

Weather



National Weather Service
Tonight: Mostly clear, with a low around 13. South wind 5 to 10 mph becoming west after midnight.

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 43. Northwest wind around 10 mph.

Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 11. Northwest wind around 5 mph becoming calm in the evening.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 38. West wind around 5 mph.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 18.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 35.

Monday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 13.

Christmas Day: A 40 percent chance of snow. Cloudy, with a high near 21.

Tuesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 5.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 24.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 9.

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 33.

Thursday: High, 35; Low 11
Precip: Thursday None
Month: 0.48 inches
Year: 12.22 inches
Normal: 20.65 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)
Sunrise and Sunset
Saturday 8:01 a.m. 5:25 p.m.
Moon: waxing, 74 percent
Sunday 8:02 a.m. 5:25 p.m.
Moon: waxing, 82 percent
Monday 8:02 a.m. 5:26 p.m.
Moon: waxing, 88 percent
(U.S. Naval Observatory)

Governor
hears report
on drought

TOPEKA (AP) – Gov. Sam Brownback says Kansas farmers, ranchers and communities should review their water use and conservation plans as the drought persists.

Brownback received an update Thursday on the drought and steps being taken around the state to maintain adequate water levels.

Officials said water supplies remain low, especially at the 24 federal reservoirs around the state. Several are more than 30 percent below normal levels. The officials noted that the John Redmond Reservoir in east-central Kansas is at just 46 percent capacity.

Brownback says it's difficult to predict when the drought will end. He urged water users to update conservation or emergency plans if conditions worsen.

County OKs money transfers

From "COUNTY," Page 1

end of the month. We need to wait for reports on KPERs, Social Security and health insurance.

"A considerable amount of money is being charged against the general fund, but it needs to be charged against employee benefits instead. This was a mistake in our favor."

The transfer to the jail fund will help increase a reserve set aside to pay for a new jail or an addition to the Law Enforcement Center. Steele said the county received more tax money than expected and that excess can be used for future jail plans.

Commissioner Ken Christiansen said they typically set back about \$150,000 for the jail, but Steele said, because of the unexpected increase in income, he anticipates setting aside anywhere between \$200,000 and \$400,000 this year.

The last transfer will be to the road and bridge fund, to cover a negative balance of \$243,000.

Later that morning, commissioners conducted a public hearing on an amended 2012 budget. No one appeared to comment. Notice of the hearing and the proposed amend-

ments had been published in the *Colby Free Press* on Monday, Dec. 3. No changes were made to that proposal.

Steele said the total of nine amendments will increase 2012 expenditures by about \$532,000. The proposal was approved by all three commissioners.

Steele added almost \$1 million in property taxes had been levied in 2011 for the general fund. Then, in August 2011, the county had budgeted to spend more than \$2.54 million this year. In addition to property taxes, this amount includes money raised by sales taxes that total almost \$800,000, plus delinquent taxes and fees, Steele said after the meeting.

On Monday, commissioners approved an increase of \$211,000 in the general fund. Steele said they did this to raise the amount the county can legally spend from that account.

Other increases to 2012 approved were for employee benefits, \$100,000; mental health, \$1,500; mental retardation, \$7,500; ambulance service, \$150,000; community van, \$2,000; and the ambulance equipment reserve, \$60,000.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved the resignation of Brewster

Mayor Mike Baughn. He served the city for over 40 years, said Baughn, as mayor, marshal and councilman. Baughn, a former Thomas County sheriff, will be come a county commissioner in January.

- Approved the annual agreement with the Thomas County Speedway and the Thomas County Fair Board. It included information on leases, rentals and parking, equipment use and a statement verifying proof of liability insurance. The speedway is to furnish insurance coverage commissioners and the fair board to be covered for \$1 million or more.

- Approved appointments for Dale Herschberger to the Economic Development Alliance board, and Paul Bailey for the Planning Commission and Zoning Appeals Board.

In January, after Christiansen serves his last meeting, he will take Baughn's seat on the Economic Development board. Steele also serves on that board.

Two commissioners cannot serve on that board at the same time because it could then be considered a public meeting under state law, Steele said.

- Renewed a beer license for the Colonial Steakhouse north of Oakley on U.S. 83.

Businesses, offices will close for holiday

From "HOLIDAY," Page 1

to 2 p.m. and there will be a paper that day. The office will be closed Tuesday, and there is never a paper on Tuesday.

Pioneer Memorial Library will close Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. The Prairie Museum of Art and History will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, but will be closed Monday and Tuesday.

Tubbs and Sons Ford will shut down Saturday through Tuesday for the holiday and Colby Dodge will close at 5 p.m. Saturday and

reopen Wednesday. P&D Auto will be closed Monday and Tuesday.

The Oasis and Pilot truck stops, along with most convenience stores, will be open.

Colby Bowl will close at 3 p.m. on Christmas Eve, but will open at 4 p.m. Christmas Day for evening bowling.

Starbucks at the Oasis will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday and from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday.

McDonalds will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday and will close Tuesday. Arby's will close

at 4 p.m. Christmas Eve and reopen Wednesday. J&B Meat Market will be open Sunday, but will close Monday and Tuesday. Village Inn and Subway will close at 2 p.m. Monday, Taco John's at 3 p.m., Sonic at 4 p.m., Pizza Hut at 6 p.m. and they will all close Tuesday. Montana Mike's will be closed both Monday and Tuesday and El Dos de Oros will be open from 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Christmas Eve and closed Tuesday.

City Limits will close Monday and Tuesday. Quiznos and Baskin & Robbins will close

Christmas Day.

Walmart will close at 8 p.m. Christmas Eve and open again at 6 a.m. Wednesday. The pharmacy will close at 6 p.m.

Dillons and the Dillons pharmacy will close at 6 p.m. Christmas Eve and open at 7 a.m. Wednesday.

Palace Drug's hours will be from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday and the store will be closed at 2 p.m. Monday and reopen Wednesday.

City Council approves fiber-optic lines

From "CITY," Page 1

final version was introduced to the council.

The contracts for other telecommunications companies were not written the same, he said at Tuesday's meeting. AT&T is allowed to put its lines on city utility poles, but S&T Communications has all its lines underground. Midwest Energy has a single line of utility poles going through the city, down Country Club Drive, and in earlier meetings the possibility was discussed of Wildflower placing its lines on the Midwest poles. Friesen has said Wildflower wants to set up a franchise for commercial customers such as cell phone towers, not to serve

homes or consumers.

He was not at Tuesday's meeting, but said later that his company will accept the contract. Wildflower plans to start laying fiber optic lines within the next 30 days, he said, "This is kind of a first step," he said. "We're not fully decided. Probably most of the plant in Colby will be underground."

In other business, the council:

- Decided not to act on a proposal to change how city water use is billed next year. The council had discussed changes that would have allowed people could continue watering their trees into winter because of the drought.

Tuesday, members pointed out that most

people have probably stopped watering because of recent colder temperatures and snow. Finance Director Debbie Zerr said municipal sewer bills are based on a person's average water use from Nov. 20 to Feb. 20, and the council members had discussed only measuring water use from Jan. 20 to Feb. 20, when few people would be watering lawns or trees.

- Authorized a transfer of \$200,000 to the reserve fund of the water utility budget. McGreer felt that the money should be set aside to fix the system as it gets older, but that the water system is in adequate shape for the time being.

Next snowstorm may land here Christmas Day

From "SNOW," Page 1

storm.

About three inches of snow fell around Colby, said Jeremy Martin at the Goodland weather office.

The blizzard started about 3 p.m. Wednesday. Wind, snow and whiteout conditions kept kept state troopers, sheriff's deputies and highway crews busy all night cleaning up accidents caused by snow packed roads and near-zero visibility.

All highways in northwest Kansas were opened by Thursday morning, though most had been closed the night before.

Lots of Thomas County kids got a snow day out of the blizzard Wednesday or Thursday. Colby, Heartland Christian and Sacred Heart Catholic schools cancelled classes before the storm, while students at the Golden Plains and Brewster school districts got Thursday off. Heartland opened at 10 a.m. Thursday, and Colby Public

Schools and Sacred Heart had classes all day.

The snow hit just as several school districts were about their winter break, including Colby, Sacred Heart, Heartland Christian School, Triplains, and

Brewster schools, which had no classes today.

Today was the last day of school for Golden Plains. Colby Community College did not have class at all this week.

LOCAL TV Listings

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Monday Evening										December 24, 2012			
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30			
KAKE/ABC	Landing	Shrek	Shrek the Third				Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live				
KBSL/CBS	How I Met	How I Met	2 Broke G	Mike	Hawaii Five-0		Local	One Christmas Story	Local				
KSNK/NBC	It's-Wonderful						Local	Christmas Eve Mass					
KSAS/FOX	Raising	Raising	Raising	Raising	Local								
Cable Channels													
A & E	Duck D.	Duck D.	Duck D.	Duck D.	Duck Dynasty		Duck D.	Duck D.	Duck D.	Duck D.			
AMC	Miracle on 34th Street			Miracle-34 St.				Prancer					
ANIM	America's Cutest Dog	Too Cute!			Too Cute!		America's Cutest Dog	Too Cute!					
BRAVO	Meet the Parents			Meet the Parents				Overboard					
CMT	Reba	Reba	Unlikely Angel					Fireproof					
CNN	Best and Worst 2012	Piers Morgan Tonight			The First Christians				Piers Morgan Tonight				
COMEDY	Tosh.0	Tosh.0	It's Always Sunny		Bad Santa				It's Always Sunny				
DISC	American Chopper	American Chopper			Amish Mafia		American Chopper		Amish Mafia				
DISN	Christmas Carol				Phineas and Ferb		Jessie	Shake It	Wizards	Wizards			
E!	E! Investigates		Celebrity Oops: They		Ice-Coco	Ice-Coco	Chelsea	Celebrity Oops: They	Chelsea				
ESPN	College Football							SportsCenter		NFL			
ESPN2	SportsCenter		E:60		SportsCenter My Wish		SportCtr	E:60		SportCtr			
FAM	Santa Clause 3	Home Alone					The 700 Club		Nat'l-Christmas				
FOOD	Diners	Diners	Diners, Drive		Diners	Diners	Mystery D	Health	Diners, Drive				
FX	Train Dragon				Train Dragon				Train Dragon				
HGTV	Love It or List It	Love It or List It			Hunters	Hunt Intl	Love It or List It		Love It or List It				
HIST	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn			
LIFE	March Sisters				Road-Christmas				March Sisters				
MTV	Teen Mom 2		Teen Mom 2		Teen Mom 2		Teen Mom	Teen Mom 2		Teen Mom			
NICK	See Dad	Full H'se	Full Hse.	Full Hse.	The Nanny	The Nanny	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends			
SCI	Star Trek VI		Starship Troopers						Serenity				
SPIKE	Deadliest Warrior	Deadliest Warrior			Deadliest Warrior		Deadliest Warrior		Deadliest Warrior				
TBS	A Christmas Story				A Christmas Story				A Christmas Story				
TCM	Shop Around Corner				Come to the Stable				Auntie Mame				
TLC	Long Island Medium:	Medium	Medium		Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium			
TNT	The Mentalist		A Christmas Carol				CSI: NY		CSI: NY				
TOON	Regular	Annoying	King/Hill	King/Hill	Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Chicken	Aqua Teen			
TRAV	The Layover		The Layover		Hotel Impossible		Hotel Impossible		The Layover				
TV LAND	Cosby	Cosby	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	King	King	King	King			
USA	WWE Monday Night RAW						The Mummy						
VH1	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny	T.I.-Tiny			
WGN	Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos		Funniest Home Videos				
Premium Channels													
HBO	Journey 2-Myst				Fight	In Time			REAL Sports Gumbel				
MAX	Love Actually				The Sitter				Sin City Diaries 3: To Die For				
SHOW	Untold History		The Help						The King's Speech				

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