

Weather



National Weather Service
Tonight: Mostly clear, with a low around 28. South wind around 15 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 60. Breezy, with a south wind between 15 and 25 mph, with gusts as high as 35 mph.

Saturday Night: A slight chance of rain and snow showers after midnight. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 34. Breezy, with a south wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

Sunday: A slight chance of rain and snow showers before 9 a.m., then a slight chance of rain showers between 9 a.m. and noon. Mostly sunny, with a high near 60. South wind between 10 and 15 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 34.

Monday: Sunny, with a high near 70.

Monday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 39.

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 72.

Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 42.

Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 70.

Wednesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 40.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 71.

Thursday: High, 50; Low 17
 Precip: Thursday None
 Month: None
 Year: 0.89 inches
 Normal: 2.11 inches
 (K-State Experiment Station)
Sunrise and Sunset
 Saturday 7:03 a.m. 6:47 p.m.
 Moon: waning, 92 percent
 Sunday 8:01 a.m. 7:48 p.m.
 Daylight Saving Time starts, 2 a.m.
 Moon: waning, 85 percent
 Monday 7:59 a.m. 7:49 p.m.
 Moon: waning, 76 percent
 (U.S. Naval Observatory)

City council approves water, electric upgrades

From "CITY," Page 1

"What we're arguing about is probably the most beneficial part of this whole damn package," Mallory said.

Councilman Mark Beringer told Hutfles there is money in the budget for fixing leaks already.

Hutfles then asked how long the meters are guaranteed for and whether the city would be "cycling" some of them out over the years or just keep the same ones in for 20 years. Christenson said he hopes they can have the same ones in place for the whole time, so Hutfles asked if they would replace them all after the 20 years.

Mense said not necessarily, because meters don't just fail with age. He said they tend to start losing accuracy depending on how much water goes through them.

Hutfles asked how much the water side of the project is costing and how much electric is costing. Taylor said costs include \$900,000 for water meters, about \$100,000 for leak detection and a little more than \$500,000 for electric meters.

Taylor added that on the electric side, every month that the city doesn't go to a new system, the staff puts in old meters that have to be manually read and over time, the costs are going to go up. He said he figured that if the city were to phase in the water meters over 10 years, it would lose about \$370,000 in benefits due to the inaccuracies of the existing meters, meaning that they keep pumping water into the ground, keep buying meters, instead of spending \$900,000 at once to fix all of these problems.

Hutfles said one issue he sees

is that the city is going to spend about \$1 million on the water side and then still have to fork out more money along the way to fix leaks and other things.

"Whether we have this program or not, we're going to have leaks we're going to be fixing all the time anyway," said Mayor Gary Adrian.

"This is what I'm struggling with," Hutfles said. "Say we spend all this money, we have all this high-dollar accurate locating equipment, we still gotta fix it and we still gotta come up with the money to do it."

He then asked if the city would keep utility rates the same. Beringer said the proposal from Johnson is for no rate increase.

Councilman Omar Weber asked if the city backs off and does the project a piece at a time, how much costs would increase in five years?

Christenson said that the American Water Works Association anticipates by 2030 that we will be paying 3 1/2 times as much to replace pipe as we are today.

Hutfles asked if any leaks were identified in the survey the firm took earlier this year, and Christenson said they found two large leaks and a bad seal on a fire hydrant.

Taylor said the city is going to continue to have leaks no matter what because of the aging water lines.

Mense added that right now, city staff is spending a lot of time replacing and reading meters, so if they're all new and have the new system, that time will be freed up for fixing leaks. Voss asked how much time they spend replacing meters and Armstrong said an average of 120 electric meters a year.

Weber said the council needs

to consider that Colby is still growing while the surrounding towns are not and are even shrinking. He said he doesn't want to spend the \$2 million either, but that the city is going to have to go electronic sooner or later.

"I think we need to stay on the cutting edge of everything that we do, and granted, there's a money limit, but I don't want to see us get held up here," Weber said. "And again, I don't want us to look back 10 years from now, spent just as much money and got a third of the job done and we're fighting even more of a leak problem because 10 more years have aged..."

Councilman Mike Hake said it's good that the council was looking at this project critically because it hasn't always done that in the past, and the council has to be aware of the public perception and make sure it's considering all the alternatives.

"It still bothers me that it's all bundled together ... I'm struggling with it," he said.

Armstrong said she was probably the most negative person on this project in the beginning, but she's convinced it's the right way to fix the problems.

Hake said he thinks the project is a benefit, but the council is struggling with the cost. Beringer said another benefit is possibly avoiding fines from the state. Adrian said the benefit the public is looking for is just to have water come out of their faucets.

After a little more discussion, Mayor Adrian asked for a motion and Weber moved to accept the contract and it was seconded by Mallory. The motion passed 6-2, with Stan Schmidt and Dave Voss voting against.

Possible job creation drives highway bills in Congress

From "BILL," Page 1

pitched his own six-year, \$476 billion transportation bill as a jobs plan as well, but it is obvious lawmakers are unwilling to consider such a large proposal. They've had to scour the federal budget to find money to pay for a Senate bill a quarter of that size. While paying lip service to their own bill, administration officials are also backing the more modest Senate bill, which would cost \$109 billion over two years.

"A transportation bill will be the biggest jobs bill Congress could ever pass, bigger than anything else they've done in the three and a half years I've been in this job," Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said, praising the Senate bill.

Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif.,

the chief sponsor of the Senate bill, estimates it will preserve 1.8 million jobs that would be lost if authority to spend trust fund monies expires, and create another 1 million new jobs through a \$1 billion loan-guarantee program.

The loan program has been shown to generate as much \$30 in private sector investment for every \$1 in federal aid. To reach her job estimate, Boxer used that formula, plus Federal Highway Administration estimates that every \$1 billion in highway spending creates about 35,000 jobs if it is matched by state and local aid.

Nearly 3 million jobs "are hanging in the balance" as the Senate debates the bill, Boxer said.

But that analysis "assumes that if this bill doesn't pass, all

funding ceases, which really isn't a fair assumption," said Joshua Schank, president of the Eno Center for Transportation, a transportation think tank.

It's unlikely that Congress would allow highway and transit aid to lapse even if lawmakers can't agree on a longer-term bill, he said. Rather, he said, they are likely to pass a short-term extension of current programs, as they have done eight times since the last long-term transportation plan expired in 2009.

Icon says Kan. should support front-runner

From "SUPPORT," Page 1

chances of winning Kansas will be affected if he doesn't visit, "but I don't think it's a decisive effect."

"The inevitability factor does help Romney a bit," Kobach said. "Many Republicans are saying these candidates are all acceptable."

Santorum, who won three states on Super Tuesday, has brushed off suggestions that Romney's nomination is inevitable and said a victory in Kansas is important if his campaign is to overcome Romney.

Santorum's Kansas coordinator, Greg Cromer, said Santorum will have an event Friday afternoon in Topeka before going to Wichita.

Tori Walker, a 42-year-old music teacher from the Kansas City suburb of Shawnee, said she attended Santorum's rally Wednesday because she likes Santorum's conservative views on abortion and gay marriage.

But it was Paul picking up the endorsement Thursday of Troy Newman, president of the anti-

abortion group Operation Rescue, which has its headquarters in Wichita.

On Friday, Santorum plans to speak at a local Wichita airport but won't attend a tea party group's pre-caucus rally - frustrating organizers who spent \$25,000 to rent an arena.

They expected between 1,000 and 3,000 people and had hoped all four remaining GOP candidates would show.

Only Paul is participating. He also scheduled an appearance in Topeka before the Wichita rally and in Lawrence afterward.

"That may be something the voters of Kansas should take into consideration at the polls, whether a candidate takes the time to actually visit their state," said Gary Howard, Paul's national campaign press secretary, in an email to The Associated Press.

Former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich canceled planned appearances Friday and Saturday in Kansas. He's instead concentrating on campaigning in the South after winning his home state of Georgia on Tuesday.

Briefly

Republican caucus set for 10 a.m. Saturday

Thomas County Republicans will caucus Saturday to vote on presidential candidates. The session will begin at 10 a.m. at the Cultural Arts Center on the Colby Community College campus. Party workers will start checking photo IDs at 9. Only registered Republicans may vote. The caucus must close at 1 p.m., but anyone who's inside by that time will be allowed to vote. For questions, call Josh Faber, county chairman, at 460-6548.

Worship, praise night planned by church

A night of worship is planned at 6 p.m. Saturday at the Colby High School Auditorium, sponsored by the Celebration Community Church of Hays and featuring a nondenominational, encouraging message and music by the band Ignite. For information, call Debbie McNinch at 460-4205.

Deadline approaching for mini-soccer camp

Registration deadline is next Friday for a mini-soccer camp to be held Friday through Sunday, March 23 to 25, at Colby Middle School. Cost is \$65. For information or to register, contact Elaine Bremenkamp at 462-7860.

Women pioneers the focus of 'Thought'

The Prairie Museum of Art and History's next "Food for Thought" program will be at noon Thursday. In honor of Women's History Month, the focus will be on a few hardy women who were some of the earliest settlers in Thomas County. A light lunch will be served, with extra tables and chairs and plenty of food. The museum is at 1905 S. Franklin. For information, call Ann Miner at (785) 460-4590 or e-mail museumed@st-tel.net.

Walk Kansas to begin March 18

Walk Kansas 2012 runs from Sunday, March 18, to May 12, for teams of six. Pick up a team captain packet at the Thomas County Extension office, 350 S. Range, Suite 16, or download materials at www.thomas.ksu.edu. Registration, \$7 a person, includes program packets and weekly newsletters. T-shirts are available for \$7, more for larger sizes. Register your team by 5 p.m. next Friday.

Colby first graders plan musical next week

The Colby Grade School first graders will present a musical show, "Carnival of the Animals," at 2 and 7 p.m. Tuesday in the school auditorium. The free event is open to the public. For information, call music teacher Jennifer Koel at 460-5100.

Salina lawyer to talk about estate planning

The Thomas County Community Foundation and K-State Research and Extension have asked a Salina lawyer to talk on estate planning from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday at the 4-H Building, off Olive Street west of Range Ave. \$10 pays for supper. Register to attend no later than today by calling (785) 460-4582 or e-mailing jengels@ksu.edu.

College plans meetings on aid guidelines

The admissions office at Colby Community College will hold four informal information sessions on revised scholarship guidelines and the Thomas County Tuition Scholarship at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Tuesday and next Wednesday in the Student Union, room 106. Refreshments will be provided. For information, contact Brittney Squire at 460-4690.

Seniors plan potluck at Presbyterian Church

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share; table service and beverages will be provided. For information, call 462-6342.

Citizens offering classes on diabetes

Citizens Medical Center will begin a monthly series of free classes on diabetes from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday in the hospital conference room. The series, "Journey for Control," will provide information support from others dealing with diabetes. The first topic is "On the Road to Better Managing Your Diabetes." Participants are asked to register with Jeanene Brown if the education department at (785) 460-4850.

Kids can learn to cook at free classes

Kids-a-Cookin', a free, fun, hands-on cooking and nutrition class for third through fifth graders will be Thursdays, this week and April 19. Sign-up by calling the Colby City Recreation Department at 460-4440 so organizers will know how much food and materials to have. Sessions will be canceled if the enrollment is less than 10.

LOCAL TV Listings Sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Monday Evening										March 12, 2012		
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30		
KAKE/ABC	The Bachelor				The Bachelor		Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live			
KBSL/CBS	How I Met	2 Broke G	Two Men	Mike	Hawaii Five-0		Local	Late Show Letterman	Late			
KSNK/NBC	The Voice				Smash		Local	Tonight Show w/Leno	Late			
KSAS/FOX	House		Alcatraz		Local							
Cable Channels												
A & E	Hoarders		Hoarders		Intervention		Intervention		Hoarders			
AMC	Braveheart								Braveheart			
ANIM	Gator Boys		Finding Bigfoot		Rattlesnake Republic		Gator Boys		Finding Bigfoot			
BRAVO	Bethenny Ever After		Bethenny Ever After		Love Broker		Happens		Bethenny Ever After		Love	
CMT	Them Idiots				Ron White's Celebrity				Them Idiots Whirled Tour			
CNN	Anderson Cooper 360		Piers Morgan Tonight		Anderson Cooper 360		E. B. OutFront		Piers Morgan Tonight			
COMEDY	South Pk	South Pk	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Daily	Colbert	South Pk	South Pk		
DISC	American Chopper		American Chopper		Sons of Guns		American Chopper		Sons of Guns			
DISN	Austin	Hocus Pocus			Austin		Phineas	Wizards	Wizards	Wizards		
E!	Sex-City	Sex-City		E! Special		Scouted		Chelsea	E! News	Chelsea		
ESPN	NBA Basketball							NBA Basketball				
ESPN2	Bracketology			MLS Soccer					SportsCenter			
FAM	Pretty Little Liars		Secret-Teen		Pretty Little Liars		The 700 Club		Prince	Prince		
FOOD	Heat See.	Heat See.	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners		
FX	Twilight								Twilight			
HGTV	Love It or List It		House	House	House	Hunters	My House	First	House	House		
HIST	Pawn	Pawn	American Pickers		Pawn	Pawn	American Pickers		Pawn	Pawn		
LIFE	Untraceable				Panic Room				Untraceable			
MTV	Tribute to Dunn		Jackass 3.5				Caged		Jackass 3.5			
NICK	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends		
SCI	Being Human		Being Human		Lost Girl		Being Human		Lost Girl			
SPIKE	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die		
TBS	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Conan		Office	Office		
TCM	A Kind of Loving				The L-Shaped Room				The Lonel			
TLC	Obsession	Obsession	The Real Skinny		Twintervention		Obsession	Obsession	The Real Skinny			
TNT	The Mentalist		The Mentalist		The Closer		Rizzoli & Isles		CSI: NY			
TOON	Regular	MAD	King/Hill	King/Hill	Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Chicken	Boondocks		
TRAV	Bizarre Foods		Bizarre Foods		Bizarre Foods		No Reservation		Bizarre Foods			
TV LAND	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	King	King	The King of Queens			
USA	NCIS		WWWE Monday Night RAW				Psych		NCIS			
VH1	Basketball Wives		T.I.-Tiny	Basketball Wives		T.I.-Tiny	Basketball Wives		T.I.-Tiny	Stevie TV		
WGN	Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		WGN News at Nine		30 Rock	Scrubs	Scrubs	Death		
Premium Channels												
HBO	Real Time/Bill Maher		Game Change				Too Short		Your Highness			
MAX	Life as We Know It				Face/Off					Sexy		
SHOW	Homeland		Californ.	Lies	Shameless		Lies	Californ.	Shameless			

Use The Classifieds!
 785.462.3963