

Weather  
Corner

## National Weather Service

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 40. Southwest wind between 5 and 15 mph.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 68. North wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 42. East wind around 5 mph becoming south.

Saturday: Sunny, with a high near 75. South wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 43.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 72.

Sunday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 43.

Monday: Partly sunny, with a high near 63.

Monday Night: A 20 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 42.

Tuesday: A 20 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 64.

Tuesday Night: A 20 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 39.

Wednesday: A 30 percent chance of rain. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 55.

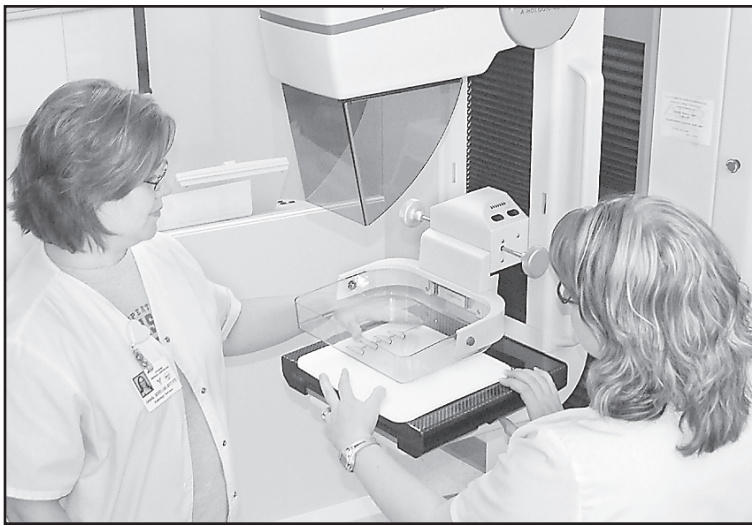
Wednesday: High 56, Low 37  
Precip: Wednesday, 0:00  
Month: 3.64  
Year: 18.76  
Normal: 17.96  
(K-State Experiment Station)

## Mammography best gift you can give yourself

Some medical exams are easier to put off than others. Mammograms may be at the top of that list for some women, but mammograms are the best gift you can give to yourself.

Early detection is the key to surviving breast cancer, and mammography — X-ray examination of the breast — is a life saving piece of technology.

“What I see most often are women who have a misconception of the mammography exam because of what they have read ... or horror stories from friends,” said Kim Weigel, lead mammography technologist at Citizens Medical Center in Colby. “The fact is that a large number of women’s reaction is ‘If I would have known it was this easy, I would have been



TAMA UNGER/Citizens Medical Center  
Radiation technologist Kim Weigel showed sonographer Amanda Lange new mammography equipment and techniques, including a square breast pad that make exams much more comfortable.

in a long time ago. I’m surprised at how easy the exam is.”

“I tell patients if you can bear with me for 10 minutes once a year, you have taken a big step toward detecting and surviving breast cancer.

“For some women, a mammogram will be uncomfortable, depending on their pain tolerance or overall breast tenderness. Let your technologist know you are uncomfortable, as repositioning and working together during your exam can help technologists get the images they need while helping you remain comfortable.”

Mammography film can detect problems besides breast cancer, she said. Mammography resolution today is so advanced that it can see details in the breast simi-

lar in size to that of a piece of lint or a grain of salt. This sensitivity reveals potentially serious conditions such as calcifications.

Men can have breast cancer, too, Weigel said, and should be aware of any changes in their breast tissue. There is a fairly common benign condition in men that requires a mammogram to detect.

If you have any questions or personal concerns about breast exams and breast health, she said, you should talk to your doctor. There are many resources available to help you understand the possible threats and care.

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month each year. It’s a great reminder for you to get your annual exam, no matter what your gender.

## Social Security benefits will increase 5.8 percent

WASHINGTON (AP) — Social Security benefits for 50 million people will be go up 5.8 percent next year, the largest increase in more than a quarter century.

The increase, which will start in January, was announced Thursday by the Social Security Administration. It will mean an additional \$63 per month for the average retiree.

The increase is the largest since a 7.4 percent jump in 1982 and is more than double the 2.3 percent rise that retirees got in their monthly checks starting in January of this year.

The typical retiree’s monthly check will go from \$1,090 currently to \$1,153.

But the fatter Social Security check may still seem puny to millions of retirees battered this year by huge increases in energy and food costs who have also watched helplessly as their retirement savings have been assaulted by the biggest upheavals on Wall Street in seven decades.

“Right now many senior citizens are feeling depressed because things seem out of control. They feel like they are in a boat being whipped around by rough seas,” said Sung Won Sohn, an economics professor at the Smith School of Business at California State University. “Their purchasing power has been going down because of higher prices for food and energy and a lot of other things while their savings have taken a hit because of what is hap-

pening in the markets.”

The market turbulence has continued this week with the Dow Jones industrial average plunging by 733 points on Wednesday, the second largest point drop on record. Earlier this month, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that Americans’ retirement plans have lost as much as \$2 trillion over the last 15 months — more than 20 percent of their value — because of all the market upheaval.

With all the gloomy news, re-

tirees may take little comfort in the new cost of living adjustment. The benefit change is based on the amount the Consumer Price Index increases from July through September from one year to the next.

The increase would have been even higher, but after racing ahead earlier in the year, energy costs fell in both August and September, helping to moderate the overall price gain.

The 5.8 percent rise in the cost of living adjustment is a sharp depar-

ture from recent years. The COLA increases have been below 3 percent for all but three of the past 15 years as the Federal Reserve waged a successful campaign to keep inflation under control.

Even with the big increase, the COLA is well below the gains of the late 1970s and early 1980s when the country was in the grips of a decade-long bout of high inflation. The biggest cost of living benefit on record was a 14.3 percent increase in 1980.

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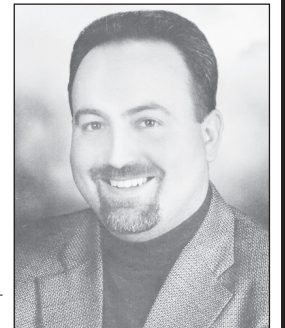
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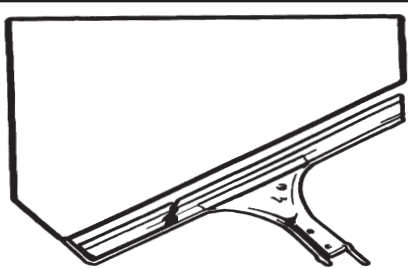
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