

Weather Corner



Tuesday's high near 60, low 31

The forecast

Tonight — Increasing clouds with a low around 48. Breezy with a south wind 15 to 20 mph becoming west 5 to 10 mph. Winds could gust as high as 30 mph. **Tuesday** — Mostly cloudy with a high near 60. Windy with a north wind between 25 and 30 mph, with gusts as high as 45 mph. **Tuesday night** — Partly cloudy with a low near 31. Breezy with a northwest wind 20 to 25 mph decreasing to between 5 and 10 mph. Winds could gust as high as 35 mph. **Wednesday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 64. Windy with a west wind 10 to 15 mph increasing to between 25 and 30 mph. Winds could gust as high as 40 mph. **Wednesday night** — Mostly clear with a low around 36. **Thursday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 68.

Temperatures
Sunday's high, 83
Low this morning, 46
Records for this date, 88 in 1946, 17 in 1907
Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00
April's precipitation, .44

Water use for April 14, 15 and 16
2,074,466 Average per day
Water Warning = 4.0 million
Water Emergency = 4.5 Million
A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-TEMP.

Briefly

RSVP banquet Wednesday

The annual RSVP Recognition Banquet will be held at 4 p.m., Wednesday, April 19 at the American Legion, 1850 W. Fourth St., Colby. "This is our annual event to say thank you to all of the RSVP volunteers who give so much during the year to their communities," said director Laura Withington. "We hope all volunteers will be able to join us on this special night." Check-in is at 4 p.m. with dinner and awards presentation starting at 5 p.m. The Ramblin' Andy Band will play from 7-9 p.m. For questions, call Withington at 462-6744.

Adelines plan guest night

The Hi-Plains Harmony Chapter of Sweet Adelines International is inviting area ladies to attend "Guest Night" at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, at Colby United Methodist Church. Door prizes and refreshments will be served. For questions, call Joan Wessel, president, (785) 386-4241 or Sheila Krehbiel, publicity, 462-3313.

Help needed for cleanup week

The City of Colby and the Thomas County Commissioners are combining their efforts to sponsor a city-wide and county-wide cleanup week from May 1 through May 6. Area service clubs and church groups are asked to commit their organizations to clean public areas in the city, such as ballfields, parks, all roadsides and entrances in Colby. If anyone is willing to volunteer their services to assist the elderly and infirm, call Jo Stange, administrative assistant to the city manager, 460-4410, and leave name. Those who need assistance should also call the city and leave their names. The city will then match up those who can help and

those who need help.

Scrapbooking project planned

Heartland Christian School is sponsoring a scrapbooking fundraising project from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday, May 6. The classes will be held at the school, 1995 W. Fourth, Colby, and are open to experienced scrapbookers and beginners. For questions and costs, call Tonya Winger, 462-3677.

Hazardous waste site open Saturday

As part of this year's Earth Day celebration, the Thomas County Household Hazardous Waste Site facility, 190 W. Fourth, Colby, will be open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, for safe disposal.

Acceptable items include old paints, stains, varnish, thinners, cleaning products, lawn and garden chemicals, automotive products, swimming pool chemicals and batteries, said Sandy Swob, director. "This is a free service to Thomas County households only," she said. "No business wastes can be accepted." Used motor oil should be taken to the county landfill for recycling. Empty containers need not be brought to the facility. "These can be discarded as regular household trash," Swob said. For questions, call her at 460-4526.

CRP deadline extended

The USDA's Farm Service Agency in Thomas County announced the extension of the sign-up deadlines for both the Conservation Reserve Program general sign-up and the special Conservation Reserve Program re-enrollment and extension opportunities until Friday, April 28.

The CRP program is a voluntary program that helps agri-

cultural producers safeguard environmentally sensitive land, said Ross Sloan, executive director.

Farmers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to control soil erosion, enhance wildlife and improve water and air quality. In return, the Farm Service Agency provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Information is available at the agency's website: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crpinfo.htm>.

Grass, tree limb collections starts

The City of Colby began picking up grass clipping today. Reissues are required to bag or can the grass clipping, which must be separated from other household garbage. Tree limbs must be separated and tied together in bundles less than 4' long and less than 50 pounds, officials at the Public Works Department said.

All collections must be at curbside by 8 a.m. For questions, call 460-4410.

College to hold town meeting

NetWork Kansas, a service of the Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship, will hold a town hall meeting from 7-9 a.m., Wednesday, April 19, in the student union at Colby Community College to discuss entrepreneurship. For information or questions, call Barry Kaaz, business and industry representative, at 462-3984, ext. 224.

Heartland Share delivery Saturday

Heartland Share delivery is at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 22 at Sacred Heart School gym. There are a few shares left for \$20.50 each and two hours of volunteer time of one's choice. For orders or information, call 460-3570 or 460-8640.

Ruleton man charged in aggravated battery case

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

A Ruleton man has been charged in Thomas County District Court with beating a Colby man and breaking bones in his

face. Nicholas J. Gary, 19, was charged on March 27 with aggravated battery of Brett Mariman, 22.

According to Colby Police Detective Sgt. Gary Shull the incident took place at Mariman's

home during a party on March 25.

If convicted and depending on a presentence investigation, Gary faces a prison term between 38 and 136 months and a fine up to \$300,000.

Gary was also charged with

one count each of criminal trespass and driving while his license was cancelled, suspended or revoked.

According to court records, Gary was told to leave Mariman's residence in the 200 block of

Webster, but defied leaving and entered the house and struck him.

If convicted and depending on a presentence investigation, Gary faces six months in the county jail and a fine up to \$1,000 for each charge.

Bill bundling could help unpopular legislation

TOPEKA (AP) — When legislation runs into a roadblock, lawmakers often get around the obstacle with the time-tested tactic of bundling bills.

A bill on death's doorstep gets attached to a popular bill — and if there's motherhood, apple pie and a touch of divinity in the mix, so much the better.

Last year, senators passed a bill

allowing private prisons in Kansas and waited for the House to act. But the idea is about as popular with many House members as coddling sex offenders.

This year, lawmakers have the mother of motherhood bills — getting tough on sex offenders, particularly those victimizing children. It's just the kind of thing House members can go home and crow about while seeking re-election.

The two chambers passed differing versions of what's been dubbed "Jessica's Law," and House and Senate negotiators worked out the differences.

But they also bundled it with the private prison bill so lawmakers must consider both ideas together when they return April 26 to wrap up their session.

There's little doubt the bundled bill will sail through the Senate. But House Speaker Doug Mays says many in his chamber are philosophically opposed to private prisons.

"A lot of people think prisons should be 100 percent government function. They're suspicious that private corporations can do as well. They're distrustful," said Mays, R-Topeka.

Senators may be counting on House members to collectively hold their noses on private prisons and vote for the bundle so they can brag about how they voted to lock up sex offenders and throw away the key.

"It's a fabulous political tactic to get a bill passed in an election year that may not ordinarily be passed," said Bob Beatty, Washburn University political science professor.

In this case, the Senate may force the House's hand, said Burdett Loomis, a University of Kansas political science professor who formerly served on Gov. Kathleen Sebelius' staff.

"I don't see there being an option

of not acting on a sexual predator bill and one way to take advantage of that is to link something to it," Loomis said.

One of the biggest boosters of private prisons is Senate Majority Leader Derek Schmidt. He argues that since increased penalties for sex crimes — a minimum of 25 years for a first offense against a child — will mean the need for 1,000 more prison beds in 15 years, there's logical linkage.

"The theory is if you want to cast a politically popular vote to get tough on criminals, you need to cast the vote for a place to put them," said Schmidt, R-Independence.

House members do have a few options. They could reject the bundled bill and then pass the Senate version of Jessica's Law, flushing private prisons in the process.

But there's some risk in that for House members who vote against

the bundle but later for a bill with only Jessica's law.

A challenger could take the first vote and use it against the incumbent, implying that the incumbent didn't support tougher penalties, without ever mentioning the second vote.

Jessica's law is named for a murdered Florida girl. Bills for tougher penalties often come with a victim's name in the title — to remind legislators and voters of the compelling stories that prompted them.

"During elections, voters aren't into nuance. If voters hear their legislators voted against Jessica's Law, they just want to know why they didn't vote for it," Beatty said.

No candidate wants to be the subject of an attack ad featuring a miscreant's face and story.

"If that prospect doesn't scare legislators to vote for it, nothing will," Beatty said.

Rexford man faces harassment charge

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

A Rexford man has been charged in Thomas County District Court with harassing and threatening his estranged wife earlier this month.

According to court documents, Fredrick Albers, 52, willfully terrorized Katherine Albers over the telephone on April 2. A felony according to Kansas law, if convicted and depending on a presentence investigation, Fredrick Albers faces a prison sentence of five to 17 months and a fine of up to \$100,000.

In the same incident, Albers is

also charged with telephone harassment and violating a protective order which dates back to May 9, 2005, both are Class A misdemeanors punishable by one year in the county jail and a fine up to \$2,500 if convicted and depending on a presentence investigation's outcome.

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Time: 3:00 pm and 7:00 pm
Place: Colby Community Building (Down Stairs in the Little Theater)
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