

Weather Corner



Friday forecast says high 68

**Tonight** — Partly cloudy with a low around 29. West wind between 5 and 15 mph.

**Friday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 68. West wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south.

**Friday night** — Mostly clear with a low around 26. South wind around 10 mph becoming west.

**Saturday** — Mostly sunny with a high near 47. North wind around 10 mph.

**Saturday night** — Partly cloudy and blustery with a low around 23.

**Sunday** — Partly cloudy with a high near 41.

**Sunday night** — Mostly cloudy with a low around 18.

**Monday** — Mostly cloudy with a high near 35.

**Temperatures**  
Wednesday's high, 61  
Low this morning, 25  
Records for this date, 72 in 1988, -16 in 1901  
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 460-8367.

Briefly

Area Christmas services wanted

Thomas County churches planning to hold Christmas Eve services are encouraged to inform the *Colby Free Press* of the times and locations for those events. A listing of those services will be in the Thursday, Dec. 21 edition.

Piano recital Sunday

Piano students of Sharon Kriss will take part in a Christmas recital at 7 p.m., Sunday, at the Colby United Methodist Church, 950 S. Franklin Ave. Those students who will be performing are: Joshua Baden, Brittany and Brooklyn Bange, Morgan and Lauren Bell, Mandy Edmundson, Elizabeth Erickson, Abby and Allie Friesen, Valarie Higerd, MaKayla Hoffman, Katrina Kaus, Miranda Kern, Jessi Kriss, Kevin Lang, Laura Leebrick, Sara Martin, Cameron

McLaughlin, Abby Miller, Katelin Neuenschwander, Renea Reasoner, Alexi, Ariel and Kale Regier, Kelsey Shields, Ashley Standage, Sydney Stephens, Andrew and Anna Taylor, Brenly Terrell, Brianna Thummel, Michael Tubbs, Quade Woofter, Alex Young and Andrea Zerr. Everyone is welcome.

Prairie Land Food delivery Saturday

Prairie Land Food delivery is at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the Sacred Heart School, gym, 1150 W. Sixth St. For information, call 460-3579.

Fair board to meet today

The Thomas County Fair Board will meet at 8 p.m., today, at the 4-H Building at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. The meeting is open to the public.

Taxes, license tag deadlines near

The Thomas County Treasurer's office is reminding taxpayers the first half of 2006 taxes are due by Wednesday, said Donita Applebury, treasurer. In addition, persons renewing license plate tags with the last name beginning with U through Z need to buy them no later than 4 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 28. For questions, call 460-4520.

Former mayor undergoes by-pass

Former Colby Mayor Warren Hixson, now living in Hutchinson, underwent open heart surgery Monday to bypass five arteries. According to City Manager Carolyn Armstrong, Hixson is well on his way to recovery and expected to be discharged from the hospital Dec. 18. Cards may be sent to: 129 West 23rd, Hutchinson, KS 67502.

Heart tree has names unclaimed

By Patty Decker  
Free Press Editor

Now in its fifth year, "Gifts From the Heart," epitomizes the spirit of the holiday season by giving to those less fortunate, said Amanda Wahlmeier, one of the project coordinators.

While most of the names have been selected, one charitable group came forward earlier in the week asking the committee for help.

Although most of those children's requests have been met, there are about 10 names still needing a benefactor and time is running out for selecting a name, buying a gift and getting it back to Sacred Heart Church for wrapping and distribution.

Anyone who can help is encouraged to do so before the Friday or early Saturday morning's deadline, Wahlmeier said.

"We know this is a last-minute appeal," she said, "but we didn't want to turn down any genuine requests for help."

For those unfamiliar with the project, it was first started in December 2002 as a way to remember Dr. Jeff Jennings, who returned to Colby to begin his family practice and enjoyed this



PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

Rich Epp selected one of the remaining names on the Heart Tree at Dave's His Shop today.

time of the year.

Similar to other service projects in the past, the idea has remained the same — pick a "heart" off the special Christmas tree located at His Shop, 475 N. Franklin in Colby or at Sacred Heart's rectory and buy a new gift for a young child.

Each of the "hearts" has the age, gender and a number signifying an anonymous name with the goal of making sure any child needing a present receives a gift.

With the added names, Wahlmeier said the number of children is about 100 this year.

"Christmas can be a stressful time for some, and as a community, this is a wonderful opportunity to either give or receive," she said.

In previous years, the amount of names submitted has ranged between 45 and 130, representing 65 or more families.

In 2004, about 45 children and 30 families were identified, the lowest total since the project's inception.

For questions about the project, call Wahlmeier at 460-9145.

Legislator fined \$45,000

TOPEKA (AP) — Rep. Patricia Kilpatrick was fined a \$45,000 fine Wednesday by the state Governmental Ethics Commission for misusing campaign funds in 2005, the second time she's been fined by the panel this year.

Kilpatrick, R-Overland Park, didn't appear before the commission. But her attorney, Scott Hattrup of Olathe, said Kilpatrick's former fiance gained access to her campaign accounts and took the money without her knowledge.

Kilpatrick, a one-term member of the Kansas House, didn't seek reelection in November.

The commission accepted a consent decree in which Kilpatrick acknowledged the allegations in a commission complaint accusing her of mingling campaign funds with personal funds, converting campaign funds to personal use, failing to report contributions and failing to keep detailed campaign finance records. She faced up to \$120,000 in fines.

Under the decree, the commission agreed not to refer the matter to prosecutors for possible criminal action and said she could set up a payment schedule for the fine.

The commission in June fined Kilpatrick \$4,000 after concluding she filed an inaccurate finance report for her 2004 campaign. She has paid \$750 of that so far.

*As the Season is upon us we reflect on those who have helped shape our business in the past year. We look forward to helping you in the year to come with all of your party needs.*

*"We wish you a Merry Christmas & A New Year filled with peace & prosperity."*

*You're invited to our*  
**OPEN HOUSE!**

*December 18, 2006 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.*  
*Hot Cider, Cookies, Door Prizes & More!*

*The Party House*  
Southwind Plaza  
1145 S. Taylor Ave • Colby, KS  
785-460-0199

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*Join us.....*

*Christmas Customer  
Appreciation*

*~ Open House ~*

*Friday, December 15th*  
*10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.*

*This is our way of saying "Thank You"  
for your patronage as we look forward to  
another year of friendship with you.  
Please stop in and enjoy refreshments  
and say "hello".*

**COLBY  
FREE PRESS**  
155 W. 5th, Colby

Power plant opposed

LAWRENCE (AP) — A proposal to build three coal-burning power plants in western Kansas is sparking opposition in Colorado and several Northeastern states, which complain that the plants would cause environmental damage and increase electric rates.

Sunflower Electric Power Corp. wants to build three 700-megawatt plants near its existing plant in Holcomb.

In comments to be presented Friday to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, a group of Northeastern states will argue that the plants will undermine their efforts to combat global warming.

And on Tuesday, a Colorado conservation group said the plants would cause wholesale electric rates to increase at least 64 percent in the next five years.

The Northeastern group's comments, which were prepared by New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, said climate change is "the single greatest environmental chal-

lenge facing the world today."

The coal-fired plants would emit up to 18 million tons of carbon dioxide a year, according to the group.

"Scientists overwhelmingly agree that the global community must reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, to well below 1990 levels within a few decades, if we are to stabilize the climate at acceptable levels," the comments said.

Although Spitzer drafted the comments, Vermont agreed Tuesday to join with New York and several other states to oppose the plants. A copy of the draft comments was provided to the Rutland (Vt.) Herald by Vermont Gov. James Douglas' office.

Although the plants are more than 1,800 miles from Vermont, the state is opposing their construction because the new levels of carbon dioxide will negate work of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative that Vermont joined this year.

**NOW SHOWING**  
*Dec. 8th - 14th ONLY*

**CASINO ROYALE**  
PG-13 2 hour, 25 min.  
Friday 7:00 & 9:30  
Saturday 4:00 & 7:00 & 9:30  
Sunday 4:00 & 7:00  
Monday - Thursday 7:00

**FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS**  
R 2 hour, 15 min.  
Friday 8:30  
Saturday 4:00 & 8:30  
Sunday 4:00

**FLUSHED AWAY**  
PG 1 hour, 25 min.  
Friday 7:00  
Saturday 7:00  
Sunday 7:00  
Monday - Thursday 7:00

4:00 Matinees  
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