December 31, 2013

Monday, 30 December 2013 12:00

Oops. My brain just hit a bad sector.
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Gregory Leung finds his way to Seward County, Lawrence

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Christmas tree of bottles

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Manhattan staging New Year's Eve ball drop

MANHATTAN (AP) — Thousands of New York's free revelers are expected to turn out in the Kansas town known as "The Little Apple" to watch a ball dropped after the one in New York's Times Square.

Manhattan is staging its 15th annual New Year's Eve celebration in the Aggieville bar and entertainment district.

Today's festivities begin at 10 p.m. and include a laser light show. The event celebrates or ostensibly with the lowering of a ball from atop Kansas's Bluemont.

The commencement of the ball drop in the "Big Apple's" Times Square tradition for more than a century.

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TUESDAY DECEMBER 31, 2013
LEADER & TIMES
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Police grapple with enforcing driver texting ban

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Good morning! Because of the New Year holiday, today's edition and the New Year's Day paper will be morning deliveries.

The Leader & Times offices will be closed Monday and Tuesday. We will resume publication Wednesday.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

GOP opposition hasn't quieted Kan. Medicaid debate

by Corbin Hiar
• @HiarCorbin •

TOPEKA — Proponents are likely to build next year's effort to expand Medicaid in Kansas despite the Republican-dominated Legislature's displeasure with the federal government's health care law.

Advocates for the needy and consumers are promising to push for an expansion once lawmakers convene their annual session Jan. 13. The nonpartisan Kansas Health Institute estimates that expanding Medicaid would cover 150,000 people, almost a quarter of the state's uninsured residents.

But Kansas Republicans' strong opposition to the 2010 health care law championed by President Barack Obama, a Democrat, and GOP Gov. Sam Brownback's administration suggest the prospects for finance much of the cost. The tenth rollout of the federally run online health insurance marketplace also toughened some Republicans' resolve.

But for Florida Gloria Ott, 52, a recently unemployed Hutchinson resident, the key question is whether Kansas will be able to afford to expand Kansas this fall. Ott, and her 60-year-old husband are living on his retirement and Social Security benefits and have been unable to afford a commonly health plan for cancer and dealing with chronic back pain.

"We don't have any luxuries or things of that nature," she said. "We all down not having enough money to afford things."

The federal law requires most Americans to obtain health coverage or face tax penalties beginning in 2014. It also offers subsidies to make coverage mandatory for measure. The law provides subsidies for millions of Americans living above the poverty line, but Republican governors have been expanding their Medicaid programs to cover people living at or below the poverty level, or about $23,000 a year.

But in its 2012 ruling upholding most of the health care law, the U.S. Supreme Court said the federal government couldn't compel states to

See GRAHAM/Page 5

Kansas gay inmate's husband not planning to visit

TOPEKA (AP) — The husband of a Kansas inmate says he isn't interested in visiting his spouse, who has been moved to a new state, a decision-making for prohibiting the visits.

Christopher Tetzo is serving seven years in prison for crimes related to embezzlement. He says the state is treating him differently by refusing to allow his husband to visit, while other inmates have been allowed.

Tetzo's husband, Steve Tetzo, told The Topeka Capital-Journal that he has no desire to visit the prison, but he wants to see the marriage, perhaps in person or on camera.

The state has said the husband of the inmate has been convicted of crimes against the state of Christopher Tetzo's crimes. Prison officials said that the sexual orientation had no bearing on the decision.

Fort Hood shooter Nidal Hasan's jail requests: Bible, cheese

COLLEGE [illegible] — The former Army psychiatrist who killed 13 people at Fort Hood made several requests of the Texas jail where he was held, before he was moved to Kansas, including a copy of the Bible and another for the name of the company that made the cheese in his sandwiches.

Nidal Hasan was held at the Bell County Jail in Belton for a year before his August court-martial for the 2009 attack at Fort Hood, which he has conceded and sentenced to death.

Hasan fired 21 separate writ[illegible] and [illegible] shooting [illegible] KXAN-TV in Dallas reported.

Hasan's first request was for [illegible] the name of the company that produces the white cheese on pre-sandwiches, also the type of cheese he is accustomed to. Hasan, who has been [illegible] to keeping a beard during his trial — [illegible] his attorney told an [illegible] station that Hasan was likely concerned about whether he [illegible] the cheese was kosher, according to Islamic dietary standards.

Hasan requested the jail [illegible] copy of the Bible and added, "Please send a knowledgeable Muslim to answer any Islamic questions as well as a prayer rug for my personal use."

Hasan, who is a Muslim convert, [illegible] Islamic jurisprudence, Lt. Col. Ben Poppe, said they thought Hasan [illegible] the Bible from an Islamic perspective.

Hasan also wanted a clock to [illegible] Muslim daily prayer times at a [illegible].

The court of judge Tilman [illegible] Lt. Col. Poppe's [illegible] Hasan [illegible] the Fort Hood courthouse [illegible] Army of "overkill" in trying and convicting Hasan, who is [illegible] military death row at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

"I mean, it's not a breach of [illegible] — [illegible] — [illegible] that was good."

Hasan walked into a Fort Hood [illegible] building in November 2009 [illegible] killing 13 people and wounding [illegible] medical facility and [illegible].

Hasan described himself as [illegible] and said the war in Afghanistan [illegible] between America and Islam. Government lawyers also said Hasan did not want to go to [illegible] Afghanistan, deployment [illegible]

This archived file photo provided by the Bell County Sheriff's Department shows Nidal Malik Hasan, a former Fort Hood Army psychiatrist in Dallas reports that Hasan had 21 requests while he was held for nearly four years after the 2009 Fort Hood shooting. Among those requests was a question about the name of the company that made the cheese on the sandwiches he was served in jail. Hasan also requested a copy of the Bible and a "knowledgeable person" to answer "Islamic questions" and a prayer rug and a clock to time his daily prayer times on a Muslim. Hasan was convicted and sentenced to death in August and is now being held at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. (Associated Press)

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