

Weather  
Corner



Century mark  
to be topped

**Tonight...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 60s. South winds 10 to 15 mph.

**Tuesday...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 90s. South winds 10 to 20 mph.

**Tuesday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the mid 60s. Southwest winds 10 to 20 mph.

**Wednesday...**Partly cloudy. Highs around 100. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph. Gusts up to 30 mph in the afternoon.

**Wednesday night...**Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 60s.

**Thursday...**Mostly sunny. Highs around 101.

Saturday's high, 92

Sunday's high, 100

Low this morning, 60

Records for this date, 107 in 1936, 51 in 1911

Weekend precipitation to 8 a.m. today, 0.08

Month's precipitation, 1.50

**Water Terms**

- WaterWatch — Demand for 3 consecutive days exceeds 3.5 million gallons per day.
- WaterWarning — Demand for 3 consecutive days exceeds 4.0 million gallons per day. City will begin conservation efforts.
- WaterEmergency — Demand for 3 consecutive days exceeds 4.5 million gallons per day. No outdoor watering allowed along with other conservation efforts.

Water use for the weekend = (not available)

**The sources:**

A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

Wind farm  
support mixed

BEAUMONT (AP)—Construction work has begun on one of the state's first wind farms, and Butler County residents are wondering whether the project will help save area ranches or be an environmental and financial disaster.

Four ranchers have leased 8,000 acres of tallgrass prairie in the Flint Hills to PPM Energy, a U.S. subsidiary of ScottishPower, to build a 150-megawatt Elk River Wind farm. The \$190 million project involves 100 wind turbines, expected to generate enough electricity for 42,000 homes.

The electricity will be purchased by The Empire District Electric Co., in Joplin, Mo., which will sell it to customers in Missouri.

Although two lawsuits are trying to stop construction, 22 miles of roads have been built and work has begun on towers that will hold the wind turbines.

Clinton Squier, whose family has ranched in the area for decades, has watched the construction three miles down the road.

"I just wonder if it's going to work," said Squier, 84. "Nothing like this has ever happened around here before. I hope it makes some money."

Marce Brewer, a member of the Butler County Economic Development Board, believes the wind industry will help ranchers.

MOVIE  
PASSES

Watch for your  
name in the  
Wednesday movie  
listings  
for 2  
free passes.



*(Passes must be used within 7 days.)*

Pick up your passes at your:



Briefly

**Reunion chorus plans rehearsals**

Rehearsals are scheduled for the upcoming Colby Alumni Reunion's Eagle Feathers Chorus. The rehearsals are planned for 7 p.m., Wednesday, July 20 and July 27 for those in the Colby area in the Colby United Methodist Church choir room, 950 S. Franklin. Janet Wolf, director, is also asking that those interested in attending to "please bring your classmates." Sharon Kriss will be the accompanist for the chorus.

**Commodity distribution set**

United States Department of Agriculture commodities will be distributed on Wednesday, July 20 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center, 165 Fike Park. For information, call the RSVP office at 462-6744.

**Gigantic garage sale deadline nears**

The Colby High Plains Lions Club in conjunction with the Highway 25 Association is sponsoring a city-wide garage sale on Saturday, July 23. There will be garage sales going on that weekend from Interstate 70 at Colby to Interstate 80 at Sutherland, Neb., officials said. Booths for the

sale will be set up in the parking lot of the Thomas County Office Complex or residents wanting to participate can do so at any location they choose. Organizations and groups planning to attend will need to furnish their own tables and clean up the area after the sale. A map will be included in the Thursday edition of the *Colby Free Press* and deadline for getting on the map is Wednesday. Those wanting to reserve space are asked to call Mary Hurtt, 443-1886 or Hazel Estes at (785) 821-2492.

**La Leche meetings continue**

La Leche League of Northwest Kansas will have a local meeting series on breastfeeding information, from 3 to 4 p.m. on Sunday, August 7, at First Presbyterian Church meeting room, 515 W. 4th, Colby. The August meeting will be on avoiding difficulties and on nutrition/weaning. All interested parents-to-be, parents with nursing babies, and support people are welcome to these informal meetings. Call Connie Davis, (785) 460-7188, for questions or general information on breastfeeding.

**Five-year reunion forms available**

For those planning to attend Colby's All School five-year

reunion, but have lost their registration forms or didn't receive on, they can pick forms up from Sharon Bieker at F & M Bank, 240 W. 4th St., Colby. Also registration information can be obtained by going online at <http://www-eaglesalumni.org>.

**Queen/princess contestants sought**

The Thomas County Rodeo Queen and Princess contest is seeking contestants for the 2005 pageant on Monday, July 25 in Colby. For those interested in the queen competition, the age range is 16-23. For the princess contestants, age range is from 12 to 15. Junior princesses from 8 to 11 years old are also eligible. A trophy saddle will be awarded to queen along with belt buckles and crowns for all winners. Contestants will be judged in horsemanship, interview, speech and modeling. For questions or an entry form, call (785) 586-2228.

**Van available to public**

The Thomas County transit van is available to all people in Colby and Thomas County, said Shelly Harms, county clerk. The transit van operates from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. For those wanting to use the van, call 460-2901 for access.

State pension fund deficit on the rise

TOPEKA (AP) — The gap between what is paid into the pension fund for Kansas public employees and what will be required to pay future benefits grew by more than \$1 billion last year, but officials say there isn't cause for worry — yet.

Actuarial experts told trustees for the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System that the fund's unfunded liability had grown from \$3.58 billion in 2003 to \$4.74 billion in 2004.

That is much faster than previously expected. Analysts in 2002 said the unfunded liability was \$1.8 billion and warned that without additional cash contributions it would grow to \$4 billion by 2011. Instead, it's almost \$5 billion now.

The biggest reason for that growth, a study done last year shows, is that retirees are living longer, forcing officials to adjust their future benefit cost figures.

Teachers make up the largest share of the unfunded liability, officials said.

State Rep. John Edmonds of Great Bend, a Republican who is chairman of the Legislature's Joint Committee on Pensions and Benefits, said teachers are, on average, healthier than the general population. He said many of them are women and aren't as likely to engage in life-shortening habits like smoking and excessive drinking.

While the gap between funding and liability has widened quickly, officials said the system, which covers retirement for one in 12 Kansans, or 250,000 people, isn't in danger of defaulting. They said the state is finding more money to put in the fund and said they expected the deficit to grow much slower in the future and start shrinking by 2020.

Edmonds said the Legislature

agreed two years ago to slowly increase the state's annual contribution to KPERS, as the fund is called. He said it will be important for future lawmakers to keep to that schedule but acknowledged that a budget crunch could tempt them to postpone an increase for a year or two.

"We're not yet contributing at the rate required by actuaries," he said.

Also, lawmakers last year approved the sale of \$500 million in pension obligation bonds, which will give the system additional assets to invest and collect interest for the fund.

State Rep. Ray Cox, a Bonner Springs Republican, added that the financial markets should increase the value of KPERS investment, further reducing the excess liability.

"We're very aware of the situation," Cox said. "It's going to be taken care of. We still have a lot of money."

KPERS, which also covers retirement for firefighters, police officers and judges, pays out about \$678 million a year to 61,000 retirees and other beneficiaries. State law requires that retirees be paid at a fixed rate.

BTK items expected to draw buyers

WICHITA (AP) — The sale of memorabilia from notorious murderers is a growing industry, and items from BTK killer Dennis Rader are likely to become popular, said a man who monitors such Internet auction sites.

The first item has already sold — a letter from Rader went for \$100 Thursday.

"This is just the beginning of the merchandising of Rader/BTK, whatever you want to call him," said Andy Kahan, director of the crime-victim's assistance program in Houston.

"This is a burgeoning industry. I would be shocked if he didn't get in on the action."

A group of collectors around the country has dealt in "murderabilia" for decades and buying such items has become easier because of the Internet, said Kahan.

At one Web site last week, collectors could bid on foot scrapings from serial killer Angel Ramirez, on death row in Texas, or a vial of dirt from the crawl space where executed serial killer John Wayne

Gacy buried his victims.

Texas, California, Florida and New Jersey have passed laws that prevent anyone from profiting from a criminal's notoriety, Kahan said.

Kansas has a law that prohibits criminals from profiting from book or movie deals, but it says nothing about physical artifacts, said Ann Swegle, Sedgwick County deputy district attorney.

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JAN KATZ ACKERMAN/Colby Free Press

LaRene Wentz, left, reviewed materials for the nursing home administrator program of which he is about to complete, with Jerry L. Korbe, administrator of Park Lane Nursing Home in Scott City where the course is offered.

Logan County group  
awards big scholarship

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
*Colby Free Press*

OAKLEY — The Logan County Healthcare Foundation announced on Wednesday it has awarded a \$1,000 administrative scholarship to LaRene Wentz. For the past four years, Wentz has worked as head of the maintenance department at Logan County Hospital and Manor.

"I really like working with the elderly. They are very interesting people," he said.

According to Susan Bloom, executive director of the foundation, Wentz is in the final stages of his training. She said for the past six months, he has traveled to Park Lane Nursing Home in Scott City for training. Having all of the course work completed, Wentz is in the process of taking his licensure exams.

"The training is very intense and there is a lot to learn about administration," Wentz said.

Wentz has resided in Oakley with his wife, Kathy, for the past 12 years, and the couple has eight children, three of which reside at home.

Family activities include being involved as a 4-H club leader and hosting foreign exchange students, this year's being a student from Italy.

Since created in 1993, Logan County Healthcare Foundation, Inc. has given over \$1 million back to the community. Most recently, it has purchased a downtown building and renovated it into a pharmacy and is in the process of recruiting a pharmacist to operate it.

For more information call Bloom at (785) 672-3663 or stop by the office at 216 Center Ave in Oakley.

American Profile

Celebrating Hometown Life

(available in trade area only)

See American Profile Magazine in today's issue of the



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Colby, KS  
460-2000

"Neighbors helping neighbors"



Picnic  
In The Park

Bring your lunch  
and lawn chair and  
enjoy the musical  
talent of....



Wagoner  
Family

Thursday, July 21st  
12:00 noon  
Fike Park

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