

Weather Corner



National Weather Service Tonight: Rain likely before 9pm, then snow likely. Areas of blowing snow after midnight. Cloudy, with a low around 23. Windy, with a north wind between 20 and 30 mph, with gusts as high as 40 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70 percent. New snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.

Tuesday: Areas of blowing snow and a chance of snow before 9am. Cloudy, then gradually becoming mostly sunny, with a high near 30. Windy, with a north wind 25 to 30 mph decreasing to between 15 and 20 mph. Winds could gust as high as 40 mph. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 15. North wind 5 to 10 mph becoming west.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 47. West wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Wednesday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 21.

Thursday: Partly sunny, with a high near 44.

Thursday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 20.

Friday: Partly sunny, with a high near 47.

Friday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 17.

Saturday: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 34.

Saturday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 15.

Sunday: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 23.

Friday: High, 41; Low 15
 Saturday: High, 55; Low 27
 Sunday: High 70, Low 27
 Precip: Friday 0.00 inches
 weekend 0.00 inches
 Month: 0.10 inches
 Year: 20.62 inches
 Normal: 20.34 inches
 (K-State Experiment Station)

Utilities want to move on repairs

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — With another winter approaching, rural power companies in Kansas are hoping to push forward with efforts to restore electrical systems damaged by last December's ice storm.

A meeting with Federal Emergency Management Agency officials is set to start Tuesday in Topeka to hash out repair needs.

A committee that represents 22 rural electric cooperatives and five municipal systems is disputing FEMA's repair estimate. The agency has offered about \$39 million for what the rural power companies say is about \$340 million in damage.

The rural utilities say FEMA evaluators who surveyed the damaged systems initially didn't take into account such things as electrical lines coming loose and fraying.

"That was the worst I've been through in 30 years in this business," said Don Hellwig, general manager of DS&O Rural Electric Cooperative in Solomon, referring to the ice storm that damaged electrical systems in western, central and northeast Kansas. "I don't want to ever have to do it again and I don't want my customers to have to go through it again."

It took FEMA eight months to assess the damage. Utility managers say it's crucial to move the process along as another winter season looms.

Officials with FEMA say the purpose of the meeting in Topeka is to reach an agreement on standards for additional repair aid.

"I think (FEMA officials) want to get everyone to the table before they decide anything along those lines," said Josh DeBerge,

a spokesman for the Region 7 FEMA office in Kansas City.

Clay Center Public Utilities Superintendent Bill Callaway said the utilities will have the option of accepting or appealing whatever guidelines FEMA officials propose for assessing power line damage.

Clay Center Public Utilities was offered about \$7,500, but the utility's engineers say that doesn't begin to cover the roughly \$3 million in damage to its electrical distribution lines.

"We're very serious about recording and verifying what repairs we've done," Callaway told the Salina Journal. "We've recorded our man hours, what we've done and what (damage) we've removed. Hopefully, FEMA will look at that positively for reimbursement."

Many certified teachers are not in the classroom

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — At a time when many Kansas school districts don't have enough teachers, around 25,000 people who have state teacher licenses aren't teaching.

State education officials say that's a huge number, considering that the state currently has 41,000 working teachers. Some are staying home with children, while others have changed professions, moved on to teach in colleges and relocated to other states.

School districts have increased efforts to hold onto teachers, but the biggest help in meeting the teacher shortage may come from the struggling economy.

Bluestem Electric, which serves rural Clay County, estimates its losses at \$13 million. FEMA offered the utility \$242,000.

Hellwig, the DS&O general manager, said the cooperative's engineers recommend replacing 315 miles of power lines at an estimated \$15.3 million. But FEMA offered \$6,000.

"We have been told that the expectation is that when the working group leaves at the end of next week, there will be a framework to get something going with," Hellwig said. "That doesn't mean that all 315 miles of our stuff gets funded. But if you can tell me what the rules are, I can look at what's (going to qualify). That's what we've been after all along."

Kansas Education Commissioner Alexa Posny says a license can be a safety valve. She says existing teachers could be slower to retire or pursue another career, and more college students may see teaching as secure profession.

Workshops help plan family farm transitions

MANHATTAN, Kan. - Bringing family members into the farm business and passing the farm from one generation to the next can be the best - and worst - of times. To help families develop a plan to suit their operation, K-State Research and Extension and the K-State Farm Analyst Program will again host "Keeping the Family Farming" workshops in January.

Topics include: Understanding Tax Repercussions and Legal Issues in Selling and Transferring Assets; Comparing Business Entity Options; Estimating Financial Needs in Retirement; Evaluating Strategies for Transferring the Family Farm;

Making Explicit Plans; Determining your Current Financial Situation; and Being Aware of the Potential for Conflict and the Identifying Ways to Resolve it.

"This year, we will have meetings in three locations," said LaVell Winsor, who is with the Kansas Farm Analyst Program.

"We've restructured the

meetings to be two one-day meetings, about two weeks apart and they will be held in more southern parts of the state than the previous sessions."

The workshops in western Kansas will be Friday, Jan. 10 and Friday, Jan. 30 in Garden City.

"At the end of the meetings in each location, the families will have the option of meeting with someone from the Farm Analyst program to review their personal situation," Winsor said.

The cost for the two-day session is \$225 per family of four, if paid by next Monday, plus \$75 for each additional participant.

The cost per family of four after next Monday is \$300. The fees include all materials, two lunches and one evening meal.

More information on the "Keeping the Family Farming" Workshops is available online at <http://www.agmanager.info> (click on Upcoming Events) or by contacting Lavell Winsor at 785-313-4974 or lwinsor@ksu.edu.

Parade of lights celebrates holiday season

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while the Knights of Columbus placed second.

There were 43 entries for this year's parade, said Holly Stephens, executive director of the Colby/Thomas County Chamber of Commerce.

The winners were decided by three judges, Mayor Ken Bieber, Chamber member Tina Harris, and Leilani Thomas, director of the Colby Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Ron Evans was the emcee for the parade. Free hot chocolate,

made by College Drive Assembly of God Church, was available at six locations along the route. The Colby Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star served coffee and hot chocolate and Sunflower Bank served free hot dogs inside the bank during the parade.

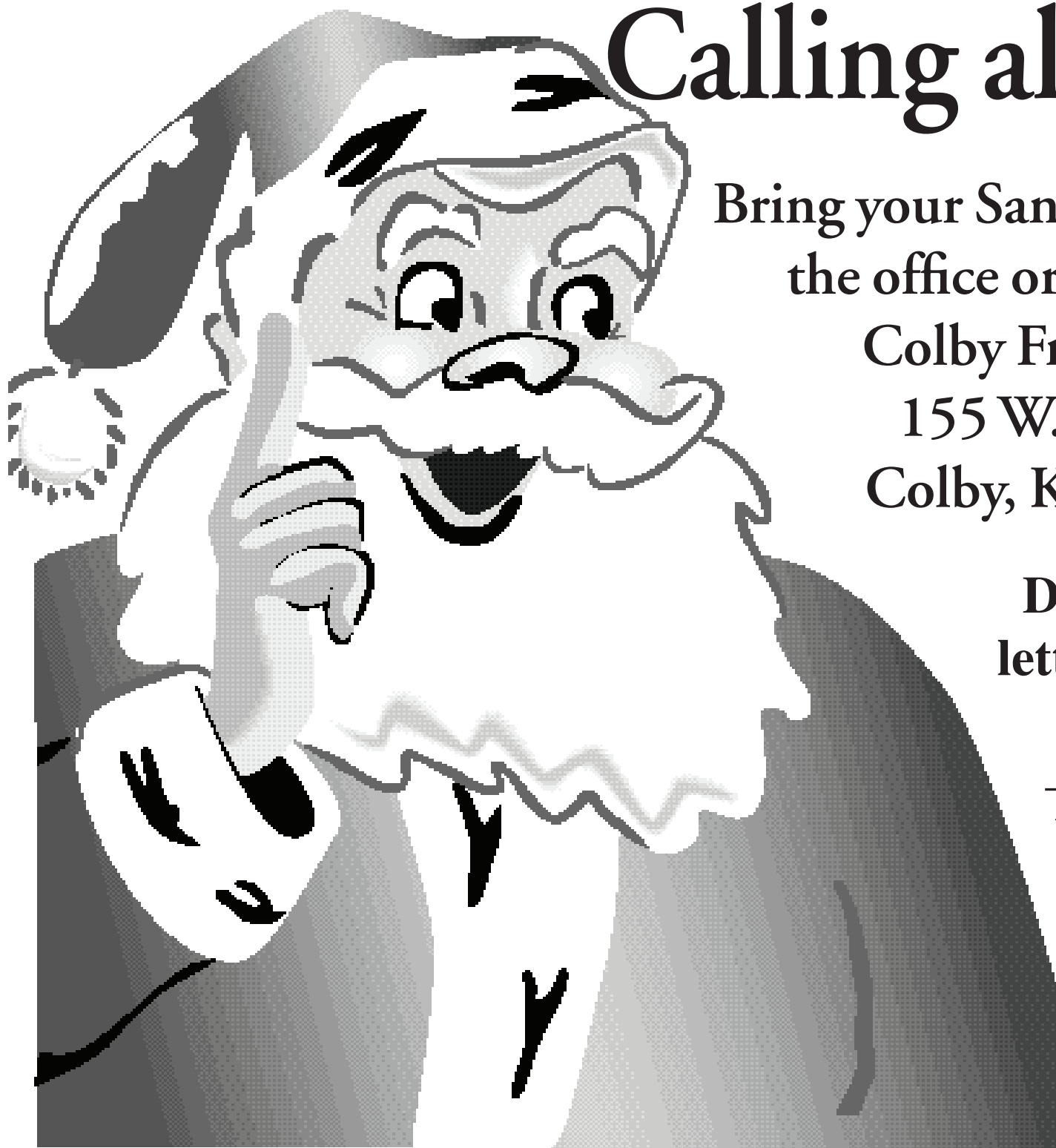
Letters To Santa

Calling all kids!

Bring your Santa Letter by the office or mail to:
Colby Free Press
 155 W. 5th St.
 Colby, KS 67701

Deadline for letters is Wed., Dec. 10th

Your letter will appear in the paper so Santa can read it!



Routine screening and prompt treatment can reduce deaths from breast and cervical cancer.

call to see if you qualify for a free screening

early detection works

620-275-5302
www.preventionworkskansas.com

LOST DOG



REWARD!

Gold-silver male Yorkshire Terrier lost around west 7th Street. Micro-chipped will be tracked and found. **Family offering generous reward.** Please help us find him.

462-6234 or 443-3686

MOVIE PASSES

Watch for your name in the Wednesday movie listings for 2 free passes.

(Passes must be used within 7 days.)

Pick up your passes at your:

