

Weather Corner



Friday high 32, lows around 15

Tonight — Mostly clear with a low around 6. West wind around 10 mph.

Friday — Mostly sunny with a high near 32. West wind between 5 and 10 mph. **Friday night** — Partly cloudy with a low around 15. West wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday — A 30 percent chance of snow, mainly after noon. Mostly cloudy with a high near 33. West wind around 10 mph becoming south.

Saturday night — A 30 percent chance of snow, mainly after noon. Mostly cloudy with a high near 33. West wind around 10 mph becoming south.

Sunday — Flurries. Mostly cloudy with a high near 34. **Sunday night** — Mostly cloudy with a low around 10.

Monday — Partly cloudy with a high near 29.

Temperatures
Wednesday's high, 27
Low this morning, -3
Records for this date, 73 in 1920m -23 in 1984
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00
January's precipitation, 0.07
A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-8367.

Legislature renews push to protect fetus

TOPEKA (AP) — Prompted by last year's murder of a pregnant Wichita teenager, legislators are renewing their push for a law aimed at protecting mothers-to-be and the fetuses they are carrying.

But efforts to eliminate what some lawmakers view as a gap in Kansas law are tangled up in the larger debate over abortion. Groups on both sides are working on rival proposals dealing with crimes against pregnant women and their fetuses.

Abortion opponents back a proposal to declare that the definition of "person" in the state's criminal code covers an "unborn child," from conception. Abortion rights supporters prefer alternatives such as creating a new crime of harming a fetus or increasing penalties for crimes against women and girls if they are pregnant.

The Senate Judiciary Committee agreed Tuesday to sponsor a bill increasing the penalties for homicides if the victim is pregnant, and abortion rights advocates planned a news conference Wednesday. The House Judiciary Committee plans to have a hearing Thursday on the abortion opponents' proposal.

"It's about punishment," said House Judiciary Committee Chairman Mike O'Neal, R-Hutchinson. "There's a void in the law."

"We need to do something about that."

However, abortion rights supporters continue to suspect the motives of legislators seeking a declaration that a fetus is a person, even if that change wouldn't apply to abortion.

Kansans for Life, the state's largest anti-abortion group, has put such legislation at the top of its agenda for the year.

"It's the foot in the door, the camel's nose under the tent," said Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman John Vratil, R-Leawood. "That's why it's an abortion bill, even though some people would contend it's not."

Thirty-five states have some sort of law making it a crime to kill or harm a fetus, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, including Alabama, California, Illinois, Missouri and Ohio. However, laws vary state-to-state, and not all apply from conception.

Briefly

Extension sponsors workshop

The Thomas County Extension office is sponsoring a workshop noon to 1 p.m., Tuesday, in the meeting room at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave., Colby. "The presenter, Brian Bitz, has a self-directed campaign for keeping the brain functioning at its best," said Diann Gerstner, extension agent. "For those who cannot remember someone's name, forgets their keys or is just a part of our hectic world, this event is for them and laughing is required," Gerstner said. For questions, call 460-4582.

Heartland plans auction, barbecue

Heartland Christian School's junior/senior class will be having a silent auction during the school's annual barbecue 11-2 p.m. Sunday at the school. Auction proceeds will be used to help fund their trip to Washington, D.C. in March. Auction items include a fountain from Barton Concrete Works, a piano, a Dell printer, three handmade quilts and numerous smaller items.

Soup supper Saturday

The Northwest Kansas Chapter of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is holding a free soup and dessert supper at 6:30

p.m. Saturday at Trinity Lutheran Church, on the corner of Fifth Street and Country Club Drive in Colby. Chapter officers will present an outline prepared by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in CD format on "connecting" with retirement dreams. Instructions are included for Thrivent Financial members to access Web site calculator tools that can be used to get retirement on the right track.

For information, call Ralph Hansen at 460-2443.

Food refunds, tax assistance set

Rosalie Seemann, Silver-Haired legislature and former Thomas County clerk, will be at Meadowlark Manor in Colby from 9:30 to 11 a.m., Friday to assist with Food Sales tax refunds, Homestead refunds and the telephone tax refunds.

Commodity distribution Monday

United States Department of Agriculture commodities will be distributed from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Monday at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office at the Senior Progress Center in Colby. Participants are asked to not arrive at the distribution site before 12:30 p.m. Eligible people who are not able to attend the distribution may send a signed permission slip with another person to pick up their commodities. For information, call 462-6744.

Eastern Kansas man does old west crafting

By Ron Wilson
Huck Boyd Institute

Finding a horseshoe means good luck. That folk wisdom came from my grandfather back when I was a kid. Recently I found a horseshoe and it did bring me good luck. Only it wasn't some rusty horseshoe along the trail. It was a horseshoe that had been shaped into a work of art. I also found the remarkable Old West-style craftsman who shaped it. He uses horseshoes, wood and similar items to create wonderful works of art with a western theme. He's located in rural Kansas, and he's remained true to the cowboy way in both good times and bad.

Terry Dishon is the proprietor of the Lazy T Buckaroo Foundry and Woodworks in Alta Vista, Kansas.

Terry and his wife Rita were originally raised on farms near Troy.

Terry was always mechanically skilled and also a fan of the old west - really a cowboy at heart.

In 1986, Terry went to work with the National Guard at Fort Riley. He did metal work, body work and repair, and general metal fabrication.

Terry and Rita like the rural lifestyle and they wanted to live in a rural area. They eventually settled in Alta Vista, population 434 people. Now, that's rural.

In 1997, Terry went into business on his own. He started his own auto body shop in his garage in Alta Vista and called it Auto Spa. He did repair work, but his specialty was restoring International Harvester vehicles. That included not just tractors but also the International Scout, such as the vintage vehicle that Terry drives.

Terry's handiwork was excellent. One of his restored vehicles has gone as far away as Belleville, Illinois

But then life threw Terry a curve. A goiter on his neck suddenly started to grow and expand. The doctors checked it out and they had bad news: Terry was diagnosed with thyroid cancer.

Surgery took his voicebox and part of his airway, but Terry is not the kind of guy who will quit. He says, "I've got too much livin' to do."

Since he could no longer work in an environment with paint fumes,

he retired from his body shop, but his other skills came into play.

"I'd always enjoyed western art and history, so I took up wood and metalwork," Terry said.

He started designing and building western-theme items. He had been making these as gifts for friends, but the response was so positive he started marketing them. Using his first initial, Terry named the business Lazy T Buckaroo Foundry and Woodworks. He says, "I thought I'd just laze around and play cowboy the rest of my life." But Terry's not being lazy. He creates wonderful handmade works of art with western themes as well as household items such as hat racks, coat racks and tissue holders.

He makes picturesque barn wood picture frames.

His handmade boot scraper feature hames from a horse collar, mounted on an old disk. No, not some computer disk, an iron disk blade.

Perhaps his most striking piece of work was a giant model of a Saguaro cactus that he built for a customer's ranch home near Alta Vista. The saguaro cactus is 9-1/2 feet tall and is made out of 236 horseshoes. It even has spines made out of welding wire.

Smaller examples of his handiwork can be found at Lee's Western Wear in Manhattan and Drovers Mercantile in Ellsworth. He sells them at western shows and community festivals from Lawrence to Colorado.

I was shopping at Lee's Western Wear when I spotted a creative, decorative item made from horseshoes. The craftsmanship and creativity caught my eye, and it lead me to find this wonderful cowboy craftsman.

So Grandpa was right. Finding a horseshoe did bring me good luck. For in finding this horseshoe, I found Terry Dishon, the craftsman who did wonders with it. And in doing so, I found someone who is making a difference by using his skills and creativity, in spite of life's adversities. That's a find we should never forget.

Editor's note: The mission of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development is to enhance rural development by helping rural people help themselves.

Snow bunny



JAN KATZACKERMAN/Colby Free Press

A jackrabbit sat alone in the sun earlier this week about one mile north of Hoxie despite temperatures only in the teens.

Panel says former attorney general did not improperly use state computer

TOPEKA (AP) — Former Attorney General Phill Kline didn't break the law when an employee used a state computer to copy e-mail addresses for use in Kline's failed re-election campaign last year, the state ethics commission ruled Wednesday.

Kline, now Johnson County's top prosecutor, avoided a fine, and the Governmental Ethics Commission dismissed a complaint against him from its staff. The complaint alleged that he had violated a law against using or causing someone else to use state equipment to "expressly advocate" the election or defeat of a candidate. The possible penalty was \$5,000.

The commission's attorney argued that copying the list of addresses was the first step toward sending out a batch campaign e-mail in September 2006. But the commission, before the 6-0 vote dismissing the complaint, said the e-mail addresses were public records, available to anyone who asked, and a state computer pro-

vided the only access to them.

The commission heard testimony that an employee of the attorney general's office downloaded the list of addresses onto a portable hard drive he owned, then carried it to Kline's campaign headquarters. Campaign computers then were used to draft and send the batch e-mails.

"The commission listened to the factual scenario as it actually occurred," said Kline's attorney, Tuck Duncan, of Topeka. "They made it very clear — and we agree with them — if the campaign had drafted the e-mails or transmitted them on state equipment, that may indeed have been a violation."

The attorney general's office automatically collected the addresses when people signed up on its Web site for electronic updates on various issues, or if they filled out forms when someone from the office spoke to a group.

"To use those is not a violation in and of itself," commission Chairwoman Sabrina Standifer said. "I

— or anyone else — can walk into the attorney general's office, and I can make a request for that information. Then an attorney general employee is going to have to use that computer."

Kline, who left the attorney general's office Jan. 8, didn't attend the commission's meeting. Afterward, spokesman Bob Murray said, "We're pleased and the decision speaks for itself."

It was the second time within a year that the commission considered a case involving Kline. In March 2006, it fined him \$1,500 after he reported that a consultant hired by his campaign had inadvertently violated a law against soliciting lobbyists for campaign contributions.

Kline, a Republican, replaced Morrison as Johnson County district attorney. Morrison won five terms in the county office as a Republican, then switched parties to challenge Kline, but the GOP retained the right to fill the vacancy in Johnson County.

HIS SHOP

475 N. FRANKLIN • 462-6361

DOWNTOWN COLBY

We will be

CLOSED

January 22nd,
23rd, 24th
& 25th.

Colby/Thomas
County Chamber of
Commerce welcomes:

WILLIAMS

MACHINERY & SUPPLY

1160 W. 4th, Colby
785-460-7277