

Weather Corner



National Weather Service

Tonight: A 40 percent chance of snow. Cloudy, with a low around 14. North wind 10 to 15 mph becoming east. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible.

Saturday: A 20 percent chance of snow before noon. Cloudy, with a high near 30. South wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 12. Southeast wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 28. East wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Sunday Night: A 30 percent chance of snow. Cloudy, with a low around 10.

Monday: A 30 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 25.

Monday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 13.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 43.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 19.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 50.

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

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 42.

Thursday: High, 69; Low 30
Precip: Thursday 0.00 inches
Month: 0.09 inches
Year: 0.09 inches
Normal: 0.48 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)

Stem cell project approved

NEW YORK (AP) — A U.S. biotech company says it plans to start this summer the world's first study of a treatment based on human embryonic stem cells — a long-awaited project aimed at spinal cord injury.

The company gained federal permission this week to inject eight to 10 patients with cells derived from embryonic cells, said Dr. Thomas Okarma, president and CEO of Geron Corp. of Menlo Park, Calif.

The patients will be paraplegics, who can use their arms but can't walk. They will receive a single injection within two weeks of their injury.

The study is aimed at testing the safety of the procedure, but doctors will also look for signs of improvement like return of sensation or movement in the legs, Okarma said.

Whatever its outcome, the study will mark a new chapter in the contentious history of embryonic stem cell research in the United States — a field where debate spilled out of the laboratory long ago and into national politics.

While some overseas doctors claim to use human embryonic stem cells in their clinics, stem cell experts said they knew of no previous human studies that use such cells.

"It's a milestone and it's a breakthrough for the field" because Geron passed the safety hurdles for getting federal clearance to launch the study, said Ed Baetge, chief scientific officer of Novocell Inc. His company hopes to begin a similar human study for treating diabetes in a few years.

Cheerleaders strut their stuff



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

The Colby High cheerleaders performed for the crowd at halftime during the Colby High boys basketball game against Ulysses on Thursday.

Educational fund has reached first goal

By Andy Heintz

Colby Free Press
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Melinda Olson, executive director for the Thomas County Community Foundation, told the board of education members at their meeting on Monday the Colby Public Schools Educational Fund had reached the minimum amount of \$2,500. She said the foundation had decided no interest or earnings would go into the fund until they had raised at least \$2,500. Olson said the fund has received \$2,925 in donations.

The foundation has set up five sub-categories where donors can send their money. These sub-cat-

egories include fine arts, arts education, athletics, education mini-grants for teachers and agricultural education, said Olson. If the donor wants money to go to something that does not fit into any of these categories the foundation will set up a new sub-category to represent the donor's interests. For example if a person wants to donate \$1,000 to go towards improving technology at the school a sub-category will be set up for technology improvement.

People wishing to donate need to send a check to the foundation along with a note saying how they want the money to be spent.

Olson encourages people to donate to the foundation.

"The more we build the fund up, the more we can help the schools," Olson said.

Terrell Harrison, superintendent for Colby Public School district informed the board that all Colby school buildings had made adequate yearly progress on the Kansas Assessment towards meeting the requirements of No Child Left Behind. The requirements mandate all students must be at mini-

mum proficiency on state reading and mathematics assessment. The board approved dismissing students and district personnel on Friday, Feb. 27 in order to have an incentive day for meeting Adequate Yearly Progress for 2008.

Harrison said A special board meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 2 to discuss future cuts in state funding.

Colby Middle School Principal Rob Ross told the board 12 students from the middle school have been chosen to attend a leadership class in Oberlin in February. The class will feature chosen students who have shown leadership traits from Colby, Oberlin and Atwood middle schools who will learn about school pride, anti-bullying, how to include everyone in activities and teaching respect.

Students from each school will choose a project that will be initiated in their respective schools, Ross said.

Harrison said teachers and students from Colby Grade School and middle school are getting ready for Kansas Assessments that will take place in February

Don Krebs, Colby High School interim principal, showed board members the career center newsletter. He said the newsletter will be on the school website.

The newsletter is our way of informing students and parents about what's going on in the career center, said Colby High Career Counselor Joanie-Clark Leiker. The newsletter covers topics such as financial activities, college visits and college tuitions, she said.

Lary Gabel, Activities director at the high school, said that he and other activities directors from the schools that will make up the new Great West Activity Conference League are working on writing up a constitution for the new league. The league will begin in the fall of 2010. There are six teams signed up for the new league. They are Colby, Goodland, Scott City, Holcomb, Hugoton and Ulysses. Hugoton voted to be part of the league on Monday.

We want your local news: e-mail to colby.editor@nwkansas.com

Humanities council offers speakers bureau

TOPEKA — The Kansas Humanities Council is offering Picturing America, a new Speakers Bureau series available in 2009.

Six programs highlighting Kansas art and artists are offered free in Kansas in conjunction with the series, an initiative of the National

Endowment for the Humanities.

"The Speakers Bureau programs introduce historical themes through the work of artists who shaped, and were shaped by, Kansas," said Julie Mulvihill, executive director of the council.

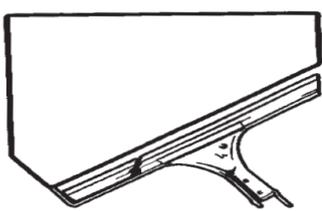
Programs cover topics includ-

ing artists' depictions of the Dust Bowl, outsider art, artists Aaron Douglas and Birger Sandzen, women's clubs and fine art, and the artistic heritage of Kansas.

For programs and booking information, call (785) 357-0359 or visit www.kansashumanities.org.

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