

Weather Corner



Wind gusts and cooler

Tonight — Mostly clear with a low around 18. Blustery, with a northwest wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. **Thursday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 38. Breezy, with a northwest wind between 15 and 25 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph. **Thursday night** — Partly cloudy with a low around 13. Northwest wind between 5 and 10 mph. **Friday** — Partly cloudy with a high near 34. West wind around 5 mph becoming calm. **Friday night** — Partly cloudy with a low around 14. **Saturday** — Partly cloudy with a high around 29. **Saturday night** — Mostly cloudy with a low around 12. **Sunday** — Mostly cloudy with a high near 26. **Temperatures** Tuesday's high, 52 Low this morning, 27 Records for this date, 72 in 1988, -16 in 1901 Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00 December's precipitation, 0.06 A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

Animal ID and technology focus of meetings

An update on the National Animal Identification System and technology used to implement electronic identification will be the focus of a series of meetings to be held in northwest Kansas, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, Jan. 4-6, 2006. The meetings, sponsored by K-State Research and Extension, will be held in Atwood, Sharon Springs, Quinter and Hays so producers can select from the most convenient. Kansas livestock commissioner George Teagarden will update producers on the status of the National Animal ID System. Other speakers include: • Dale Blasi, K-State Research and Extension beef specialist and a national leader in radio frequency ID technology will discuss tag differences. • Industry representatives Nathan Mead of Destron Fearing and Bryan Rickard of Allflex will demonstrate use of tag readers, placement logistics and selection guidelines. • Tim Davis, CowSense, will explain options in using data collected with electronic systems. • Sandy Johnson, K-State Research and Extension northwest area livestock specialist will address source and age verification requirements for export markets and new opportunities to capture value. The meeting dates, times, locations and telephone numbers are: • Jan. 4 - 3 p.m. - Rawlins County Fairgrounds, Atwood (785-626-3192); • Jan 5 - 9 a.m. - Wallace County Fairgrounds, Sharon Springs (785-852-4285); • Jan. 5 - 3 p.m. - Quinter Livestock Auction (785-938-4480); • Jan. 6 - 9 a.m. - Agricultural Research Center, Hays (785-628-9430). A pre-registration fee of is requested by Dec. 28 to reserve a meal.

Hot Topics

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Briefly

After 5 Club to hold last meeting

The High Plains After 5 Club is “going on hold,” and will have its last meeting for a while from 10:30 a.m. until noon, Saturday, Dec. 17, at the Colonial Steakhouse, Oakley. The program, “Remember When . . . Holiday Brunch,” features Betty Nickols, director of Second Chance, a counseling ministry in Rexford. Officials said Nickols plans to take those attending down memory lane as she reminisces about Christmas past, present and future. Music will be provided by Bobbi Barton of Colby with Shelley Rodenbeck, owner of Pasttimes, also in Colby, offering information about local artists as well as national known companies. Reservations and/or nursery services are due today by calling Gloria Mattix, 460-2705. The After 5 Club has been meeting since 1985 and organizers hope to see many at the last meeting for now.

Christmas program scheduled

Heartland Christian School, 1995 W. Fourth, will celebrate the season with their Christmas Program at 7 p.m., Thursday. The performance will include the Christmas Musical, *Hark, The Herald Angel*. The public is invited.

FFA group has extra food items

The FFA group has leftover boxes of fruit, meat and cheeses from its recent sales. Anyone interested in buying summer sausage, cheese spreads, and other items is asked to call Mike Wetter, Colby High School ag instructor/FFA advisor, at 460-5320. All items will be sold on a first-come basis at a slightly discounted price.

City sanitation schedule announced

The City of Colby's sanitation trucks will run the following holiday schedule: Friday, Dec. 23 - normal routes; Saturday, Dec. 24, normal commercial routes; Monday, Dec. 26, no sanitation service; Tuesday, Dec. 27, Monday route and regular Tuesday service routes. During the New Year's Week on Friday, Dec. 30, trucks will run normal routes; Saturday, Dec. 31, normal commercial service; Monday, Jan. 2, no sanitation routes; and Tuesday, Jan 3, Monday route with regular Tuesday service route. For questions, call 460-4410.

Soup supper Friday

The Colby High School All Sports Booster Club is sponsoring a soup supper, from 5 to 8 p.m., Friday, at the Colby

Community Building when the Eagles take on the Oakley Plainsmen. Menu items include chili and chicken noodle soup, vegetables, desert, and drink for a free-will donation. Proceeds will go toward the Dennen Field Project.

Share delivery Saturday

Heartland Share delivery is scheduled for 10:30 a.m., Saturday, at the Sacred Heart School gymnasium, 1150 W. 6th. For questions, call 460-3579.

Piano recital Saturday

Students of Pat Ziegelmeier of Colby will share Christmas selections in a piano recital at 3 p.m., Saturday, at the Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin. The program will be a combination of solos and duets with some family members accompanying the students, she said. The event is free of charge and open to everyone.

Chorus rehearses every Tuesday

The Hi-Plains Harmony Chorus of Sweet Adelines holds rehearsals every Tuesday at 7:30 pm. at the Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin Ave. All female singers are encouraged to attend anytime.

Logan County gets \$26,600 for voting equipment

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Logan County voters are two weeks away from taking advantage of federal money which will upgrade their voting procedures. Logan County Clerk Pat Schippers said the county has been allocated \$26,600 as part of the Help America Vote Act. The federal voting law is to improve voting in America and allow the purchase of electronic voting machines and software. “Phase Two of the Help America Vote Act is required to be in place by Jan. 1,” Schippers said. The Help America Vote Act was signed into law Oct. 29, 2002. The first part of it pertained to two voter accessibility and identification. Other parts of the Act include polling place postings and changes in provisional voting procedures. “In my opinion, the new federal law will affect the county clerk’s office in many positive ways,” Schippers said. She said some of the functions previously done solely on a county level are now done with assistance of the state. The state now helps with creation and maintenance of the statewide centralized voter registration database; purchase and installation and

Voting equipment mandated

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Starting Jan. 1, Kansas county clerks will be required to work with ELVIS. “We are mandated to use Election Voter Information Software instead of our own programs,” Sheridan County Clerk Paula Bielser said. ELVIS is software that registers voters in each county and provides that information to the state voter database. Sheridan County is the recipient of \$28,000 federal money to implement the Help America

Vote Act of 2002. Bielser said because of the new law almost every aspect of the election process will change. Software required to run new equipment means Bielser’s office staff, Lea Herl and Virginia Feldt, is required at least 32 hours training to run it. As election officer, Bielser is required to have 40 hours of training on the new program. It’s too soon to tell whether the new technology will help or hinder. “I don’t know at this time, we’ll just have to wait until it all is in place. I do know that the software is a killer,” Bielser said. Equipment to accommodate the

new law means the purchase of one voter assist terminal costing \$4,850, three precinct scanners at \$5,025 each, four memory cards at \$90 each, and installation charges of \$355 for a total of \$20,640. The remaining \$7,360, if needed, must be used for election procedures by April, 2006. Sheridan County will share training charges with Logan, Trego, Gove, Decatur Counties, with Sheridan County’s share being \$240. The county will also have to pay \$4,500 to the state annually for maintenance for the ELVIS software and updates.

maintenance of voting equipment; training of county election officers and precinct election board workers; and funding of certain election activities. “Each polling place is required by law to have at least one electronic voting machine to assist those whose physical challenges will not allow them to mark a regular ballot and will cost \$4,850 each,” Schippers said. Add to that \$325 for the table, curtain and case for each machine,

\$1,200 for hardware training, \$85 for installation and set-up fees, and the voting equipment total is being estimated at \$22,240. The remaining \$4,360 must be used by April, 2006. Schippers said because of the cost of implementing the new law, the number of polling sites in Logan County will be reduced from five to three locations. Those locations will be announced before the August primary. “Many counties have consoli-

dated all of their polling places into one or two, but geographically, this would be a tremendous inconvenience to our voters in the western tier of our county,” Schippers said. “With advance voting available 20 days before an election, any voter can call and request a ballot be mailed to them or they can come into the county clerk’s office and vote ahead of time.” Schippers said the Aug., 2006 primary election will be the first time Logan County’s new equip-

ment will be used. She said the average voter won’t notice much difference when he or she goes to the poll. “We will still have our voting booths and paper ballots that they will vote and place in the locked ballot box,” Schippers said. “At the end of the day, 7 p.m., the ballots will be carried in a locked box to the courthouse where there will be a resolution board that will receive the ballots, which will then be run through a central ballot reader that will count and record the ballots and later store the results on a diskette.” Schippers said Logan County voters will enjoy the new technology. She said the electronic machines required in each polling place will help the physically challenged voter. She also said the centralized database will help keep voting records accurate because with all 105 counties having their information in Topeka, there won’t be duplicate voter registrations. Counties will be responsible for maintenance and programming of the machines before each election. “That’s a small price to pay to allow everyone the same right to vote whether physically challenged or not,” Schippers said.

Museum faces challenges in keeping artifacts intact

LAWRENCE (AP) — Rebecca Phipps is fighting a battle against decay. The Watkins Community Museum of History in downtown Lawrence has thousands of items in its collection — dresses, books, knickknacks of all varieties — many of them dating back to the 1800s and early 1900s. Lots of it is stuff that, in other hands, would have crumbled to dust by now. Lots of it is stuff still in danger of crumbling. “Some of our books have mold growth, which we can usually take care of,” Phipps, the museum director, said. “Silk in particular is really bad — if it’s not in perfect condition, it goes really fast.” Museum workers have placed ultraviolet filters on the building’s large windows to slow the harsh effects of light on antiques. The museum’s temperature and humidity are monitored on a daily, even hourly, basis. “The preservation of the collections is one of our top priorities,” Phipps said. “The deterioration of artifacts and paper documents is a problem everywhere — everybody faces it.” A new study from Heritage Preservation confirms that. The non-profit organization’s national survey of more than 3,000 museums, libraries and archives showed that most such institutions have had some specimens and artifacts damaged by temperature, humidity, light or improper storage. “We owe it to the future to preserve these collections, but we also owe it to the past,” said Kristen Overbeck Laise, who directed the Heritage Health Index.

Fifty-one Kansas institutions participated in the survey, including Watkins, Kansas University’s Spencer Museum of Art and Natural History Museum and the Lawrence Public Library, all in Lawrence. Survey results from individual museums were not made public. John Simmons, director of Kansas University’s museum studies program, said even big museums with deep pockets struggled to keep their artifacts in good shape. Simmons also serves as the collections manager for the natural history

museum. The main building was constructed in 1902, though it has since been retrofitted with climate control systems. Despite those efforts, some of the thousands of bird, mammal and insect specimens possessed by the school have been lost over the years. That’s a loss — not just to the exhibits, but to scientists who use the DNA for research. “Our collections are made of protein — birds, mammals, insects — and protein tends to degrade,”

Simmons said. “So we might be more aware of these issues than others.” Sofia Galarza Liu, collections manager at the Spencer Museum of Art, said the art collection there was mostly in good shape, though silk objects were always tough to preserve. The more pressing issue, she said, is room. Preservation of old artifacts, Phipps said, is important. “These things are our history, they’re our culture, they’re our

past,” she said. “This is a way of understanding who we are, and where we came from. And it’s just plain fun.”

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