

## Weather Corner



**Tonight...**Partly cloudy. Isolated thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the mid 60s. South winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of thunderstorms 20 percent.

**Tuesday...**Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly sunny. Highs around 100. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Tuesday night...Mostly cloudy. Lows in the upper 60s. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.

**Wednesday...**Mostly sunny. Highs around 102. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph. Wednesday night...Mostly cloudy. Isolated thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the upper 60s. Chance of thunderstorms 20 percent.

**Thursday...**Mostly sunny. Highs around 100. Thursday night...Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the mid 60s.

**Friday...**Partly sunny in the morning then becoming mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 90s. Friday night...Partly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the mid 60s.

**Saturday and Saturday night...**Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 90s. Lows in the mid 60s.

Sunday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 90s.

Sunday's low, high: 61, 98  
Saturday's low, high: 61, 93  
Friday's low, high: 64, 83

Water usage  
Friday to Sunday  
2,425,000 gallons average  
Thursday  
2,964,000 gallons  
3 Consecutive Days over 3.5 million will put us in a water watch

3 Consecutive Days over 4.0 million will put us in a water warning

3 Consecutive Days over 4.5 million will put us in a water emergency

A recorded forecast updated throughout the day is available by calling (785) 899-7119. Current temperatures are available by calling 460-8367.



Pickin' on the Plains fans find their seats Saturday to listen to one of the several bluegrass bands that played during the week-end at the Thomas County Fairgrounds.

PATTY DECKER/Colby Free Press

## Forum highlights area candidates

Goodland Star-News

Candidates for the Tuesday, Aug. 5, Primary Election have been invited to a public forum at 7 p.m. tonight at the Goodland High School auditorium.

Amy Sederstrom of the Sherman County Farm Bureau, which is sponsoring the event, said those invited include:

- County treasurer, Republicans Iris Scheopner and Wanda Schritter.

- Sheriff, Republicans Kevin Butts and Frank Tabor (who is working in Iraq).

- Commissioner in District 2, Democrats Mitch Tiede and Dee Miller. (Republican candidate Cynthia Strnad does not have an opponent in the Primary.)

- Commissioner in District 3, Republicans Kevin Rasure and Max Linin.

- District Judge, Republicans Scott Showalter of Goodland, Kevin Berens of St. Francis and Andrea Wyrick of Colby.

## Debate over coal plants likely to return

TOPEKA (AP) - Chances are good that the Legislature will have the same debate next year about two proposed coal-fired power plants in southwest Kansas that it had this year.

Sunflower Electric Power Corp. hasn't given up on building the plants in Finney County. Since October, its plans have been blocked by Rod Bremby, secretary of health and environment, over the plants' potential carbon dioxide emissions and concerns about global warming.

True, elections this year could change the composition of the Legislature. But some important players in debates over energy policy are unopposed for re-election, and, absent a huge political catastrophe, Republicans are likely to keep their majorities in both houses.

That means the 2009 Legislature probably will convene in January with a significant number of members who still want to overturn Bremby's decision to block Sunflower's plants. Sunflower is still determined to build them, and various court challenges aren't likely to have run their course by then.

"I anticipate a full-blown debate until we get this fixed," said Senate President Steve Morris, a Hugoton Republican who strongly supports Sunflower's project.

Many legislators, like Morris, view the plants as economic development, and Sunflower has enjoyed bipartisan support, though Bremby is an appointee of Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius.

Sunflower would build the plants outside Holcomb, relying on two partners, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association Inc., of Westminster, Colo., and Golden Spread Electric Cooperative, of Amarillo, Texas. The out-of-state partners initially would claim 86 percent of the new power.

But Sunflower's allies see benefits for Kansas as well. They argue

the plants will spur the development of larger transmission lines, which could open up the area for wind farms, and note that Sunflower plans a bioenergy center to capture CO<sub>2</sub>, use it to grow algae and convert the algae to fuel.

Environmentalists question the technology behind that center and oppose Sunflower's project over CO<sub>2</sub>.

They also argue that allowing the new coal plants, which would provide enough electricity to meet the peak needs of 700,000 homes, would effectively smother any development of wind farms.

In denying an air quality permit, Bremby said the state couldn't ignore the dangers posed by climate change, which many scientists link to man-made greenhouse gases.

Bremby has said his action was an early step in moving Kansas toward regulating — voluntarily — greenhouse gas emissions. In March, Sebelius established an advisory committee to develop policy on such emissions; she already had a council reviewing energy policy.

"I think if the conversation is the same, I would be concerned," Bremby said. "Perhaps there'll be new topics and new solutions that are possible, and so, hopefully, that's where we will start with a conversation, as opposed to looking backwards."

This year's legislative debate ended with a stalemate.

Supporters of Sunflower's project forged bipartisan majorities

by linking provisions overturning Bremby's decision and limiting the secretary's power to other initiatives, including "green" ones.

But Sebelius vetoed three bills and, as large as the majorities for them were, they weren't enough to override her.

That forced Sunflower to pin its hopes on the courts in the short-term. Bremby's decision prompted six legal challenges: one an administrative review; two in Finney County District Court and three now with the Kansas Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court said in April that its three cases wouldn't go forward until the others were resolved. A Finney County judge helped last week, dismissing the two cases before him. But even if the administrative review goes quickly, it ultimately will be resolved by the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, Kansans will be filling all 40 Senate seats and 125 House seats in the Nov. 4 general

election. That's given both sides hope of a political breakthrough.

But the pro-Sunflower majorities in both chambers were large enough this year that the utility isn't likely to see its support drop far enough to prevent allies from passing the policy they prefer.

House Speaker Melvin Neufeld, an Ingalls Republican, and Minority Leader Dennis McKinney, a Greensburg Democrat, both supporters, are running unopposed. Senate Majority Leader Derek Schmidt, an Independence Republican, has no opposition, and Morris' only challenge — which he's expected to beat back — is in the GOP primary Aug. 5.

Finally, no one is challenging Rep. Carl Dean Holmes, a Republican from Liberal who's chairman of the House Energy and Utilities Committee.

He hasn't had a challenge to his re-election since 1996, and such safety has given him the chance to travel to national conferences and

cement his status among legislative Republicans as their energy policy expert.

Holmes is almost certain to play a big role in drafting of energy legislation next year and to be among the House and Senate negotiators drafting the final version of anything. He is, of course, a big supporter of Sunflower's project.

And so Kansans shouldn't be surprised if next year's session has a familiar ring to it.

## Aquila utility company sold

Aquila customers in Sherman County will not see a lot of changes with the sale of the gas utility completed Tuesday, but in coming months the trucks, signs and bills will be under the name "Black Hills Energy."

The \$940 million cash purchase of five Aquila Inc. utilities in Kansas, Colorado, Iowa and Nebraska by Black Hills Corp. was completed on Tuesday.

"Customers will continue to receive the same trusted coverage and service they have come to depend on," said David R. Emery, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Black Hills Corp. "They will benefit from enhancements to programs and services, including service from Aquila's Lincoln, Neb., call center."

**AFTER HARVEST SALE**  
**JULY 23, 24, 25, 26**  
**9:00 - 5:30**  
**25% TO 50% OFF**  
 Flannel, Fleece, Cotton, Backing  
 Home Dec, Books and Patterns (in store sales only)

**Interior Connection Quilt Cabin** 1525 S. Range  
**462-3375**

**ELECT PRESTON PRATT**  
 County Attorney

**EXPERIENCE:**

- 15 Years prosecuting experience
- Asst. Decatur County Attorney; Acted as Special Prosecutor in Rawlins and Norton Counties
- Numerous Jury Trials, Hundreds of Criminal Convictions
- Successfully Seized Assets of Drug Dealers & Traffickers
- Partner in HIRSCH & PRATT, LLP with offices in Decatur & Logan Counties

**CURRENTLY:**

- Asst. Decatur County Attorney
- Asst. Oberlin City Attorney
- Member Kansas, Nebraska, and American Bar Associations
- Secretary Sacred Heart Parish Council
- Knights of Columbus Council #5387 Grand Knight
- President Oberlin Country Club, Inc.

**FORMERLY:**

- Oberlin City Council
- Decatur County Economic Development
- Oberlin Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Area Resource Conservation & Development
- President Decatur County Theater, Inc.

Advertisement  
 Preston A. Pratt, Treasurer

**MEXICAN BUFFET**  
**CITY LIMITS**  
**THURSDAY, JULY 24TH**  
**5:00 - 9:00 p.m.**  
**462-6565**

**NOW SHOWING**  
 July 18th - July 24th

**WANTED**  
 R 1 Hour, 50 Minutes  
 Friday & Saturday 7:00 & 9:15  
 Sunday 2:00 & 7:00  
 Monday - Thursday 7:00

**THE DARK KNIGHT**  
 PG-13 2 Hours, 35 Minutes  
 Friday & Saturday 7:00 & 9:45  
 Sunday 2:00 & 7:00  
 Monday - Thursday 7:00

**FREE SUMMER MATINEE**  
**HORTON HEARS A WHO!**  
 G 1 Hour, 30 Minutes  
**Tuesday, July 22nd @ 2:00 p.m.**  
 Sponsored by: *McCarty Dairy, Western Kansas Farm Credit, Karen Thumel D.D.S.*

**Colby Cinema**  
 1935 S. Range • 785-460-9600  
 www.colbycinema.com

**Picnic In The Park**  
 Bring your lunch and lawn chair and enjoy the musical talent of....

**DAN KELLER**

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 23RD**  
**12:00 noon @ Fike Park**

SPONSORED BY COLBY/THOMAS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, COLBY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU AND YOUR COLBY FREE PRESS.