Billy's Blue Duck BBQ
Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink beer all day.
Thursday Prime Rib
44 Village Plaza • Liberal, KS 620-626-4400 Monday - Saturday
BILLY'S BLUE DUCK BBQ VOTED AMERICA'S BEST RESTURANT 5 YEARS STRAIGHT.

Semi-auto collision sends Meade man to hospital

By LARRY PHILLIPS
• Leader & Times

A Meade man was hospitalized after slamming into the side of a semi Monday afternoon six miles east of Liberal.

Erasmo Vergara, 54, Meade, was driving his 2001 Oldsmobile westbound on U.S. Highway 54 and travelling behind a westbound semi. According to a Kansas Highway Patrol report, Vergara was following the 2000 Freightliner too closely.

When the truck's driver, Matthew R. James, 37, Hugoton, slowed to turn north on Road O at 4:59 p.m., Vergara swerved onto the shoulder in an attempt to avoid a collision and crashed into the side of the semi.

Vergara was transported to Southwest Medical Center for treatment of his injuries. James was not injured in the crash.

Both men were wearing their seat belts, according to the report.

County opens all buildings to concealed carry, with 2 exceptions

Court rooms, law enforcement center will be at discretion of judges, sheriff

By ROBERT PIERCE
• Leader & Times

Seward County

Monday Seward County commissioners approved a resolution that would allow the carrying of concealed weapons in all county buildings with a couple of exceptions.

Prior to the discussion, Kansas Representative Reid Petty and USD No. 480 Board member Tammy Sutherland-Abbott spoke to the commission about what they would like to see done.

"I would also like to encourage you to take down all the signs and not spend an extra $100,000 of taxpayer money, which in my opinion would go against the Second Amendment as well," Petty said.

The $100,000 the legislator referred to

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PANCAKES WITH SANTA

• Rec Center

Santa is coming to the Recreation Center at 1109 W. Seventh St. from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday to have pancakes with the kids.

There is no cost unless children want to have their picture taken with Santa, and that cost is $2.

Kids do not have to have their picture taken to just see Santa. The International Pancake Board and Liberal Parks and Recreation Department are working together to bring Santa to the center.

For more information, contact the Recreation Office at 626-0133.

City closes shooting range for 'safety' reasons

By LARRY PHILLIPS
• Leader & Times

The City of Liberal, which according to a recorded deed in 1994, doesn't own the shooting range, but has closed the range to the public – again.

The land is owned by Seward County, but the city now operates the range.

Recently, the City of Liberal has attempted to open the range to other groups besides the Liberal Gun Club, but those changes have raised questions about insurance for the facility.

A faxed press release from the City of Liberal received by the *Leader & Times* at 3:15 p.m. Monday stated, "The City of Liberal has received new information

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ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS MY PUPPY BACK!!
Please Find me and Call
620-626-7643
620-417-6536
A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR ME IS A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR YOU!!
REWARD $500 CASH & $500 RUFFINO'S GIFT CARD FOR SAFE RETURN OF KODA.
Lost in the Vicinity of 11th & Prospect on 12/10/13.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 17, 2013
LEADER & TIMES
Your daily news & views for 127 years

L&T now accepting 'Dear Santa' letters

• L&T staff report

The staff at the Leader & Times has contacted Santa Claus, and he has agreed to let us collect "Dear Santa" letters and forward them to him at the North Pole. Children are encouraged to write to Santa and send them to us. They can be handwritten and delivered or mailed to: 16 S. Kansas Ave., Liberal, KS 67901 or they can be e-mailed to: santa@hpleader.com.

The letters must be received by noon Friday, Dec. 20, so they can be forwarded to Santa in time for Christmas. They will also be published in the Leader & Times – exactly as written – on Sunday, Dec. 22.

Fla. burglar swallows 2 necklaces

LARGO, Fla. (AP) — A man faces burglary and tampering charges after an X-ray machine revealed a dark mass near his stomach while he was being booked into jail.

Pinellas County Sheriff's officials say the mass turned out to be two necklaces stolen during a Dec. 10 burglary in Safety Harbor.

Twenty-one-year-old Joseph Ramos was arrested Dec. 11 when he was stopped for driving a vehicle that was stolen during the burglary. Various items from the home were inside the vehicle.

When Ramos was being booked into jail, he stepped on the SecurPass X-ray machine and the dark spot was identified as the necklaces. He underwent surgery to remove them. The owner later identified the items.

Jail officials have been using the X-ray machine since June to detect items concealed on inmates.

This June 6 file photo shows a sign outside the National Security Agency (NSA) campus in Fort Meade, Md. A federal judge says the NSA's bulk collection of phone records violates the Constitution's ban on unreasonable searches. The judge put his decision on hold pending a nearly certain government appeal. AP photo/Patrick Semansky

Judge's word on NSA program won't be the last

By FREDERIC J. FROMMER
• Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A federal judge made headlines Monday by declaring that the National Security Agency's bulk collection of millions of Americans' telephone records is likely unconstitutional. But even he realized his won't be the last word on the issue.

U.S. District Court Judge Richard Leon put his decision to grant an injunction against the NSA on ice, predicting a government appeal would take at least six months. He said he was staying the ruling pending appeal "in light of the significant national security interests at stake in this case and the novelty of the constitutional issues."

Even after the appeals court rules, the Supreme Court will probably have the last word.

"This is the opening salvo in a very long story, but it's important symbolically in dispelling the invincibility of the metadata program," said Stephen Vladeck, a national security law expert at the American University law school.

Vladeck said 15 judges on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court have examined Section 215 of the USA Patriot Act, the provision of law under which the data collection takes place, without finding constitutional problems. "There's a disconnect between the 15 judges on the FISA court who seem to think it's a no-brainer that Section 215 is constitutional, and Judge Leon, who seems to think otherwise."

Vladeck said there is a long road of court tests ahead for both sides in this dispute and said a higher court ultimately could avoid ruling on the big constitutional issue identified by Leon. "There are five or six different issues in these cases," Vladeck said.

Robert F. Turner, a professor at the University of Virginia's Center for National Security Law, predicted Leon's decision was highly likely to be reversed on appeal. He said the collection of telephone metadata — the issue in Monday's ruling — already has been addressed and resolved by the Supreme Court.

In his ruling, Leon granted a preliminary injunction against the collecting of the phone records of two men who had challenged the program, and said any such records for the men should be destroyed. The plaintiffs are Larry Klayman, a conservative lawyer, and Charles Strange, the father of a cryptologist technician who was killed in Afghanistan when his helicopter was shot down in 2011. The son worked for the

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NY mock trial for 'The Night Before Christmas'

TROY, N.Y. (AP) — It's a controversy whose roots trace back nearly two centuries to a holiday poem first published in an upstate New York newspaper: Who really wrote "A Visit from St. Nicholas"?

This week, a mock trial will be held in a courtroom in Troy, where the now-classic also known as "The Night Before Christmas" was first published anonymously in the Sentinel newspaper on Dec. 23, 1823.

The Daily Gazette of Schenectady reports that Wednesday's trial will have a prominent local lawyer representing Clement Clark Moore, a wealthy scholar from New York City who's credited with writing the poem.

Other attorneys will argue the side of Henry Livingston Jr., whose descendants claim the gentleman farmer from the Hudson Valley was the true author.

Actors portraying Moore and Livingston will take the stand during the courtroom showdown.

Kan. Supreme Court to hear death penalty appeal

TOPEKA (AP) — Two Wichita brothers who were sentenced to die for a quadruple homicide in December 2000 are taking their appeals to the Kansas Supreme Court.

The court scheduled separate, two-hour hearings Tuesday for Jonathan and Reginald Carr.

The brothers were convicted of shooting three men and a woman on Dec. 15, 2000, as the victims knelt on a snow-covered field. The four friends and a woman who survived a head wound had been abducted from a home by armed intruders who forced them to engage in sex with each other and withdraw money from ATMs.

Issues raised by the Carrs' lawyers on appeal include a judge's refusal to move the trial outside Sedgwick County, the fact that the brothers were tried together and the constitutionality of the death penalty.