

Weather Corner



National Weather Service Tonight: A 30 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 10. Southeast wind around 5 mph. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible. Friday: Partly sunny, with a high near 33. South wind around 5 mph. Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 12. South wind around 5 mph. Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 38. South wind between 5 and 10 mph. Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 15. Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 38. Sunday Night: A chance of freezing drizzle. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 17. Monday: Partly sunny, with a high near 41. Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 16. Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 42. Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 17. Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 43. Wednesday: High, 37; Low 18 Precip: Wed. 0.00 inches Month: 0.12 inches Year: 0.12 inches Normal: 0.45 inches (K-State Experiment Station) Sunrise and Sunset Friday 7:54 a.m. 6:01 p.m. (U.S. Naval Observatory)

Senate approves last year's cuts

From "BUDGET," Page 1

Parkinson was dealt a setback when the House Taxation Committee rejected his proposal to increase the sales tax rate. Parkinson wants to raise the rate to 6.3 percent from 5.3 percent. But the Republican-dominated Taxation Committee voted Wednesday to recommend the bill not be passed. The move was not unexpected and kills the proposal contained in the bill. Democrats on the panel objected to the move, saying no options should be removed from consideration this early in the session, which began Jan. 11. Rep. Julie Menghini of Pittsburg said to kill the proposal now was "at best premature, at worst irresponsible" when legislators don't know just how much new revenue will be needed for the 2011 budget. Rep. Richard Carlson, a St. Marys Republican and

committee chairman, says other tax proposals will be considered as they are brought forward. "The opportunities are not lost at this time," Carlson said. Beth Martino, the governor's spokeswoman, said it still was early in the session and Parkinson was eager to hear legislators' plans for generating new revenue. "The governor proposed the sales tax as one possible option for solving this budget crisis. As he said in his budget proposal, we can't cut our way out of this so we must find revenue somewhere," Martino said. Parkinson argues there is little left to trim spending, and that without new revenue more cuts would be needed in education, corrections and social services. The state expects to spend \$651 million less in general tax revenues in its current budget than in it did two years ago, a drop of nearly 11 percent.

Kansas judicial audit encourages consolidation

WICHITA (AP) — Judicial officials in Kansas are being told what school district administrators have heard for years: Consolidation could save money. An audit produced by the state and released Wednesday estimated that if Kansas had only 13 judicial districts in 2008, instead of its 31 judicial districts, "costs could have been about \$6.2 million less statewide." Under a hypothetical scenario of only seven judicial districts, expenses in 2008 could have been about \$8.1 million less across the state, the Legislative Division of Post Audit's report stated. The audit contained two maps showing how a 13-district and a seven-district judicial system might appear in Kansas.

Hodgeman, Lane, Ness, Pawnee and Rush counties — was 390 cases for the year. By comparison, the caseload for judges in Shawnee County, making up its own judicial district, was 2,392 cases per judge. Judges in urban areas hear substantially more cases per year than their counterparts in rural counties, and until the state drops the one-judge-per-county standard, "caseloads will stay unequal," the audit said. While Kansas has 31 judicial districts, Utah and Iowa each has eight such districts and Minnesota has 10 districts, the audit pointed out. Utah is comparable to Kansas in land area, said District Judge Mike Keeley of Barton County, chief judge of the 20th Judicial District, but the two states have "completely different" demographic maps. There are only about four places in Utah where there are people, Keeley said. Thirteen judicial districts for Kansas would not be enough, in Keeley's view. Larger districts would pose a problem with access to courts on a timely basis. He also noted that districts where voters have determined judges will be elected in partisan elections would partly overlap districts where voters have opted to see judge-retention ballot questions.

Turn job loss into opportunity

A job loss has an impact on the affected employee, but also has a ripple effect on family and friends, a Kansas State University specialist said. "Changes in the economic climate affect marriage and family relationships," said Charlotte Shoup Olsen, Kansas State University Research and Extension family systems specialist. "Personal values, and particularly ideas about saving, spending, the responsibility in providing for the family, and lifestyle, can impact how well a newly laid-off or down-sized employee may handle a change in employment," she said. An individual raised in a thrifty household may draw from experience in making immediate and necessary changes in the face of unemployment. Does that mean that others, such as a young adult or parent raised in a home where everything was provided can't — or won't — fare as well? "Not necessarily," Olsen said. "Feeling hurt, angry or disappointed is normal, but blaming a newly laid-off or unemployed

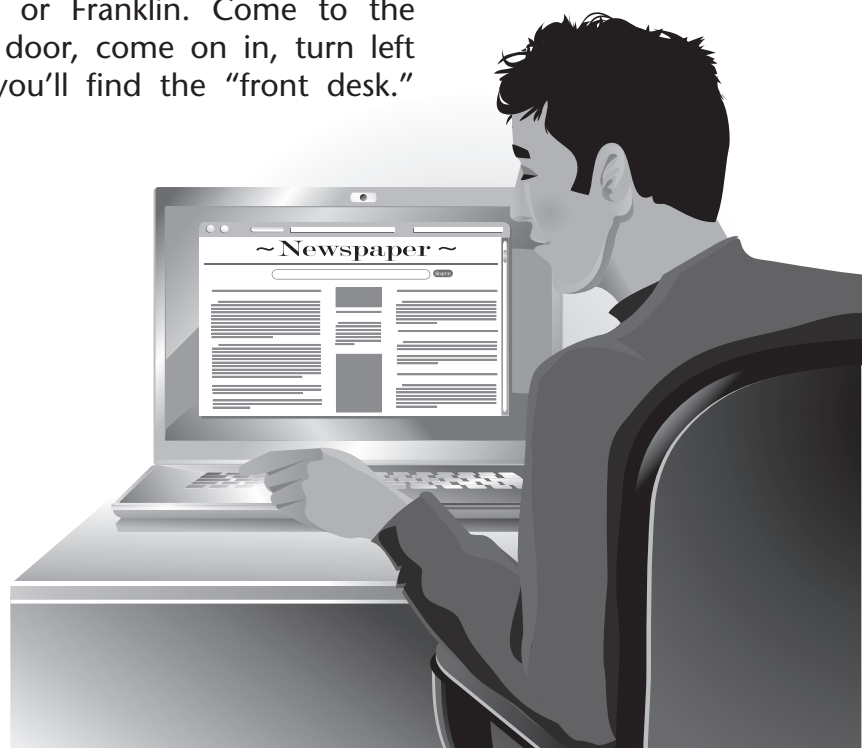
person, rather than changing economic times, is not likely to be productive — and can be harmful to relationships," Olsen said. Perhaps it is time to re-think a career, re-train or build skills for new opportunities, said Olsen, who offered tips for weathering tough times: • Acknowledge the change, but don't dwell on it. • Take a business-like approach to financial management. Separate needs from wants, and focus on needs. • Be willing to readjust expectations. A new job may offer a lower salary and fewer benefits, but still be an opportunity. • Be up front with children and family members. Stick to the facts, and try to keep emotion in check. Parental ability to manage a job loss and the stress from it can teach valuable lessons. Tips for managing family relationships are available at county and district K-State Research and Extension offices and on the Extension Web site: www.ksre.ksu.edu.

Sell it in the classifieds 462-3963

We're Open!

Because of the flooding, we are working in the back room. The front door is open, but Fifth Street is closed. Parking is available on Chick or Franklin. Come to the front door, come on in, turn left and you'll find the "front desk."

As always, customers are our priority at the Colby Free Press. We're here to serve you. Please pardon our mess.



Office hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday. 155 W. Fifth St. • (785) 462-3963

LOCAL TV LISTINGS sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Saturday Evening January 30, 2010 and Sunday Evening January 31, 2010 TV listings grid with cable channels.

Sunday Evening January 31, 2010 TV listings grid with cable channels.