

Weather Corner



Sunny and warm

The forecast
Tonight — Mostly clear with a low around 44. South wind between 5 and 10 mph. **Tuesday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 75. Southwest wind around 10 mph. **Tuesday night** — Mostly clear with a low around 43. West wind around 10 mph. **Wednesday** — Partly cloudy with a high near 73. Northwest wind between 5 and 15 mph. **Wednesday night** — Partly cloudy with a low around 34. **Thursday** — Partly cloudy with a high near 54 .
Temperatures
Sunday's high, 57
Low this morning, 35
Records for this date, 84 in 1972, -3 in 1969
Precipitation last 24 hours, 0.00
March's precipitation, 0.00
A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-8367.

Man who killed Wichita girl won't be executed

WICHITA (AP) — The man who raped and murdered a 9-year-old Lancy Shoemaker in Wichita in 1990 will not be executed in Texas for another girl's murder.

Texas Gov. Rick Perry on Friday commuted the sentence for Doil Lane to life in prison, after courts in that state found that Lane was mentally retarded. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2002 that executing mentally retarded inmates was unconstitutional.

However, because Lane was not found to be retarded in Kansas, he could be returned to the state to serve a 62 1/2-year sentence for killing Nancy.

Kansas did not have the death penalty when Lane was convicted of kidnapping Nancy on July 30, 1990, as she walked to a convenience store in south Wichita to buy soda for her sick brother. Her remains were found in February 1991 in Sumner County.

Lane was later convicted of killing 8-year-old Bertha Martinez, who was raped, stabbed and strangled after being kidnapped March 20, 1980, in San Marcos, Texas.

Lane, 45, was convicted of murder in both states in the 1990s. A co-defendant, Donnie Wacker, is serving 15 years to life for helping to kidnap Nancy.

During a court hearing last fall in Texas, prosecutors did not contest arguments by Lane's lawyers that he was mentally retarded — prompting Perry's action on Friday.

That action disappointed Bo Shoemaker, Nancy's father, and Sedgwick County District Attorney Nola Foulston, who prosecuted Lane.

"I've been waiting for years and years to look at him in that room being strapped down and getting ready to die," said Shoemaker, who now lives in Pensacola, Fla.

Foulston said that after the Supreme Court ruling, she tried to get Texas prosecutors to argue that Lane was not retarded.

"We knew this was coming," she said. "We were vociferous in our arguments against it, but the governor has made that determination."

Lane was prosecuted in Kansas under a "hard 40" law that allowed juries to impose 40-year minimum sentences for those convicted of certain murders. The law did not apply to defendants deemed to be mentally retarded.

"He was low-functioning. He held a job. He had a car. He had his own place. He interacted with people."

Briefly

Walk Kansas begins

Walk Kansas, a fitness program developed by Kansas State University Research and Extension and coordinated through area extension offices, began Sunday. Although the deadline for registration was today, late entries will still be accepted through Tuesday, said Diann Gerstner, Thomas County Extension agent. In addition to recording the miles walked each week, the program has another component on the mileage log for jotting down how many fruits and vegetables are eaten each day.

For those interested in the program, but cannot fill out a team, the extension office can also help pair them up with others. To register or questions, call Poore at 460-4582.

Tree deadline changed

The Thomas County Conservation District has changed the deadline for tree orders, as well as the day for delivery. Orders will be taken through Friday, March 23, and Tree Day will be held Saturday, April 14, at the Thomas County 4-H Building from 8 to 11 a.m. Please contact Danielle Freeman at 462-7482 Ext. 303 for order information.

Farm Bureau plans seminar

"The Ten Top Stupid Things Families Do To Break Up Their Business," will be presented at 6:30 p.m., Monday, March 26, in the Colby High School auditorium. The speaker is Jolene Brown, certified speaking professional, who also is a grain farmer in eastern Iowa. The seminar is free and sponsored by the 10th District of the Kansas Farm Bureau.

FFA Chapter plans fundraiser

Colby High School's FFA Chapter is sponsoring a Mountain Oyster Fry at 6 p.m., followed by a labor auction at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 15, at the Thomas County 4-H Building. For tickets, call Shawna Howell, 460-5320.

Help sought for caravan

Participants are sought for the June Antique Tractor Caravan scheduled for June 2. The caravan will start in Bogue, going through Nicodemis to Webster Lake and back to Bogue. If interested, call Foyd and Liz Vanloenen, (785) 421-2604, or write: P.O. Box 10, Bogue, Kan. 67625.

First aid, CPR class scheduled

The Thomas County Red Cross is sponsoring a community first aid course and adult CPR class from 6 to 10 p.m., Tuesday, in the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave. For questions, call 462-7161

Agri-tourism workshop April 4

A one-day workshop on agri-tourism will begin at 8:30 a.m., April 4, at the Gateway Convention Center in Oberlin. In its third year, the workshop, "Northwest Kansas Rural Experience: Agri-Tourism Part 2" is open to the tri-state area (Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado) and comprised of speakers in the agri-tourism field that will provide various aspects of the business to consider.

The event is sponsored by Decatur County Development, Landmark Inn, K-State, Department of Commerce, Colby Chamber of Commerce, First National Bank of Goodland, Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau, Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc.

To register, call (785) 462-2602.

April 15 the deadline to burn conservation acres

MANHATTAN — It can be a scary sight — topping a hill and coming across a line of fire as far as the eye can see.

But, planned burning of the prairie can help reduce brush and invasive plant species, improve grass production, and even reduce the risk of wildfires, Kansas State University range and weather experts said.

Planned or prescribed burning also reduces litter and helps maintain productive grasslands, said Walt Fick, rangeland management specialist with K-State Research and Extension. It can increase wildlife populations, improve grazing distribution and ultimately increase livestock weight gain.

Open burning is prohibited in Kansas except in certain situations, including agricultural purposes, he said.

How often to burn depends on rancher goals or whatever a rancher is trying to accomplish, Fick said. Maintaining tallgrass prairie requires a burn every two to four years, but a less frequent use of fire is necessary on grasslands receiving less precipitation.

"K-State has been studying burning and its effects on the prairie in one way or another since 1918," Fick said.

"Burning at different times of the year produces different results."

Kansans who have acreage enrolled in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) must burn during the Feb. 1-April 15 period.

If a landowner's main purpose for burning is to help create better wildlife habitat, he or she should burn earlier, rather than later in the spring — generally in the February through March time period, Fick said.

Burning earlier does less damage to broadleaf plant species.

To control eastern red cedar — which has proven a particularly in-

vasive plant species on the Kansas prairie — the burning time is not so critical, he said. For other brush control, however, a later-season burn once the woody plants have leafed out is better. That's more in the mid-April to early May time frame.

If burning during the spring to enhance forage for beef stocker gains, a late spring burn (mid- to late April) works best. The burn should take place just after the warm-season grasses have started growth and are 1 to 1.5 inches tall, Fick said. Timing is not as critical for cow-calf operations.

No matter the primary reason for burning, however, property owners must be mindful of the weather forecast and the need to protect people and property, he said.

"Anyone planning a prescribed burn on their property has a number of free resources available to help make the burn safe and effective," said state of Kansas climatologist Mary Knapp, who is in charge of the Weather Data Library, based at Kansas State University. "The National Weather Service has introduced a new Fire Weather Forecast product to help property owners in Kansas plan the appropriate timing of burns."

The Kansas WDL's fire information page is at: http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/WDL/fire_weather_links.htm. The link to the National Weather Service Fire weather page (<http://fire.boi.noaa.gov/>) and the northeast Kansas NWS product can be found at <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/top?n=fire>.

K-State Research and Extension has several publications on burning available at its county and district Extension offices.

The publications are also available for downloading at Extension's Web site <http://www.oznet.ksu.edu/library>. Fill in the name and publication number in the Search function.

Barbershoppers to perform

HAYS — The Hays High Plains Barbershop Chorus will present its 39th annual show, "There's No Business Like Show Business," at the Beach-Schmidt Performing Arts Center on the campus of Fort Hays State University on Saturday, April 14 with performances at 2 and 7 p.m.

In addition to the chorus and chapter quartets, Max Q and Chordial Celebration, two award-

winning barbershop quartets, will be featured throughout the show.

Show Co-Chairman Jerry Krug said, "We have put together a wonderful show this year. Our primary goal is always to foster the growth of community singing, and I know we will advance that cause with this show."

The campaign for advanced ticket sales and advertising in the show program is already underway.



Proposed Wellness/Activities Complex

Colby Community College Public Forums

Question/Answer Sessions to Discuss Proposed Wellness/Activities Complex

Thursday, March 15	CCC Thomas Hall	5:30 p.m.
Tuesday, March 20	Brewster HS Gym	5:30 p.m.
Thursday, March 22	CCC Student Union	12 Noon
Thursday, March 22	Rexford HS Gym	5:30 p.m.



Medical workshop



JAN KATZACKERMAN/Colby Free Press

Deb Kaufman, left, and Ernie Whinener, an instructor for the Texas Engineering Extension Service of College Station, Texas, oversaw Teresa Bird of Leoville, Harge Hartzog of Jennings, Bill Beckman of Hoxie and Diana Middleton of Colby as they participated in hands-on training on the human patient simulator to train during a weapons of mass destruction workshop Friday, Saturday and Sunday in Hoxie. Whitener, along with fellow instructor, Gregory LeMay, taught 30 northwest Kansas medical and emergency service personnel about chemical and biological agent exposure symptoms. Paid for by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, LeMay said the two-fold training is a response to the Sept. 11 strike on America.

Oklahoma affecting Kansas gambling

TOPEKA (AP) — Pressure in the Statehouse to expand gambling in Kansas may not come this year from inside the Sunflower State.

Thank Oklahoma for that.

In recent years, the debate among legislators has focused on the number of casinos in Kansas City, Mo., the four American Indian casinos in northeast Kansas and the flights leaving for Las Vegas and Atlantic City.

Supporters say Kansans have the gambling bug but are dropping their disposable money in slots that don't benefit the state.

Opponents say that's fine. They contend Kansas doesn't need the casino headache and the state is still puritanical enough that many consider gambling a sin.

But in recent years, Oklahoma has added a new wrinkle.

There are at least two dozen casinos or bingo parlors within 60 miles of the Kansas border, mainly

in northeast Oklahoma. Advertisements in Kansas newspapers offer residents low-cost day trips to the Sooner State to gamble.

For example, each Monday a Crossroads Travel tour bus from Joplin, Mo., pulls into Meadowbrook Mall in Pittsburg. For \$15,55 senior citizens load up for the hour-long ride to the Cherokee Resort Casino off Interstate 44 in Tulsa. Seniors are given vouchers from the casino.

"It doesn't cost them anything to go," said Jim Willard, owner of the travel line.

Though he said it might cost him a little business, Willard, who is also a property owner in Kansas, says the state should expand its gambling opportunities.

"I think we ought to, instead of money going across the border," he said. "It's what's best for the state, and that's revenue for the state."

A House committee began a se-

ries of hearings last week to consider gambling legislation. It largely follows previous proposals, putting slot machines at dog and horse tracks, with provisions for allowing a limited number of casinos elsewhere.

Sen. Phil Journey, R-Haysville, an opponent of expanded gambling, said the proliferation of casinos in Oklahoma shouldn't build support in Kansas.

He said bringing casinos to Kansas will increase problems associated with them, such as gambling addiction. He also dismissed the argument that Kansas should have casinos because they're elsewhere.

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.

First National Bank employees
will be attending a
Spring Conference on March 15,
therefore we will be closing early on that day.
Please note the following
closing time on your calendar:

Thursday, March 15, 2007
FNB will close at 2:00 CT.

Thank you!



First National Bank
1195 South Range - Colby, KS
785-460-2000
www.fnb.com