts Center/Frahm Theatre.

# Parents should check out privacy policy on 'Dear Santa' web sites

More than 60 domain names have been registered in the name of Santa Claus, offering children a wide range of opportunities to email St. Nick.

Sadly, some of the websites aren't always so trustworthy and can potentially be a dangerous way to obtain your child's personal information. Better Business Bureau is advising parents to do their homework before letting their child write to Santa this holiday season.

Writing to Santa has been a long lasting tradition, and while it seems innocent and fun, it is very important for adults to carefully review the site to determine who is seeking the information, how it will be used and whether it will be shared with third parties.

The Children's Advertising Re-

view Unit said all websites directed to children - or websites designed with a special children's section - should have a privacy policy explaining the site's information collection practices. The privacy policy should include the name of the company and the company's complete contact information.

It should say whether the company shares information with third parties, including advertisers, and whether the company publicly discloses the information or retains the information for any future purpose.

The Advertising Review Unit offers the following 'Dear Santa' site review tips:

- Check to see what they want you to hand over. Websites directed to children should not ask a child to

disclose more information than is reasonably necessary to participate in the activity - a first name and email address, for instance.

Limit the personal information children share with Santa and omit physical addresses. In many cases, there really shouldn't be a need to share this information. Especially since Santa already knows where all the children live.

Check websites for unwelcome content. Some sites are geared toward adults and may contain language or advertising adults may not want children to see.

Check the links. Since hyperlinks can allow children to move seamlessly from one site to another, investigate the hyperlinks to assure children don't access inappropriate content.

For more information on website safety and children, please visit

Children's Advertising Review Unit at [www.CARU.org](http://www.CARU.org) and for more

information you can trust, visit [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org).

# More winners in Christmas on Us

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given out over four weeks, for a total of \$500. Eight winning numbers will appear in ads, which means eight shoppers have a chance to win up to \$400 with the prizes given out on a first come basis until all the prizes are gone. Numbers will appear in today's edition and on Dec. 9. All of the \$50 instant winners will be given out during the month.

The grand prize drawing for \$1,000 and second prize for \$500 will be held at 4 p.m. on Tuesday,

Dec. 20, on 12th Street across from the Sherman Theater.

It's simple enough, but there are a few rules.

- You must be 18 to participate.
- Employees of participating businesses are not eligible at their workplace, but can collect tickets from other sponsors. Star-News employees and their immediate family are not eligible.
- All prizes will be awarded in scrip, which can be spent only at participating businesses.
- The last day to collect tickets is

Monday, Dec. 19.

- Winners must be present at the grand prize drawing and be able to show their winning ticket.

- All winners agree to have their name and photo published in the Star-News. Winners of major prizes must provide their tax identification number, and agree to be interviewed and photographed for publication in the newspaper.

- Be sure to remind the clerk if you're not offered tickets. If that happens, you should get one extra ticket.

# Ranking dates set for three conservation initiative programs

Ranking dates have been set for four U.S. Department of Agriculture conservation initiatives offering technical and financial assistance through the Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives program.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced ranking dates for the On-Farm Energy, Organic, and Seasonal High Tunnel will be Feb. 3, March 30 and June 1.

"Producers tell us they want to apply for these initiatives, but many want more time to make sure they

choose the one that's right for their operation," Vilsack said. "Moving to multiple ranking dates for each initiative is going to make it easier for more producers to apply and help them get started with implementing the practices they need to benefit the natural resources on their operations."

Natural Resources Conservation Service accepts applications for financial assistance on a continuous basis throughout the year. At the end of a ranking period all submitted proposals are considered for fund-

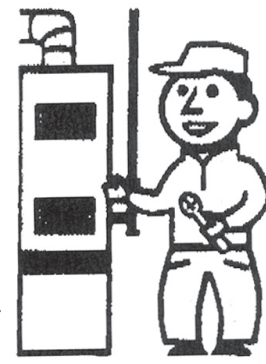
ing consideration. The service will notify all applicants of the results of the rankings and begin developing contracts with selected applicants.

The On-Farm Energy, Organic and Seasonal High Tunnel initiatives are available in all 50 states, the Caribbean Area and the Pacific Basin.

Visit the NRCS National Web site for more information on how to apply for these initiatives and connect with the Sherman County NRCS office (785) 899-3070 at 210 W. 10th.

## ATTENTION LENNOX PULSE FURNACE OWNER

**Pulse Furnace customers:** As of October 1, 2011, a number of replacement parts for these furnaces can no longer be purchased. If you own a Pulse Furnace and need repairs, we may not be able to repair it. We have some parts in stock and are keeping parts off used furnaces that we may be able to use to repair yours.



Under the Lennox Pulse program, if the installation date is less than 20 years or you are the original owner (proof of ownership will be required), a new Lennox furnace will be offered to you at a reduced cost.

Please contact Plains Heating for more information, or if you would like a bid on a new furnace. Toll free (800) 678-2914.



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