

Weather Corner



Cloudy, windy and colder

The forecast
Tonight — Partly cloudy with a low around 31. Southwest wind between 10 and 15 mph.
Saturday — Partly cloudy with a high near 48. North wind between 5 and 10 mph.
Saturday night — Partly cloudy with a low around 23. Northeast wind between 10 and 15 mph.
Sunday — Partly cloudy with a high near 35. East wind between 10 and 15 mph.
Sunday night — Partly cloudy with a low around 17.
Monday — Mostly cloudy with a low around 13.
Monday night — Partly cloudy with a low around 13.
Tuesday — Partly cloudy with a high near 37.
Temperatures
 Thursday's high, 59
 Low this morning, 22
 Records for this date, 70 in 1946, -12 in 1989
 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

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 & 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.

Commissioners to meet Monday

The Thomas County Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. Monday at the courthouse.

Items on the agenda include Thomas County Health Department administrator Lisa Molstad with a contract for family planning services at 9 a.m.; a conference call on jail expansion at 9:30 a.m.; landfill supervisor Larry Jumper with a discussion on 2007 landfill tipping fees at 10 a.m. and a tour of the Thomas County Office Complex at 11 a.m. to look at available office space.

Other items include abatements, board appointments and approval of meeting minutes.

School Board to meet Monday

The Colby School Board will meet at 7 p.m. Monday in the board room of the Administration Building, 600 W. Third St. Items on the agenda include: approval of the consent agenda; reports from the principals, curriculum director and superintendent; approval of the 2007-2008 academic calendar; out of district student attendance requests; early graduation requests and if necessary, personnel issues. The meeting is open to the public.

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Open house planned in Brewster

The Brewster Senior Center is having an open house from 2 to 4 p.m., Thursday, honoring Jack Faber's 26 years as the center's president, said Betty Jo Baird, one of the coordinators of the event.

"Come in and enjoy some hot apple cider and cookies, and help us celebrate this occasion," she said. Even though Faber is stepping down as president, she said, he will continue as a board member.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

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.

Attorney general urges caution when shopping online

Dear Attorney General Kline:

Several acquaintances of mine are trying to convince me there are many benefits of shopping on the Internet. They all say how simple and easy it is but I still have lingering concerns about my personal information falling into the wrong hands. It really sounds convenient but how can I be certain it is also safe and secure?

Dear Kansas Consumer:

While many people still prefer to support their local merchants by shopping close to home and others enjoy the convenience of shopping through mail-order companies, there is also a growing number of people doing a majority of their shopping over the Internet.

Shopping online does offer some benefits you won't be able to find when shopping in a store or through the mail. The Internet is open seven days a week, 24 hours a day, and there are plenty of bargains to be found.

Doing anything online can be intimidating to those not accustomed to shopping in this fashion, but



Phill Kline

• Consumer Corner

Internet shopping is no less safe than conventional shopping as long as you take the proper precautions. By following these simple guidelines, you can help make online shopping a safer, more enjoyable experience:

1. Be sure you use a secure browser, which is the software you use to navigate the Internet. Your browser should comply with industry security standards which encrypt or scramble the purchase information you send over the Internet which ensures the security of your transaction.
2. Shop with companies you know. Remember that literally anyone can set up shop online under almost any name so do your best to know who it is that you are dealing

with. If you're not familiar with a particular merchant, ask for a paper catalog so you can have a better idea of their merchandise and services. It's also a good idea to know the company's return and refund policies before you place your order. This information should be available on the company's Web site.

3. Keep your passwords private. When you establish a password, be creative and never give it to anyone. It's best to use a combination of numbers, letters and symbols. It's also a good idea to avoid using a portion of your Social Security number, your telephone number and your birth date information.

4. When you pay for your order online, it's best to use a credit or company charge card because the

transaction will be protected by the Fair Credit Billing Act. Under this law you have the right to dispute charges under certain circumstances and temporarily withhold payment while the creditor is investigating them. If there is an unauthorized use of your credit or charge card, generally you would be held liable only for the first \$50 in charges. Some companies also offer an online shopping guarantee that ensures you won't be held responsible for any unauthorized charges. Some cards may also provide additional warranty, return and/or purchase protection benefits.

5. When you place an order, be sure to print a copy of your order and confirmation number for your records. You should also be aware of the fact that the Mail/Telephone Order Merchandise Rule covers online orders. Unless the company states otherwise, your merchandise must be delivered within 30 days, and if there are delays, the company must notify you.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough how important it is to guard your personal information. Don't disclose information such as your address, telephone number, Social Security number or email address unless you know who is collecting the information, why they are collecting it and how it will be used. It's a good idea to check a merchant's online privacy policies on its Web site. Many companies allow you to decline or "opt-out" of having your personal information used for marketing purposes or shared with

other companies. With proper use, the Internet can provide a convenient and reliable shopping experience.

Attorney General Phill Kline offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints or questions. For further information or to file a complaint, please write Attorney General Phill Kline, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kansas 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310.

Starlight Extravaganza

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Downtown Colby 462-7136

Young racer focuses on winning his next race

FORT SCOTT (AP) — Many young people his age might be thinking about video games, comic books, and skateboards, but Dakota Singmaster focuses on his car and what it will take to win the next race. The 13-year old Fort Scott resident, an avid stock car driver who competes in various races in Missouri, recently achieved first place in his class at the Grand River Speedway in Urich, Mo., where he also won the racing organization's annual Rookie of the Year award. Singmaster and his dad, David Singmaster, both said that Dakota and his 1983 Toyota Celica have been through about 14 or 15 races together since the young man first got behind the wheel last year. For Dakota, the reason why he races is simple. "The competition — and it's fun," he said.

"Plus, he's a speed freak."

Dakota just grinned and said, "Oh yeah, I like going fast."

David said his son currently races against a field primarily made up of racing veterans at different tracks in Missouri, including the Nevada Speedway, but there are a few drivers his age whom he sometimes competes against.

"Some hate me, some like me," Dakota said of the older racing veterans and their opinions of him.

"They respect his driving abilities," David said. "He has more wins than anybody in his class. When he first started, he didn't (get much respect) but he does now. He races very clean."

When asked what his responsibilities are in helping his son during racing events, David simply said he serves as his son's chief mechanic. David and Dakota's brother help out by serving as Dakota's pit crew,

checking the car's tires and under the hood for each race.

"I don't race," David said. "I get too much enjoyment out of watching him race."

Dakota said he hopes to eventually compete in the NASCAR circuit one day.

He has had a couple of tire problems on his car, but no major mechanical problems that have stopped him from finishing a race, with the exception of one race in which the gears in Dakota's car broke, knocking him out of contention. During another race, one of the car's struts broke, but Dakota was still able to finish the race, David said.

Dakota currently has three trophies on his shelf at home from his racing endeavors, and hopes for more to come.

After a race last month, Dakota took over the points lead in his class at the Grand River Speedway in Urich, earning him first-place honors for his efforts.

His dad said he is proud of his son's accomplishments thus far.

"He's the best young driver out there," David said.

The Singmasters are welcoming sponsors for the 2007 racing season, he said. They currently have three major sponsors — K and K Auto Body in Fort Scott, which has done

all of the painting on Dakota's two cars that are used for racing; Air Tight Kustom Paint, which has all of the air brush artwork and designs completed on the cars; and long-time stock car driver and local resident Ron Bolin.

"Dakota has learned much of his driving skill and knowledge from Bolin," David said.

Tradition keeps couple rolling

OSAGE CITY (AP) — So, what do a couple of 94-year-olds do on Sunday night? Watch "Desperate Housewives" and go to bed early? Not if you are Al and Flossie Duffey.

The Duffeys do what they have done for decades. They hop into their car and head south from Osage City to Flint Hills Lanes in Emporia, where they join another couple for an evening of bowling.

"I'm not too good, but I still love it," Flossie said. "It gets you out (of the house)."

It was Flossie who had the idea to take up bowling in 1958 and then coaxed her husband to join in. She was working at the sewing factory in Osage City at the time, while Al was driving a truck.

"I talked him into it," she said, "and then after I got him started I couldn't get him to stop."

The couple, who met at a community meeting in 1935 and married two years later, used to bowl at an alley in Osage City. When that alley closed, they made trips to Topeka and other nearby cities before making Flint Hills Lanes their bowling home.

Flossie said she and Al used to bowl twice a week: She bowled with women on Tuesdays; he bowled with men on Mondays; and they bowled together on Sundays. "It lets you mix with the crowd," Flossie said of her weekly games. "You make a lot of friends."

Throughout the years, the Duffeys have won a number of

bowling trophies. Al competed at state tournaments and recently won the 2005-06 Sportsmanship Award from the Emporia Bowling Association.

"I like competing and being with people," he said. "I bowled in state tournaments throughout Kansas and only one time ran across someone who wasn't sociable."

Last Minute Gift Ideas!
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2005 Focus SE - Tan w/ Tan Cloth, 4 Cyl., 30K Miles \$10,995	2004 Bonneville SEL - White w/ Tan Leather, V-6, 29K Miles, 1 Owner \$16,850	2006 Five Hundred SEL - White w/ Gray Leather, Only 6,000 Miles \$19,995
2006 Focus ZX4 SE - Gray w/ Flint Cloth, 4 Cyl., 9K Miles \$13,500	1999 F150 Supercab Sport - Red w/ Black Cloth, V-8, 91K Miles \$8,995	2002 Impala - Brown w/ Tan Leather, PW, 44K Miles \$10,995
2001 Explorer Sport - 4x4, White w/ Cloth, V-6 \$10,500	2004 F150 Supercrew - 4x4, Red w/ Tan Leather, 5.4L, 69K Miles \$20,850	2004 GMC 1500 SLT - Extended Cab, Red w/ Tan Leather, On Star, XM Radio, 31K Miles, Loaded \$20,850
2006 Sebring - White w/ Black Cloth, 4 Cyl., Satellite Radio, 14K Miles \$12,850	2003 Mountaineer AWD - Green w/ Tan Leather, V-6, Sunroof, 37K Miles \$16,850	2004 Ranger Reg. Cab - 4x4, Red w/ Black Cloth, 6 Cyl., 15K Miles \$15,850