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Blizzard big one for Oct.

October and snow are not typically synonymous in Kansas, but Oct. 25 marks the anniversary of one of the worst blizzards in recent memory.

State Climatologist Mary Knapp says temperatures have been unusually chilly lately in the central High Plains, which has some people thinking about winter, but she says snow usually hits the western part of the state first.

“It varies across the state, with the western parts, at higher elevations, seeing the earliest events,” Knapp said. “In fact, western Kansas saw snow as early as Sept. 20 in 1995. That storm produced totals of 2 to 4 inches.”

While October 1995 and 1996 had early fall snow storms, 1997 is the year people are using as a bench mark, said Knapp, who is in charge of the Kansas Weather Data Library, based with Kansas State University Research and Extension

“On Oct. 25, 1997, snow accompanied by winds of 50 to 60 mph produced near-zero visibility and wind chills of 20 degrees below zero,” she said. “By the end of the storm, snowfall totals ranged from 10 to 24 inches. Drifts ranging from 6 to 10 feet were common, with some drifts reaching 25 feet. There were even drifts of 1 to 2 feet found in the attics of houses.”

More than 35,000 cattle died in the storm, Knapp said, but no human fatalities were reported.

Information about Kansas weather and the Weather Data Library is available on the Web at www.oznet.ksu.edu/wdl/.

Time for witches, pumpkins



TOM BETZ/Colby Free Press

A metal witch rode her broom over a stack of pumpkins in Leroy and Joan's yard at 235 W. Summit St. on Friday. Leroy and son Marc of Salina were

arranging the pumpkins around the witch. Pumpkins and Halloween art are showing up on lawns all over Colby this week.

Winter weather week begins

Whether we like it or not, winter is coming.

We'll all have to get used to the routine of bundling up in our winter coats, turtlenecks, gloves and multiple sweatshirts so we will be prepared for what Mother Nature has in store.

When dealing with the harsh realities of winter, it's good to know the terms used to describe weather conditions in forecasts and warnings. That's why David Floyd, warning coordination meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Goodland, is raising public awareness about winter weather, including frostbite, travel safety and the meaning of weather advisories and warnings.

Floyd will be discussing several topics relating to winter weather next week, starting Sunday and ending on Saturday, Oct. 25, with public information statements each day aimed at the areas the Goodland office cover in Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado.

Floyd said the weather service

See "WINTER," Page 5

Moran's cash swells as he eyes Senate bid

By Sam Hananel

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Kansas Rep. Jerry Moran has amassed more than \$2.4 million in campaign cash as he eyes a future bid for the U.S. Senate.

In his most recent campaign finance report, the Republican from western Kansas' sprawling 1st Congressional District said he took in nearly \$320,000 from July 17 to Sept. 30.

While his first priority is winning a seventh House term in November, Moran has been telling supporters he expects to run in 2010 for the Senate seat that Republican Sam Brownback will vacate. And he's ramped up fundraising efforts, raising about

\$1 million in just the past year alone.

“It says there's a lot of support in Kansas for Jerry and the work that he does in Washington,” Moran campaign spokesman Travis Murphy said. “He's doing all he can to put himself into a position where he can launch a bid for the U.S. Senate.”

Moran, of Hays, is expected to win re-election easily in his solidly conservative district. He spent just \$32,000 since mid-July campaigning against his Democratic opponent, first-time candidate James Bordonaro.

Political scientist Bob Beatty of Washburn University said Moran has been straightforward with constituents about how he plans to use the money he raises as

a House member.

“If you go back to the way his interest in the Senate became public, that actually came out through a fundraising letter,” Beatty said. “He was letting people know, ‘If you donate to me, it's likely you'll be donating to a Senate campaign.’”

Brownback is not seeking re-election in 2010, sticking to a self-imposed term-limit pledge to serve no more than two full six-year terms.

Beatty said Moran's strategy of raising money early appears aimed at scaring off potential opponents for the seat, both Republicans and Democrats.

With so much cash this early, Moran may already have about half the money needed

to run a competitive Senate race.

Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kan., just passed the \$5 million mark near the end of his re-election contest, and that was a record for a federal candidate in Kansas.

Moran's eye on the Senate has already fueled interest among possible candidates in the 1st Congressional District race in 2010.

Republican state Sen. Tim Huelskamp, of Fowler, filed a statement of candidacy for the seat with the Federal Election Commission in July. And Brownback's current chief of staff, Rob Wasinger, of Hays, has recently created a “Wasinger for Congress” Web site.

Extension agents plan bus tour of northeast farms

Northwest area extension agents and K-State Research and Extension are planning a bus tour for farmers and ranchers to the northeast part of the state on Friday and Saturday, Nov. 20-21.

The bus will leave Colby at 6:30 a.m. and make stops to pick up people in Quinter, Hays and Ellsworth. The cost is \$170 for lodging, bus and tour, \$80 for bus and tour for a second person sharing a room.

The schedule includes:

- A stop at Munson Angus Beef,

Junction City. This is a family operation that sells beef directly to the consumer. They also are involved in agritourism, giving farm tours with their draft horses, along with entertainment.

- A tour of the Kansas State University-U.S. Department of Agriculture's wheat genetics and breeding research facilities.

See how improved disease and insect resistance is detected and selected for in wheat and similar grasses from around the world and then inserted into the wheat plant

with special instruments, and how the breeding lines are then tested and developed for growers.

- Free evening at Legends West in Kansas City, Kansas. Visit the new development in Kansas City, which includes the Kansas Speedway and more than 90 stores and restaurants, including Cabela's and Nebraska Furniture Mart.

- Spend the night in the Comfort Suites in Kansas City.

- After breakfast, visit the Kansas City Board of Trade.

See where futures and options

contracts are traded on hard red winter wheat and see the Value Line Index, an equally weighted index of about 1,650 stocks.

- Tour Sysco Food Services in Kansas City. Sysco serves restaurant and institutional kitchens from more than 170 locations, with 50,000 employees and multiple products, including several lines of branded meat products.

- Tour the Homestead Mill in New Cambria. This cooperative flour mill uses stones to grind red and white wheat produced in

Kansas. Every bag or load of flour has a lot number, which identifies which member's field it comes from.

The tour is open to anyone interested in agriculture. There must be at least 40 pre-registered participants, and there are only spots for 55 due to bus space. Registrations are due by Friday, Oct. 31.

For information, call the Thomas County Extension office at (785) 460-4582.

Briefly

Two days left to register

Anyone who did not vote in the last two state and national elections and anyone who has moved or changed their name needs to register by Monday in order to vote in November. Thomas County voters can register or re-register at the clerk's office at the courthouse from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. today and Monday.

School plans Scrapbook Day

Heartland Christian School will hold its eighth annual Scrapbooking Day fund raiser from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday. The cost is \$30 for the day or \$15 for any six hours, including three meals.

Ballet will dance to 'Reverie'

The New York Theatre Ballet

Scouts to collect for Genesis

The Colby Girl Scouts plan their annual “Trick or Treat So Others Can Eat” campaign from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday. Scouts and members of other organizations will go door to door collecting nonperishables for the Genesis Food Bank. If you are going to be gone, leave a bag of canned goods on your porch. If the weather is bad, the drive will be Sunday, Oct. 26.

College board meets Monday

The Colby Community College board will meet at 5 p.m. Monday in the board room at Thomas Hall to hear about expected revenues and expenses for the year and receive the first quarter — July 1 to September 30 — financial report. The trustees are expected to discuss the Wellness Center project, the Thomas County tuition grant and an Endowment Foundation social event set for Tuesday, Dec. 2.

Coffee with Coaches' returns

“Coffee with the Coaches” begins at 9 a.m. every Saturday during the Colby High football season at the Sports Shoppe, 400 N. Franklin Ave. Come talk football with Coach Chris Gardner.

School flu shots Wednesday

The Thomas County Health Department will be at the Colby schools to offer flu shots to students and staff Wednesday morning.

A consent form will be sent home with elementary and middle school children and be available at the high school office. It must be returned to the school office by Tuesday. For questions, call Amy Hutfles at 460-5111.

Nurses will be at various businesses to offer shots from 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesday.

