### Weather Corner



### Wind gusts as high as 30

**Tonight** — Mostly cloudy, then gradually becoming mostly clear, with a low around 26. Blustery, with a north wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

Wednesday — Mostly sunny with a high near 57. West wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Wednesday night — Mostly clear with a low near 26. West wind around 10 mph. Thursday — Partly cloudy

with a high around 58. Southwest wind 5 to 10 mph becoming northwest. **Thursday night** — Partly

cloudy with a low around 24. **Friday** — Partly cloudy with a high around 48.

Temperatures Records for this date, 73 in 1928, -10 in 1894

Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.0

December's precipitation,

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

### Seedstock show nears

MANHATTAN — Area cattle producers can get acquainted with current industry issues and advances at the Cattlemen's Seedstock Showcase and Conference Jan. 23, 2006, in Phillipsburg.

The event, sponsored by the Phillips-Rooks District Extension or migrating seasons. Not only are Council, is free of charge. It will be at the Phillips County fairgrounds with registration from 9:00 to 9:50

Topics to be discussed include: 'Utilizing Distiller's Grains" and "What's New with Breed Indexes and EPDs" with Twig Marston, beef specialist at Kansas State University Research and Extension, as well as "Water Quality-Makes Dollars and Sense in Your Operation" with Stacie Minson, Extension Extension watershed specialist.

A demonstration about livestock waste-water, a door prize giveaway, trade show and luncheon will also be part of the day.

For more information about the conference and how to register, interested persons can call the Thomas County Extension Office, 460-

## Briefly

#### Blood testing for Wellness Fair nears Sanitation schedule announced

The Colby Wellness Fair will be held Saturday, Jan. 14, 2006 and as in previous years, prior to the fair, a variety of screening laboratory tests will be offered, said Tracey Gilcrist, wellness committee member. Blood tests will be drawn on Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 4 and 5 and also on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 7, 9, and 10. All blood testing will be done from 6 until 9 a.m. with registration in the lobby of the Citizens Medical Center Specialty Clinic. Anyone planning to be tested should fast 10-12 hours prior to the test so an accurate level on the Lipid Profile can be attained. For questions about testing or general information, call Jeanene Brown, 460-4850, another committee

#### January dance cancelled

The Friday, Jan. 6, Singles Dance was cancelled due to the extremely cold weather, said Carolyn Miller, one of the organizers. The February dance is still planned.

The City of Colby's sanitation trucks will run the following holiday schedule during the New Year's week starting with 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.

#### County offices plan closings

The Thomas County Courthouse, landfill and health department will be closing during the New Year holiday.

The landfill will close on Sunday, Jan. 1 and Monday, Jan. 2. It will reopen on Tuesday, Jan. 3 at 9 a.m., along with all offices in the courthouse and the health department.

#### County attorney seeks projects

The Thomas County Attorney's office is looking for community service projects for defendants and juvenile offend-

ers to do as part of their sentence or as a condition of probation or diversion.

For those who are members of the community or a local business and have a project that needs done or have ideas for some community service projects, send a letter to the Thomas County Attorney's Office, Attn: Community Service, 140 W. 4th, Colby, Kan. 67701.

#### Coalition enrollment continues

The Thomas County Interagency Coalition in conjunction with area businesses and organizations will continues its After School Program for students in third, fourth and fifth grades. The program will run Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays Jan. 9 through March 16.

Transportation from Colby Grade School to the Colby Community Building will be provided by the school district; parents must pick up their child from the community building at 5:15 following the program. For questions or to enroll a child, call 460-8177.

# Museum opens playa lakes as newest exhibit

By Sue Taylor, director

Museum of Art and History

An award-winning exhibit on playa lakes "Playas: Gems of the Plains" has opened at the Prairie Museum of Art and History, now through February, 2006. Playa lakes are often called lagoons or buffalo wallows and the exhibit explains their importance to the wildlife and in the replenishment of the groundwater.

The playa lakes exhibit features 20 separate 80-inch tall and 40-inch wide panels which illustrate a wide range of topics about playa lakes. Visitors can walk around the panels, each of which presents information on the function of playa lakes, their history geography, ecology and art

Playa lakes are shallow, usually round, wetlands with clay floors that lie in the lowest point of a generally large, closed watershed and collect runoff from surrounding uplands.

Their average size is 17 acres, and all playa lakes combined make up about 2 percent of the total shortgrass prairie landscape. They are ephemeral, or seasonal, in nature and hold water only after rainfall or runoff events. Since rainfall is scarce in the region, most of the time playa lakes are dry. The normal wet-dry cycle generates a diverse plant community, which produces large quantities of nutritious seeds birds that migrate and winter in the

Playa lakes may be the most imyas during the breeding, wintering Texas, and Wyoming.

cycle of Life PLAVAS HAVE WET AND DRY CONDITIONS BOTH ARE INPORTANT TO THEIR WELL-BEING Susting planatises are pring, but playars also must day out to funcbnama). The weidy orde is a beadly, natural event, plants and

In the wet season. May through August, the playa basin fills and runoff water. Seeds, tubers, and organisms that lived in during the dry season become active. Migratory birds stop to fresh plants and small animals while resting on their voyages

During the fall transition, rains taper off but the weather stays

As water levels recede, shallows form on the clay soil of basia

This is a busy time. Seeds are plentiful and eagerly sought I Courtesy Photo

The Prairie Museum of Art and History has opened its newest exhibit: Playas: Gems of the Plains.

essential for waterfowl, and other and protecting underground water water supply since the turn of the eastern New Mexico, Colorado and supply. Playas are the primary Aquifer, a 174,000 square mile forportant wetland habitat type for mation that underlies eight states: birds in the region. More than 200 Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New

century. But continued pumping Wyoming, western Kansas, Ne- onthe High Plains" Sunday, Jan. 29, source of recharge for the Ogallala has depleted the aquifer's water braska and Oklahoma, and the 2006 will feature the Playa exhibit supply faster than natural recharge Texas Panhandle. can replenish it.

bird species are known to use pla- Mexico, Oklahoma, South Dakota, land, this exhibit really emphasizes the western Great Plains - they are birthday of Kansas, the museum These states have depended on protecting them. Playa lakes are the Playa Lake exhibit is free and open activities for all ages from 1 to 5 playas important to wildlife, they the Ogallala for the majority of ag- most numerous wetlands in the re- to the public. are vitally important to replenishing ricultural, municipal and industrial gion, totaling more than 50,000 in

Many people have playas on their world's playa lakes are located in plains. In celebration of the 145th the idea that everyone has a role in a unique natural resource. The will serve refreshments and have

A special day for the public for the public.

"What's Your Habitat: Kansas Day and hands-on activities, demonstra-More than 95 percent of the tions and crafts relating to the high p.m. at the museum. The day is free

# Kansas man appeals Prairie Village ticket over anti-war signs

suburban Kansas City man is aphim for homemade yard signs opposing the war in Iraq.

The American Civil Liberties strictive. Union of Kansas and Western Missouri is helping David Quinly appeal the citation in Johnson County District Court. Quinly sought the warned two signs exceeded the size ACLU's help after losing an appeal in municipal court.

At issue is a Prairie Village ordi-5 square feet and limiting the total area of temporary signs displayed excessive. on a property to 10 square feet.

PRAIRIE VILLAGE (AP) — A Signs can't be up more than 60 days. cities restrict signs, but he believes ment and size must be restricted to the courts are usually going to be "It's clearly a First Amendment

pealing a ticket Prairie Village gave issue," said Quinly's attorney, John Simpson. "We think ... that the Prairie Village sign ordinance is too re-

Quinly had been putting up antiwar signs in his yard since before the U.S. entered Iraq. He was limit, but he kept them up, believing any resulting fine would be \$20 or \$30. After he was cited Sept. 20, nance prohibiting signs bigger than he was surprised to find out the fine was \$300, an amount he considers

Quinly said he understands why

political signs should be less restrictive than others, not more.

Simpson said he will argue that Prairie Village restricts political signs more than other signs, which the U.S. Supreme Court has deemed unconstitutional.

"You've discriminated, in effect, against political speech, which is the speech most protected in our (First) Amendment," Simpson said.

City Attorney Charles Wetzler said issues surrounding temporary signs don't usually apply to commercial signs.

The ordinance says sign place-

prevent them from creating traffic quite protective on the matter of a hazards. The sign ordinance also seeks to prevent "visual clutter" in neighborhoods.

latest version of the ordinance was drafted with the ACLU's input. "There have been new cases that come out, and if we need to look at it, we will."

University of Kansas law professor Mike Kautsch said it's not unusual for cities to limit signs for aesthetic reasons. But, he said, "If it's on a matter of public concern,

yard sign." "The idea is to make sure these ordinances are clearly content-neu-"The law changes all the time in tral, that they don't restrict a sign in this area," Wetzler said, noting the any way because of the nature of that message," Kautsch said.

> Faced with a Drinking Problem? Perhaps

Alcoholics Anonymous Can Help Meetings are Open to the Public City Hall Basement

Mondays & Thursdays - 8:30 p.m.

# Judicial council proposes evaluations for judges

sas Judicial Council has proposed giving voters evaluations of judges who are up for retention elections.

Evaluations also would be done for judges who face political elections, but those evaluations would not be made public. Judicial Council officials said they want those evaluations kept private because they don't want publicly funded evaluations used in political cam-

Randy Hearrell, executive director of the Judicial Council, which made its proposal to the Legislature, said politically elected judges could use the evaluations.

"Most judges don't get very direct feedback on how they are doing," Hearrell said.

For judges who are selected and then stand for retention elections, the evaluations would provide information to voters on whether the

judges should continue in office. "This is just good government," said Kansas Court of Appeals Judge Stephen Hill, who faces a statewide retention vote in November. "It accomplishes something if it helps

LAWRENCE (AP) — The Kan-voters." Sources for information for have angered some state residents in the selection of justices. evaluation would remain anony- and representatives. mous and could include other judges, attorneys, jurors, litigants, Kansas Supreme Court orders overwitnesses and social service per-

judicial evaluation proposal say the prompted some lawmakers to prorecommendation is not related to pose measures that would limit the recent rulings by Kansas courts that court and require legislative input

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turning the death penalty and ordering the Legislature to increase Hill and others involved in the school funding. Those rulings

Rep. Paul Davis, D-Lawrence, Among such rulings are recent served with Hill on the advisory committee that made the recom-

mendations for the evaluations. "It's something that is going to increase both the confidence that the public has in the judiciary and the judiciary's accountability to the public," Davis said.



Celebrating Hometown Life (available in trade area only)

See American Profile Magazine in today's issue of the





"Neighbors helping neighbors"

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Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Sat. 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.