

### Weather Corner



## Snow likely, lows near 0

**The forecast**  
**Tonight** — Mostly cloudy with a low around 8. Blustery, with a north wind 15 to 20 mph becoming south 5 to 10 mph.  
**Tuesday** — A 30 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy with a high near 13. South wind 10 to 15 mph becoming northeast. New snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.  
**Tuesday night** — Snow likely, cloudy with a low near 0. Wind chill values between -6 and -16. Northeast wind between 10 and 15 mph. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent.  
**Wednesday** — A 40 percent chance of snow. Cloudy and cold with a high near 9. North wind between 5 and 10 mph.  
**Wednesday night** — Occasional flurries before 1 a.m. Mostly cloudy with a low around -3.  
**Thursday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 17.  
**Thursday night** — Mostly clear with a low around 13.  
**Temperatures**  
Sunday's high, 23  
Low this morning, 2  
Records for this date, 77 in 1939, -14 in 1972.  
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00  
December's precipitation, 0.00  
A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

## Deadline Wednesday on liquor vote

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
*Colby Free Press*

Oakley voters have until 1 p.m. Wednesday to cast their ballot in the Sunday alcohol sales election.

The mail ballot election stems from a petition circulated by Oakley resident Delma Dible's belief selling alcohol on Sunday is wrong.

Dible took action to bring the issue to a vote after city council members Steve Gadger, James McGuire, and Larry Eberle passed an ordinance allowing sale of alcoholic liquor and cereal malt beverages in its original package.

Council member Charles Beam-er voted against the ordinance because he said Sunday sales were not necessary.

Council member Kevin Uhrich was absent from the Sept. 6 meeting.

Ballots were mailed to all registered voters in Oakley in mid-November must be returned by mail or hand delivered to Logan County Clerk Pat Schippers' office by the deadline on Wednesday.

Schippers mailed 1,220 ballots, and as of Friday 803 have been returned.

Schippers expects all returned ballots to be counted late Wednesday.

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A message from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Cancer Information Service, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and American Cancer Society.

**SHOP AT HOME**



**WITH THE CLASSIFIEDS**

Even if you don't feel like getting out, you can still "go shopping" in the

## Briefly

### Christmas dance Saturday

Ron Snyder of Colby will call for the Golden Buckle Christmas Dance starting at 8 p.m., Saturday, at the Colby Community Building. Admission is one (nonperishable) food item for Genesis Thomas County or by paying the regular admission. This will be the only dance held in December, officials said.

### Dance team plans cookie walk

The Colby High School Dance Team is sponsoring a cookie walk, from 1 to 3 p.m., Sunday, Dec 18, at Pioneer Memorial Library. The cookie walk is to raise money for the dance team to help defray expenses when they compete at nationals in Florida. In addition, Caitie Henry, dance team member, was selected for the All-American Dance Team and was invited to dance at the Orange Bowl in Ft. Lauderdale, Wednesday, Jan. 4. The team's expenses will be used from the cookie walk and Henry's expenses are not included in the cookie walk.

### Diabetes workshop Dec. 15

People with diabetes can learn more about the disease at

a workshop from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 15, sponsored by Citizens Medical Center in the hospital meeting room. Those on the agenda include Debbie Hinnen, registered nurse, and Susan Martin, registered dietitian, from Mid-America Diabetes Associates of Wichita, who will talk about disease management. Jeanene Brown, registered nurse and director of the Citizens Medical Center education department, said it's vitally important that those with diabetes get as much education as possible to prevent complications that come with this disease. Brown said most health insurances will pay for the workshop and it will help if the person's own primary care physician sends a physician referral or call Mid-America for this referral. If interested, Mid-America Diabetes Association can be reached at (316) 687-3125, or 888-879-5101 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.. For information about the workshop call Brown at 460-4850.

### Genesis needs volunteers Friday

The Genesis-Thomas County, Inc. Board of Directors is preparing for its annual Christmas Basket project and is asking for help to fill the baskets. The project will be starting at 7 p.m., Friday, at the Thomas County 4-H building on the fairgrounds. The baskets will be distributed to those eligible

from 9 to 11 a.m., Saturday, also at the 4-H Building. The board is encouraging anyone interested to come out and help pack the baskets Friday.

### Commodity distribution Wednesday

United States Department of Agriculture commodities will be distributed from 1:30-3 p.m. Wednesday at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center. Items include corn, beef stew, potatoes, rice cereal, milk, pudding cups, applesauce and instant potatoes. For information, contact the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program office at 462-6744.

### Input sought for planning group

The Thomas County planning core committee is working on a new long-term strategic plan for the county. Now, the group has set its task forces and is looking for people willing to serve on the task force of their choice. They include: rural experience, destination center, youth/entrepreneurial, targeting future industry, youth center, ed/med, wellness, recreation/entertainment, beautification and marketing/public relations and shopping. For information, call the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce at 460-3401.

# State's Christmas tree farmers gear up for season

TOPEKA (AP) — Some area farmers have turned to Christmas trees as their crop of choice, but the going has been a challenge thanks to the tough Kansas climate and a growing demand for artificial trees.

Richard Rees began planting Christmas trees in 1966 on his farmland northeast of Topeka.

That season, he planted 1,500 trees. Today, his Pine-Apple Christmas Tree Farm has 10,000 trees in

various stages of growth.

He's among the 137 Christmas tree growers in the state, according to Caleb Asher, director of communications and marketing for the Kansas Department of Commerce.

While no figures were readily available about the impact tree growers have on the state's economy, he said the farms have been part of the state's ballooning agri-tourism industry.

But Rees said his sales have dropped from 1,200 to 800 trees a season, mainly because of the rising popularity of artificial trees.

"Mess and inconvenience are reasons people give for buying artificial trees," he said.

Jean Deiter, owner of Deiter Christmas Tree Farm near Silver Lake, has been growing Christmas trees for more than 25 years.

She began by planting from 1,000

to 1,500 trees and now has 6,500 Scotch, Austrian and white pines.

She said a Christmas tree farm can provide a good income if you work hard all year.

At her farm, the trees are trimmed and shaped in early July. Grass is mowed continually, and constant checks are made for insects and diseases.

In addition to fungus and other diseases that might damage or kill

the trees, hot weather, excessive rain or lack of rain also can stifle a crop.

She said competition in a tight market can also be a problem. Another tree grower has opened a business near her farm, cutting into her business.

Deiter plans to run her farm another four years and then pass it down to her granddaughter and grandson.

## Supreme Court to consider Kansas death law

TOPEKA (AP) — Attorney General Phill Kline and Kansas Capital Appellate Defender Rebecca Woodman are scheduled to appear this week before the U.S. Supreme Court to present arguments on the state's death penalty law.

The Kansas case is one of two death-penalty cases the Supreme Court will hear Wednesday. The second case, from Oregon, involves a convicted murderer's ability to present alibi testimony during the sentencing phase of a capital trial. The high court was not expected to rule on either case until spring.

In the Kansas case, the state Supreme Court ruled 4-3 last year that the death penalty law was unconstitutional because its instructions to juries unfairly encouraged jurors to choose death over a life sentence.

Under the Kansas law, jurors have to weigh the aggravating factors against the mitigating factors in a case. Aggravating factors might include a defendant killing more than one person, and mitigating factors might include a defendant having a light criminal history. If the aggravating and mitigating factors are equal, the law says the jury has to side with the state.

In his brief to the U.S. Supreme Court, Kline wrote that the Kansas law was fair to defendants. He said the law narrows who is eligible for the death penalty and places virtually no restrictions on the admission of mitigating evidence.

"The state's capital sentencing equation neither mandates death nor restricts a juror's ability to give full effect to the mitigating circum-

stances presented by the defendant," he said in the brief.

Woodman will argue to uphold the state Supreme Court ruling, that the Kansas death penalty statute forces juries to improperly weigh evidence for and against death.

"One thing is clear: No one can say for sure that an individual defendant who receives a death sentence under the Kansas formula was actually found by the jury to receive

that punishment," her brief to the high court said. "(This) case is not about structuring decision-making; it is about terminating decision-making."

If the U.S. Supreme Court finds against the Kansas law, the sentences for eight men on death row will stand. But if the justices uphold the state court's ruling, the eight will be re-sentenced and death will not be an option.

## Negative campaigning will be candidate's forum

TOPEKA (AP) — So the story goes, two candidates were in a real dogfight of a debate. Back and forth they went — for this and against that. As the debate ended, one candidate pointed an accusing finger and intoned: "My opponent is a cattle rustler."

Later, the campaign manager asked, "Why did you say that? You know that's not true."

"I know," the candidate replied. "I just wanted him to have to deny it."

The tale illustrates "going negative" — unleashing denouncements, sometimes with a shade of truth but often injected with inaccuracies and innuendoes.

Negative campaigning is old hat in Kansas politics, and there's every reason to believe voters will see it in next year's elections.

Two races where negative campaigning is expected are the attorney general's race and the race to unseat Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

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