



COLBY FREE PRESS

Severe storms predicted over weekend

By Kevin Bottrell

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Colby may be heading into severe weather over the weekend, with thunderstorms, hail and even tornadoes possible both tonight and Saturday.

The National Weather Service forecast says air currents in Canada and the northeastern United States are pushing a cold front down across the plains. This front may produce severe thunderstorms, with hail, damaging winds and tornadoes.

A hazardous weather advisory put out by the service's Goodland weather station said the situation is complicated and uncertain. The several weather models that the service uses present varying pictures of the weekend's weather.

The service says the greatest risk tonight and Saturday will be north of a line from Colby to Hill City. On Sunday through Thursday, the forecast shows a chance of more thunderstorms, although these should be less severe.

Glen Forbes, a meteorologist with the Weather Channel, says on the channel's website there have been fewer severe storms across the country this year than in 2008. Spring last year was plagued by tornadoes, he said, more than 1,000 by the end of May, which killed more than 113 people. This year, 21 people have died in fewer than 600 tornadoes.

Thomas County has seen its share of rain in recent weeks. The service reported 1.77 inches of rain on Monday and Tuesday, .57 inches in Brewster and 1.68 inches in Rexford.

Teachers train on latest gadgets

By Vera Sloan

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Talking to students in South Africa or Australia and even Iraq is something teachers from across the state were experiencing Thursday at the "iConnect/iLearn" workshop at Colby High School.

Over a hundred teachers registered from as far away as Johnson County and Oklahoma, to become students of technology. They will take what they have learned into their classrooms when school begins next fall.

Classes included instruction on building web pages, how to add a "Travelers IQ" to a page, how to build a geography and history game, how to use the new wireless "flip cam" and how teachers can use a social network on the Inter-

net to talk to each other around the world.

On Thursday, teachers had a roundtable discussion on how technology can relate to the standards of learning.

A Kansas State University technology instructor joined the group in the afternoon to share the latest information teachers will have available to them on how to share learning tools.

Friday's keynote presenter, Sheryl Nussbaum-Beach, planned to talk about keeping up with the "Net Generation" via a virtual presentation, and Steve Wycoff, of the Educational Services and Staff Development Association of Central Kansas, spoke on "Your Kids, Your Community, Your Future."

The Colby workshop wrapped up today, with phase II to be available in Hutchinson later this month.



VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Teachers became students Thursday and Friday at a statewide gathering in Colby to study the latest technology techniques they will be using in the classroom. Thomas County Academy instructor Theresa Morgan demonstrated the "flip-cam" during a class for teachers of young students. The wireless device has a flip-up USB plug that can be connected computer. A flip-cam was given away at the Friday afternoon session.

Briefly

Alums to plan 2010 reunion

The planning committee for the 2010 Colby High School Alumni Reunion will meet at 5 p.m. Sunday at the Vision Source conference room. All Colby High alumni are welcome. For information, call Amanda Wahlmeier at 460-9145 or Jada Tubbs at 460-9084.

Church offers twin concerts

There will be a Gaither Homecoming Video Concert and a Concert of Prayer at 7 p.m. Sunday at the Colby Berean Church. The public is invited to attend the free concerts, which will feature the Oak Ridge Boys. Refreshments will be served. For information, call the church at 460-1968.

Cemetery decorations must go

Families are asked to have all temporary grave decorations at Beulah Cemetery picked up by 5 p.m.

Monday so mowing can resume, said Relda Galli, secretary of the Colby Cemetery District No. 1 board. For questions, call the caretakers at 462-3188.

Food sign up set for next week

Sign up for Prairie Land Food will be from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth St. Delivery will be 10 to 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 27, at the Sacred Heart school gym, 1050 W. Sixth St. For information, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579 or State Farm at 462-7525.

Food distribution Monday

Department of Agriculture commodity distribution will be from 1 to 2 p.m. Monday at the Retired Senior Volunteer Program office in the Senior Progress Center. Those who meet income requirements may

receive the commodities, which include tuna, peanut butter, juice, green beans, mixed fruit and blackeyed peas. Distribution is first-come, first-served, but participants are asked not to arrive at the office more than a half hour in advance. For information, call the office at 462-6744.

Church cancels Tuesday meal

The "More Fun Together" senior singles potluck at the First Presbyterian Church for Tuesday has been cancelled. The July gathering will be announced closer to the date. For information, call Carol Rahn at 462-6342.

Red Cross offers water safety

The Thomas County Red Cross will offer a water safety instructor class from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday at the Thomas County Office Complex. The

cost is \$180, including all materials. For information or to register, call the office at 462-7161.

Camp set for Tuesdays

The Colby Wesleyan Church is offering "Tuesdays @ 10," a free summer day camp for children 4 to 12. Kids are invited to participate in the food, fun, games and God's love from 10 a.m. to noon every Tuesday through July 28. This year's "Son Rock Camp" will include nature hikes and outdoor activities with lunch. To register, or for information, call the church office at 462-8391.



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

Guard unit stops in Colby

Soldiers from the 778th Transportation Company of the Kansas Army National Guard spent the night at Colby High School on Wednesday, on their way to the training facility at Camp Guernsey, Wyo. They were transporting dozens of tanks, mobile artillery, armored personnel carriers and other vehicles to the camp. The company, based in Kansas City, Wichita, Manhattan and Council Grove, has deployed to Iraq and Kuwait and been called out for hurricane and flood relief in the United States. Specialist Andrew Weber and Sgt. Adrian Davis (right) made sure their vehicles were secure before turning in. The company moved out Thursday morning, heading through Colorado to Wyoming. After dropping off the vehicles there, the company will head to Rapid City, S.D.



County recycling inspired area's effort

By Vera Sloan

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When Thomas County began a recycling program in 1997, it started a movement here boosting people's awareness of what was being dumped back into the environment.

"The program has grown by leaps and bounds," said Lynette Koon, director of the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Organization.

Now, 12 years later, the organization covers eight counties with room for three more to come on board. Thomas County serves as the central collection point.

In 2003, five area counties signed an "inter-local" agreement with Thomas County to work together to market recyclable materials. The total reached eight when Scott County came on board in January of 2008.

"Each county has its own recycling facility, and pays dues in order to have ownership privileges for the collection-point operations,"

Koon said. "Our budget comes from memberships and from what waste we sell."

Besides collecting all kinds of waste paper, plastics, glass and aluminum, the group has started recycling electronic waste, such as computers, printers, televisions and anything electronic that classifies as e-waste.

The agency was chosen for a two-year pilot program by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Bureau of Waste Manage-

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City taps Colorado company for paving

By Andy Heintz

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Grasser Construction of Stratton, Colo., will start paving projects on Sewell Avenue and Country Club Drive in the middle of July, says City Manager Carolyn Armstrong.

The project on Country Club will start at Sixth Street and go north to 10th Street. The workers

will mill off the existing asphalt and overlay the road with new asphalt, Armstrong said. The cost for paving is \$126,826.

The Sewell project consists of paving a new street that will start at Willow Avenue west of the new Walmart and go north 390 feet. The city received a paving petition from property owners Frank and Theresa Sanitate and Farmers and Merchants Bank. They asked

the city to extend Sewell north so people could gain access to a Sleep Inn Motel planned there.

The Sanitates own the ground where the motel will sit. Farmers and Merchants has to cover the costs because it owns land west of Sewell.

"If a street goes in, landowners around that area pay for the costs," said Armstrong.

Paving cost for Sewell is

\$143,931 and the total is estimated at \$193,128, including \$18,000 for engineering and 5 percent for administration, Armstrong said.

Armstrong said the total cost of both paving jobs will be \$272,757 on the bid from Grasser, almost \$100,000 below the engineers' estimate of \$371,570. Other bids came from APAC-Kansas of Hays, \$333,794, and Sporer Land Development of Oakley, \$330,180.

