

Weather Corner



90s expected Thursday

**The forecast**  
**Tonight** — Isolated thunderstorms before 1 a.m.

Partly cloudy with a low around 63.

Breezy with a south wind between 15 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

**Thursday** — Mostly sunny and hot with a high near 99. Breezy with a south wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

**Thursday night** — A slight chance of thunderstorms. Partly cloudy with a low around 62. North wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

**Friday** — Partly cloudy with a high near 94. North wind between 5 and 15 mph.

**Friday night** — Mostly clear with a low around 64.

**Saturday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 95.

**Saturday night** — Clear with a low around 65.

**Sunday** — Sunny and hot with a high near 98.

**Temperatures**  
Monday's high, 82  
Tuesday's high, 90

Low this morning, 64  
Records for this date, 106 in 1988, 42 in 1946

Precipitation last 24 hours, 0.23

June's precipitation, 1.61

**Water Use Report**  
**June 18, 19**

• 2,266,000 gallons per day, average

3.5 million = Water Watch.

4 million = Water Warning

4.5 million = Water Emergency

A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119.

Current temperatures are available by calling 460-8367.

Wichita ditch needs repairs

WICHITA (AP) — The Big Ditch, which protects a large section of Wichita from flood damage, has suffered erosion damage and needs millions of dollars in repairs, city and federal officials say.

The ditch, formally known as the Wichita-Valley Center Flood Control Project, stretches 18 miles along western Wichita and has 50 miles of connecting channels and more than 90 miles of levees. When necessary, water is diverted into the ditch from the Arkansas River, the Little Arkansas River, Cowskin Creek and Chisholm Creek.

The water inside the ditch usually is shallow, but it has been bank full in recent weeks and an annual inspection by the Army Corps of Engineers last week found erosion. The corps plans to complete a damage report within 90 days.

"It's significant enough it needs to be repaired," says Jim Martell, levee manager for the Army Corps of Engineers.

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Briefly

Volunteers needed for construction

At least 30 people are needed at 8 a.m. June 23 and June 24 to help construct Colby High School's new stadium at Dennen Field. For more information, contact Dewey Augustine at 443-1548 or Joel Powell at 462-5551.

Red Cross training planned

The Thomas County Red Cross office rescheduled training sessions, which were originally planned the week of the Greensburg tornado, said Sherry White, manager. The new dates include shelter operations from 6 to 9 p.m., Aug. 9-10 and disaster response for client casework from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Aug. 11. All training will be held at the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave., Colby. "It is important to pre-register by calling (888) 765-9058 and ask for Melinda Brown," White said. "This will help us be prepared for the right amount of materials. Anyone who wants to be a part of the Red Cross volunteer base or could benefit from this training for their job responsibilities, is encouraged to attend." For other information on Red Cross, call

(785) 462-7161.

Rodeo pageant deadline July 20

The Thomas County Rodeo Queen and Princess Pageant is looking for contestants for this year's event, said Marie Skolout, coordinator. The contest is open to girls ages 8-11 for the junior princess category; girls 12-15 for the princess event; and 16-23 for the queen contest. Contestants are judged on horsemanship, interview, speech and modeling. "A trophy saddle will be awarded to the queen, along with other great prizes for the princess and junior princess winners," she said. The contest begins Monday, July 23, and entries are due no later than Friday, July 20. For questions or to receive an entry form, call Skolout at (785) 586-2228.

Ham radio operators plan event

The public is invited to view the Colby Trojan and Goodland Sunflower Amateur Radio Clubs in action at their annual field day at 1 p.m., Saturday, and ending at 1 p.m., Sunday, at the Colby Municipal Airport (Shalz Field). "This is a

24-hour test of the club's equipment and procedures," said Bruce Frahm, Trojan Club member, and will also include interaction between more than 20,000 other clubs across the country. For questions, call (785) 462-7388.

Donations sought for garage sale

Heartland Rural Counseling, an organization helping families with mental health issues, is holding its third annual garage sale from 4-7 p.m., Friday, and 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, at 445 N. Franklin Ave. Donations are being accepted for the sale with all proceeds helping low income families. The final drop for donations is from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Thursday, at 445 N. Franklin. All donations are tax deductible. For questions, call 462-7588.

Relay for Life teams needed

Relay for Life, Thomas County's largest is Thomas County has a new location for 2007. Relay will be held at Fike Park on July 27 from 7p.m. to 7 a.m. July 28. For information, call Carla Sharp at 460-4881.

Legislation could help hunting, rural economies

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Congressman Jerry Moran of Hays recently introduced legislation to increase hunting opportunities for sportsmen and stimulate rural economies in Kansas. The "Open Fields" legislation provides incentives for farmers and ranchers to voluntarily make their land accessible for outdoor activities like hunting and fishing.

"Anyone who has driven through a rural community in the fall has seen the 'Welcome Hunters' signs in front of main street restaurants

and local motels," Moran said. "But more and more, reduced access to hunting ground is threatening the future of the sport and the dollars it brings to rural America. This legislation will help continue our nation's outdoor heritage, boost rural economies and provide additional income to our farmers and ranchers."

The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Act, known as "Open Fields," would assist states in expanding and developing access programs that encourage private

landowners - particularly farmers and ranchers - to open their property to the public for hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities. The modest payments generate extra income for participating landowners.

This legislation will expand and continue the success of Kansas' Walk-In-Hunting Area program. In a state where approximately 97 percent of the land is private, the walk-in program has opened more than one million acres in Kansas to public hunting. Though popular with hunters and landowners, interest in

enrolling land has exceeded available funding.

"Expanding access to areas available to hunt, even for those on a budget, is the only way we can ensure that the great rural tradition of hunting in Kansas will continue," said Barth Crouch, Kansas Regional Biologist for Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever.

"This will also help with getting young people outdoors and learning about the real world firsthand by interacting with nature as a participant, not just an observer. I applaud

Congressman Moran and Senator Roberts for their continuing support for the hunting tradition."

Kansas Senator Pat Roberts has introduced the "Open Fields" legislation in the Senate. The legislation has been endorsed by a long list of sportsmen, conservation and farming groups, including the National Rifle Association, Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever. Moran is a senior member of the House Agriculture Committee and a member of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus.

Master gardeners help identify plants for residents

From "GARDENER," Page 1

Thursdays from 9-11 a.m. at 350 S. Range Ave. People can bring in their plants for identification or inquire about any garden-related problems. They can also e-mail the extension office if they have a question.

"We knew about losing Doug Musick, so we just try to make things smooth so there wouldn't be a gap," said Ann Miner, who is in her fourth year as a Master Gardener. Miner said Musick called meetings and informed the other Master Gardeners of what needed to be done in the community.

Assisting with Master Gardeners is only part of what an agent does.

We get a lot of questions from farmers." Diann Gerstner Extension agent

Areas of responsibility for an extension agent are primarily agriculture and natural resources, along with identifying major educational priorities of the county based on K-State Research and Extension Core Mission Themes.

These include healthy communities, safe food and human nutrition, economic development through value-added products, natural re-

sources and environmental management and competitive agricultural systems. Providing leadership to programs is an additional responsibility for Ag agents.

Musick served as the extension office agent for about three and a half years, said Gerstner, with one of those years being spent in Iraq as part of the reserves. His expertise in agriculture is one of the things that

Gerstner said she would miss about Musick.

"We get questions from farmers, and a lot of horticulture questions, and that's where Master Gardeners have come in," said Gerstner. The extension office also received questions about hunting that Musick was able to answer.

"He was really easy to work with and very supportive of the program. He also had a lot of good ideas for people far away to do the program," said Miner. "And he was a nice guy. I'm sure he still is."

For more information about Master Gardeners, they can contact the extension office at (785) 460-4582.

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