### Weather Corner



Tonight: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. mainly before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 57. East wind 5 to 15 mph becoming south.

Saturday: 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms, mainly after 1 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 84. Southeast wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before 1 a.m. Partly cloudy, with a low around 60. South wind around 10 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 91. South wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 62

Monday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, high near 92.

Monday Night: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 64.

Tuesday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, high near 90.

Tuesday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low

Wednesday: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. High near 91

Thursday: High, 82; Low 63 Precip: Thursday 0.06 inches Month: 2.81 inches 16.21 inches 13.76 inches Normal: (K-State Experiment Station) Sunrise and Sunset

Saturday 6:32 a.m. 9:08 p.m. 6:33 a.m. 9:08 p.m. 6:34 a.m. 9:07 p.m. (U.S. Naval Observatory) Colby Water Use 1,547,000 gal.

(Colby Public Works)

# Midwest banks say area still feeling economic woes

rural bankers suggests that, thanks to the weaker market for farm products, the economy is still ailing in a region of 11 Midwest and Plains states.

The Rural Main Street Index dropped to 32.6 in July, down from 34.0 in June and 36.2 in May. The report issued Friday said that, though disappointing, the figures were still a lot higher than the record low of 16.9

A reading of 50.0 is considered growth neutral.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey, said the gauge of overall economic activity seemed to bottom out earlier in the year but is now trending downward.

Goss and Bill McQuillan, chief executive officer of City National Bank in Greeley, Neb., created the survey, which covers Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minne-

Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming.

The survey's confidence index, which reflects what the bankers expect six months from now, dropped below growth neutral also: to 44.6 in July from 52.2 in June and 56.0 in May.

Farm economists have said the weaker global economy has hurt net farm income, which in turn has hurt sales of farm equipment and land.

Goss said the July survey asked bankers what they expected in 2009 crop income.

"Only 6.3 percent of the bankers forecast an increase in farm income over 2008 levels," Goss said. "Fully one-third expect crop income in 2009 to be lower than 2008."

Some bankers suggested that the problem with farm income is prices, not production.

"It appears that yields will be 10, 15 percent higher than last year," said Bradley Robson, chief executive of First State Bank

OMAHA (AP) - A monthly survey of sota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North in Belmond, Iowa, "however, prices will be unfavorably with June's anemic 33.7, and down close to 25 percent."

Joe Kennedy, president of First National Bank in Frankfort, Kan. was optimistic.

"We have had very good rains in the past 10 days or so. The crop yields should be better than the past three years," he said.

The index for rural hiring remained low in July, hitting 25.0, or 4 percentage points under the 29.0 in June.

It was the 19th month in a row that the new-hiring index was in the declining range. In the survey report, Goss blamed that weakness in part on the national and global recession and weaker farm and energy commodity prices.

"Over the past 12 months, rural areas of the region have lost almost 5 percent of their jobs. July's survey indicates that these job losses are likely to continue in the months ahead," Goss said.

July's retail-sales index of 29.5 compared

for a second straight month, the home-sales index dropped. It hit 40.0 in July, compared

with 45.9 in June and 48.7 in May. "Real estate is selling very slowly," said Pete Haddeland, chief executive of First

National Bank in Mahnomen, Minn. But Ken Walsh, president of Ruby Valley Bank in Twin Bridges, Mont., said real estate agents are telling him "that the inquiries have picked up recently, so maybe the transactions will be forthcoming."

Also in July's survey, bankers were asked about the effect of the federal stimulus

None of the bankers reported a large and meaningful impact; 37.5 percent said the impact was nil; 62.5 percent said the impact was "very little or small."

Almost 200 communities are represented in the survey, with the average population about 1,300.

# Lab error causes false swine flu report

From "SWINE FLU," Page 1

body aches, coughing, sore throat and congestion. In the more severe cases, vomiting and diarrhea may develop.

According to the state health department, people can help contain the spread of the disease by washing hands frequently using sanitizers or soap, avoiding personal cases. Doctors usually

contact (such as shaking hands) if they have flu symptoms, coughing or sneezing away from others and drinking plenty of water.

There is as yet no vaccine for the latest virus, which cannot be treated with a few antiviral drugs. Symptoms can be treated with aspirin or other drugs and decongestants, but not eliminated in most

## Don't forget about West Nile virus

An area health expert advises people to remem- cleaning and changing pet water and bird baths ber that it's mosquito season and they should take precautions when they are outdoors, especially in the evening and early morning hours, to avoid West Nile virus and other diseases.

Decatur County Health Administrator Marilyn Gamblin said the county has had one positive test for western equine encephalitis, which is similar to West Nile virus. She said people need be careful to avoid mosquito bites and dress accordingly when going out.

Some of the things people can do is to get rid of standing water around homes. That includes emptying and disposing of any old tires laying around,

regularly, not letting boats fill up and even making sure gutters are clear of debris.

Mosquitoes need water to breed, she said, and the smallest container can provide a spot for them to lay their eggs.

Other ideas include wearing light-colored, loose fitting clothing, as some of the mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors, she said.

Gamblin said using a bug spray with the chemical DEET is a good idea when going outside. Spray with a DEET level of 23.8 percent will last five hours, 20 percent four hours and 6.65 percent

# Community College gets \$2 million grant

From "GRANT," Page 1

Paula Davis, vice president of academic affairs, is leading a group which will decide what courses to offer, Kaaz said, but some areas being considered are veterinary technology, allied health services and alternative energy technol-

The second focus for development will be online student services, such as counseling and tutoring. A third is training faculty to lead online courses, and fourth is system to support online efforts.

The idea is to expand access to potential students.'

programs and increase enrollment revenue, Krieder said. Projections show a significant increase in students by the end of the five-year grant, generating nearly \$800,000 a year in revenue. This will support salaries and cover equipment maintenance and upgrades.

"The grant will allow the college to increase enrollment by enhancing and developing successful programs responsive to the needs of the under-served populations in our service area," Kreider said. "Enrollment will grow by expanddevelopment of equipment and a ing alternative delivery systems in order to tap new populations of

# Straight winds can out-do tornadoes

MANHATTAN - Tornado Alley them from tornadic winds." residents may not be as respectful as they should be of winds that don't rotate, says state Climatologist Mary Knapp.

"The strong, straight winds that thunderstorms can bring tend to be more frequent and more widespread than tornadoes. That's one reason why straight winds also can cause more severe property and crop damage than the average tornado will," said Knapp, who heads the official Kansas Weather Data Library and its statewide array of weather stations.

Both winds can be equally strong, she said. The National Weather Service defines "straightline winds" as winds that don't rotate – "used mainly to differentiate

Typically, damaging straight-

line winds are associated with the leading edge of a thunderstorm, when rain-cooled air in the atmosphere rides over dry, warm air near the ground. Because cool air sinks (just as hot air rises), this meeting results in a downdraft of air that spreads out at ground level, causing the gusty surface winds known as the gust front or outflow boundary of the storm.

"Just to keep things interesting, though, outflow boundaries sometimes persist for 24 hours or more after their thunderstorm dissipates. Plus, they sometimes travel hundreds of miles from their place of origin. And, if they do, new thunderstorms often develop along

them," Knapp said.

A gust front becomes particularly dangerous, she said, when the downdraft of air from a storm's edge is strong enough to be classified as a downburst. Then the outburst of wind on or near the ground can produce damage similar to a strong tornado's.

"Although usually associated with thunderstorms, downbursts also can occur with showers rain storms that are too weak to produce thunder," Knapp warned. 'That's why you need to be alert, watchful, anytime strong air masses are going to meet."

The Kansas Weather Data Library (www.oznet.ksu.edu/wdl/) is housed at Kansas State Univer-

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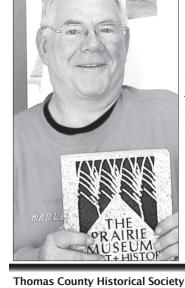


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