Weather Corner

Lows near 55, highs 92-100

Tonight — Clear with a low around 54. Northwest wind between 5 and 15 mph.

Thursday — Sunny with a high around 92. Northwest wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Thursday night — Mostly clear with a low near 58. South wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Friday — Mostly sunny and hot with a high around 100. south wind between 10 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.

Friday night — Mostly clear with a low around 58.

Saturday — Mostly sunny and hot with a high around 100.

Saturday night — Mostly clear with a low around 57.

Sunday — Mostly sunny with a high around 93.

Temperatures

Tuesday's high, 88

Low this morning, 52

Records for this date, 98 in 1953, 34 in 1966

Precipitation past 24 hours to 8 a.m. today, 0.00

May's precipitation, 0.41

Water Use Report by Public Works Department for Tuesday, May 23

• 3,181,900 gallons

This issues a Water Watch.

4 million = Water Warning

4.5 million = Water Emergency

A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119.

Briefly

Volunteers sought for mock election

Thomas County Clerk Shelly Harms invites voters to stop by her office and participate in a mock election on one of the new electronic voting machines. Harms' office is on the second floor of the courthouse and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. For questions, call (785) 460-4500.

Ice cream social planned

The Northwest Kansas County Coalitions are celebrating their accomplishments from 7-8 p.m. Tuesday, June 6 at Fike Park with an ice cream social. There will be ice cream, games, awards and prizes. RSVP by Monday, June 5 by calling (785) 460-8177 or by e-mail at lindyk@st-tel.net

Brewster citywide garage sale set

The 10th Annual Brewster Citywide Garage Sale will be held Saturday, June 3 starting at 8:30 a.m. Individuals or groups interested in participating as a sale location should contact Gloria's Beauty Shop or the Brewster Senior Center for information. Maps showing sales locations will be available at all sale locations. For those wishing to participate, a scavenger hunt will be held as a part of the sale with prizes from Brewster merchants. For questions or to sign up, call the Brewster Senior Center at (785) 694-2645; Gloria's Beauty Shop at (785) 694-2739 or Colleen Rall at (785) 694-2791.

Governor invites Kansans to event

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius is encouraging families, veterans, and fellow Kansans to attend the state's Memorial Day ceremony Monday beginning at 9 a.m. on the south lawn of the State Capitol, near the Veterans' Memorial. "We set aside this day each year to honor the men and women of the military who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation, though we should always remember we enjoy the freedom they fought for every day of the year," said Sebelius. Twenty-seven Kansas soldiers and 65 Ft. Riley soldiers who were killed during Operation Iraqi Freedom will be honored at the ceremony. Many family members who have lost loved ones in this and other conflicts are planning to attend, as well as members of the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs. In the event of bad weather, the ceremony will be held on the Second Floor Rotunda of the Capitol, said Nicole Corcoran, press secretary. For questions, call (785) 368-8500.

Field day planned next month

The Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center in Colby is hosting its annual spring field day, beginning with registration at 8:30 a.m, Friday, June 2. The program starts at 9 a.m., and includes speakers, lunch and other events. The field day and agricultural conferences are open to anyone interested and are held throughout the state. For questions, call (785) 462-6281.

Sheridan's hospital plans renovations

By Jan Katz Ackerman
Colby Free Press

Sheridan County Health Complex in Hoxie undergoes a major facelift next week.

Administrator Joe Stratton said the board of trustees approved at $15,373 makeover for the pharmacy, records department, blood draw room, clinic hallway and creation of an education room.

"I've never seen a healthcare facility that sooner or later doesn't become office challenged," Stratton said.

Sheridan County Health Complex includes a 25-bed acute care critical access hospital built in 1952. In 1995 and in 1997, the facility underwent additions to include a long-term care unit and a rural health clinic.

Trustees Richard Krannawetter, Randy Farber, Charles Schwartz, Mary Karnes, Allen Neal, Craig Cooper and Shirley Slover in April approved Hoxie contractor Max Campbell to undertake the five-phase project.

"We are adding more patient privacy and patient information management system are for three employees, as well as active and archive records," Stratton said.

He said the records department will move from a small office on one side of the basement to a larger office in the other side.

The second project will turn a portion of an unused lobby space into a pharmacy. The current pharmacy is located near the back loading dock and the new one will be adjacent to the nurses station in the hospital's main hallway.

The current blood draw room will be expanded. That room is across the hall from the laboratory in the north wing of the complex.

A fourth project will be installation of a door at the end of clinic's reception desk in order to provide patient privacy.

A storage closet will be converted into an education center and meeting room. Stratton said the room will accommodate up to 12 people.

Besides the building being overhauled, the way the complex's 120 employees receive continuing education will be revised.

Stratton said many of the employees have family commitments which make leaving town for training a hardship.

He said joining the Association of Continuing Education based in Great Bend, complex employees will no longer have to leave town for training.

The association's $10,000 annual membership includes the cost of instructors coming to Hoxie.

"It's good for organization and continuous improvements," Stratton said.

"On site training will not only be for nurses, but for those in dietary, housekeeping and laundry as well."

Trustees approve blood analyzer for complex lab

Sheridan Health Complex trustees met Monday for their regular monthly meeting.

After reviewing business reports and minutes from the Monday, April 17 meeting, the trustees approved the purchase of a blood analyzer for the laboratory. The 60-month lease will cost the complex $45,000 and has a $1 buy out option at the end of the lease contract.

Also approved was new flooring to be installed in the long-term care unit as part of an upgrade which included a new countertop for the nurses, station.

Darlene Bainbridge of Bainbridge and Bainbridge of Cuba, N.Y. has been hired to conduct a strategic planning seminar with the trustees in the near future.

According to ReChelle Kennedy, chief financial officer for the complex, the last strategic plan was done about 10 years ago. She said Bainbridge works with several hospitals in northwest Kansas holding Critical Access Hospital status, which means the facility has no more than 25 acute care beds.

Kennedy said the number of patients utilizing the hospital has doubled over last year's census.

"We're averaging four patients per day, and last year we had about two a day," she said.

Administrator Joe Stratton said a strategic plan will help trustees "be more exact and further develop a common vision."

This year's $500 scholarship award was given to 2006 Hoxie High School graduate Brian Feldt. Feldt plans to pursue a career in nursing at Fort Hays State University.

German Shepherd mix looking for someone to adopt him.

Animal clinic seeks good homes

The Colby Animal Clinic, 810 E. Fourth St., has one dog looking for his home and a second in need of a home, said a clinic spokesperson.

The animals include:

• A one-year old male Chow mix was found in the 900 block of W. Sixth St., Colby and is looking for his owners.

• Needing a home is a German Shepherd mix, brindle color, male, 2-year-old. He is a friendly dog.

After one week, if the owners do not claim their Chow mix, the clinic will place him up for adoption.

Anyone interested in adopting the German Shephard or Chow mix are asked to call the clinic, (785) 460-8621 or stop by the facility. The only cost for adoption is the price of immunization shots.

Supreme Court investigation has governor on witness list

TOPEKA (AP) — Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and her top aide are potential witnesses for a House committee investigating a Kansas Supreme Court justice's conversation about school finance with two senators, the panel's chairman said Tuesday.

Sebelius

O'Neal

Rep. Mike O'Neal said he anticipates that Sebelius and chief of staff Troy Findley would testify voluntarily. The 10-member committee plans to have its first meeting at 2:30 p.m. Thursday.

"I can't imagine they wouldn't," said O'Neal, R-Hutchinson. "I can't imagine a failure to cooperate — that would look bad."

O'Neal acknowledged that Sebelius and Findley would be "tangential" witnesses because of a March breakfast meeting at Cedar Crest in which Senate President Steve Morris, R-Hugoton, mentioned having contact with someone associated with the court on school finance issues.

"I really want to do this as benignly as possible," O'Neal said.

Sebelius spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran said the governor "would be happy to cooperate" with the committee — though Corcoran didn't say specifically that the governor would testify.

"No one has officially gotten a request from anybody," Corcoran said.

Matt All, the governor's chief legal counsel, said Sebelius doesn't have much information to offer because, "She has said what she knows."

Asked whether Sebelius has anything to hide, All said, "Absolutely not." The committee's ranking Democrat, Rep. Mike Peterson, of Kansas City, said O'Neal's comments about the Democratic governor being a witness indicate that Republicans are conducting a "fishing expedition and witch hunt."

"You've got to be kidding," Peterson said. "Who the hell is he or the House of Representatives to demand something from the governor?"

Later, Peterson said his opposition to having the governor testify is philosophical, not political.

"I don't think one branch of government should be able to compel another branch of government to do something," Peterson said.

Morris and Sen. Pete Brungardt, R-Salina, had lunch March 1 with Justice Lawton Nuss and briefly discussed education funding. A school finance lawsuit is still before the court, and the state's code of judicial conduct prohibits justices from discussing pending cases with outsiders.

Nuss removed himself from hearings on the lawsuit on April 20, after a reporter asked whether anyone associated with court had discussed school finance with legislators.

Chief Justice Kay McFarland asked the Commission on Judicial Qualifications to investigate the matter and its examiner has filed a complaint with the commission, the first step toward potential disciplinary action.

O'Neal said again Tuesday that his committee's investigation will focus on whether the conversation between Nuss and the two senators influenced the Legislature's passage of the three-year, $541 million school finance plan.

Peterson suggested the real goal is to protect the GOP. Nuss was appointed to the court in 2002 by Republican Gov. Bill Graves.

"What you've really got is a ton of Republicans caught with their hands in the cookie jar, and their fellow Republicans trying to go ahead and bail them out with some far-fetched idea that the governor may somehow be involved," he said.

Some conservative Republicans, who've opposed large increases in aid to public schools, have questioned whether there's been collusion between the court, Sebelius, her staff and legislators on school finance issues.

Auction of Surplus School Items

June 3, 2006
10:00 a.m.

Herndon School
616 Radnor
Herndon, Kansas

Contact: Mark Wolters
USD #105 Superintendent
785-626-3236

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