

Weather Corner



National Weather Service

Tonight: A 50 percent chance of rain. Cloudy, with a low around 39. West wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Saturday: Rain likely. Cloudy, with a high near 52. East wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south. Chance of precipitation is 60%.

Saturday Night: Rain likely. Cloudy, with a low around 42. East wind 5 to 10 mph becoming north. Chance of precipitation is 60 percent.

Sunday: A 40 percent chance of showers, mainly before 1pm. Cloudy, with a high near 60. North wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Sunday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 40.

Monday: Partly sunny, with a high near 67.

Monday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 45.

Tuesday: Partly sunny, with a high near 68.

Tuesday Night: A 30 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 44.

Wednesday: Partly cloudy, with a high near 73.

Wednesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 45.

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 75.

Thursday: High, 65; Low 43

Precip: Thursday 0.00 inches

Month: 0.00 inches

Year: 4.62 inches

Normal: 7.24 inches

(K-State Experiment Station)

Former Kansas leader reports on trip to Cuba

From "CUBA," Page 1

the bills in what they call the "dollar stores" and the men in Cuba are crazy for the American baseball cards.

She also took sticks of gum and some of her left-over lieutenant governor pencils to hand out as gifts. Cuba has its own coinage, she said, and although they value American dollar bills, they have no use for our coins.

The Kanas group stayed in a large hotel that Sheila said was nice and clean and they ate there. She said the food in Cuba was bland. She had expected to be fed a lot of fruit, but little was served. Cubans grow a little fruit for their own use, she said, but not for export and they no longer grow large pineapple crops.

The first days on the island, she said, they heard lectures by high public officials who told them about Cuba in elaborate detail. However, they had not been able to go anywhere or see any of the country or the people. After all, Sheila said, they were a group of farmers who had come to see the country and talk to the people.

Flinchbaugh, who Sheila described as "a type A personality with a lot of nervous energy," took the Cuban tour guide aside and told him what he had planned for his group. From that point on, she said, they began to get out and see more of what they had come to Cuba for.

Sheila said she was surprised that Cuba no longer grows a lot of sugarcane; though they do still grow tobacco for their famous cigars, and tobacco is hard on the soil. She also noticed some row crops, but she said it was the wrong time of year to tell much about what

they were raising. They grow no wheat, a fact that might be to the Kansas wheat growers' advantage whenever the U.S. lifts its trade embargo, she added.

Their guide was a man who had an advanced degree in business from Russia, and he said his wife was a doctor. Sheila said she discovered that all health care in Cuba is free and that there are plenty of doctors. The doctors are educated free of charge, some in Cuba and some sent to other places such as Russia. The guide said his wife was paid very little, though, and so he had to earn most of the support for the family. He said he liked his job because of the dollars he got as tips from tourists.

He laughingly told Sheila that he hoped his wife would remember that he was the one who supported her if the embargo is ever lifted and the Americans would come to Cuba to build big hotels and condominiums and his wife would be paid the same as the American doctors.

A group in Sweden who wanted to help the Cubans sent them a herd of dairy cattle, Sheila said. However, even though the grass was belly high on the cattle, they were starving to death. Sheila said the grass had little nutrition in it because the Cuban farmers had no money to buy fertilizer. Nor do they have the means to buy nutritious feed. They ended up butchering the cattle, she said.

Sheila said she noticed several places in the downtown area where buildings had been started and then left incomplete. The scaffolding and girders are now rusted and old. Sheila said she suspected there just wasn't enough money to finish them.

Downtown Havana had many

small shops and eating places where people could spend their Cuban coins, but they saw no large department stores. There were a lot of stores where they could spend their dollars. Sheila said she had some very good ice cream in a place in the middle of the park. She didn't know if they did have some milk cows or if the milk and cream had been imported.

In the bathrooms, she said, you had to get a piece of toilet tissue from a woman who expected a tip. Sheila said she gave her a dollar bill and the woman was so happy that she thought she would have given her the whole roll.

Overall, she said, she thought the Cuban people are artistic, polite, friendly and colorful. Their homes are colorful, too, but mostly in disrepair. Names of families needing a home are put on a list, she said, and when someone leaves their home for some reason, if they die or leave the country for example, the home is given to the first family on the list.

Sheila said it doesn't matter if it is a large family and a small home or a small family and a large home. If you are at the head of the list, you get the next available home. The group's guide and his family, Sheila said, were still living with his parents and hoping to someday get a home of their own. Appliances such as washing machines are unavailable, and most women wash their clothes by hand.

During the revolution, when Fidel Castro was taking over Cuba for the Communist party, many people left the country and abandoned their belongings. Sheila bought a sterling silver bracelet made out of a fork that she thought might be part of a set of silver left behind during that time, since she noticed several things made out of such items.

Fixing the roof



ANDY HEINTZ/Colby Free Press

It was a chilly day last week for working on the courthouse roof. Thursday, the crew had progressed to removing the shingles from the clock tower on the west side.

Commissioners tackle air-unit issue

From "COUNTY," Page 1

said her choice is a 2003 Chevy pickup that is assigned to headquarters of the Kansas Highway Patrol. It will reach trade-in status of no more than 70,000 miles sometime this summer.

The book value on the truck is \$15,800, she said, and her department can buy it for \$12,900, with the emergency lights in place. She said she'd been told it should last around 200,000 miles.

McMahan new federal regulations requiring narrow-band radios are coming in late fall of 2012, and the equipment must be in place as of Jan. 1, 2013. She said it will be a swift changeover once it gets here, maybe only 2 or 3 days. Her department's radio and changeover will be paid for from a grant, she said, but other

departments will have to have the money in their budget. She said the change to narrow bands will also affect farmers who use two-


way radios. All the tornado sirens, which are radio controlled, will need a new "brain box."

WOOFER PUMP & WELL INC.
1024 Oak Ave.
Hoxie, KS 67740

Office Phone 785/ 675-3991 Fax: 785/ 675-3990
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