

Weather Corner



National Weather Service
Tonight: Scattered flurries.
Cloudy, with a low around 24.

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 44.

Friday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 23.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 48.

Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 28.

Sunday: A 40 percent chance of snow.

Sunday Night: A 30 percent chance of snow.

Monday: A 20 percent chance of snow.

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

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 48.

Tuesday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 23.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 49.

Wednesday: High, 41; Low 19
Precip: Wed. 0.00 inches
Month: 0.38 inches
Year: 0.87 inches
Normal: 0.52 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)
Sunrise and Sunset
Friday 7:21 a.m. 6:33 p.m.
(U.S. Naval Observatory)

School district gets budget advice from citizens

From "BUDGET," Page 1

money coming in.

The district is OK for the rest of the year, Harrison said, but next year is a different story.

"I feel for them," Harrison added, "because it is going to be very difficult."

The superintendent said the House Ways and Means Committee has approved a budget that has no further cuts to education.

The Taxation Committee, however, has rejected Gov. Mark Parkinson's plan to raise

the statewide sales tax by 1 percent. Things won't be settled for several months.

"It's very difficult to build a budget when you don't know what's going to happen," she said. "We could lose anything from \$293,000 to way over a million. We may not know until May.

"Even if the state keeps the base aid at \$4,012, we will still have to cut."

After Harrison finished, she asked the audience to go into the high school commons and break up into groups of six to eight to brainstorm ideas.

Harrison put together some of the suggestions she'd received from students and

staff as a primer for the discussion. These included closing the kitchen at the grade school, increasing student fees for driver education, limited watering and mowing in the summer and eliminating vocational education.

Someone from the staff - all three principals, district staff and teachers - sat with the groups. Harrison walked around answering questions.

Ideas the groups discussed included small increases to lunch prices, cutting elective classes with low enrollment, bringing all student activity fund raisers together and allowing parents to drive students to events, rather than using a district bus or van.

School board President Janice Frahm said she was pleased with how many people attended the meeting and the amount of ideas they came up with.

Harrison collected all the ideas at the end and said she will be putting them together and posting them on the district's web site, www.colbyeagles.com.

If they have to make cuts, Harrison said, she and the district staff will put together a list of recommendations for the board.

"We basically have two choices," she said. "We can (work for) a revenue increase or we can accept the reductions.

"For us, that means less opportunities for our kids."

Corn crop difficult to assess this year

In typical times, feed-grain growers and traders would have a good idea by now of how the previous year's corn production turned out, but the past year has been anything but typical, and that could affect prices this spring.

"Given winter conditions since late December, combined with high soil moisture levels in the central, northern and northwestern Corn Belt, it is unlikely that much corn harvest progress will have occurred in time for the March 31 USDA stocks report," said Dan O'Brien, Kansas State University agricultural economist in Colby.

U.S. Department of Agriculture data released Jan. 12 estimated that U.S. corn production in 2009 totaled a record 13.2 billion bushels, 1 percent above the previous record of 13 billion bushels set in 2007, and 9 percent higher than the 2008 harvest.

Yet, there is uncertainty about the final size of the 2009 crop because the government estimated the U.S. corn harvest was 95 percent complete as of Dec. 20, said O'Brien. If 5 percent of the U.S. crop is still unharvested, that would amount to approximately 3.98 million acres.

Some of the questions that persist, he said, include:

- The possible impact of low test weights on feed grain use.
• Quality deterioration of some corn supplies currently in storage.
• The potential for production losses with as much as 500 million to 650 million bushels of corn still unharvested.
• Possible corn crop abandonment this spring, due to wet soils and the need for farmers to begin fieldwork in preparation for planting the 2010 crop.

More marketing information is available on the K-State Extension agricultural economics Web site: www.agmanager.info/.

Colby students learn state's safe driving tips

From "DRIVING," Page 1

and drowsy driving, the dangers of power windows for children, weather, animals, emergency vehicles, rules of the road, using a cell phone, plus alcohol and driving. It's a lot of good information."

Tricia Korthanke of the Regional Prevention Center said her office learned about the free information and teaching materials being offered through the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource

Office, and they called area schools to see if they might be interested in presenting the information to students.

Korthanke said that besides Mrs. Wagoner's class, Kevin Cox will teach a class later in the spring at Colby High, and both the high school and junior high in Goodland will take advantage of the information.

Information about the safety office and its materials can be found at www.ktsro.org, she said.

Colby High students earn top piano honors

From "PIANO," Page 1

"Eccosaisses" by Ludwig Van Beethoven.

Bickner has also been taking lessons for 12 years. She has gone to the state every year she has been at Colby High. She played "Cat and Mouse" by Aaron Copland.

Rachel Juenemann has been

taking lessons for nine years. It was her second time at state. She played "Le Petit Anne Blanc" by Ibert.

Alex Juenemann has been taking lessons for seven years, but this was his first time at state. He played "Toccatto Opus 40" by K-balevsky.

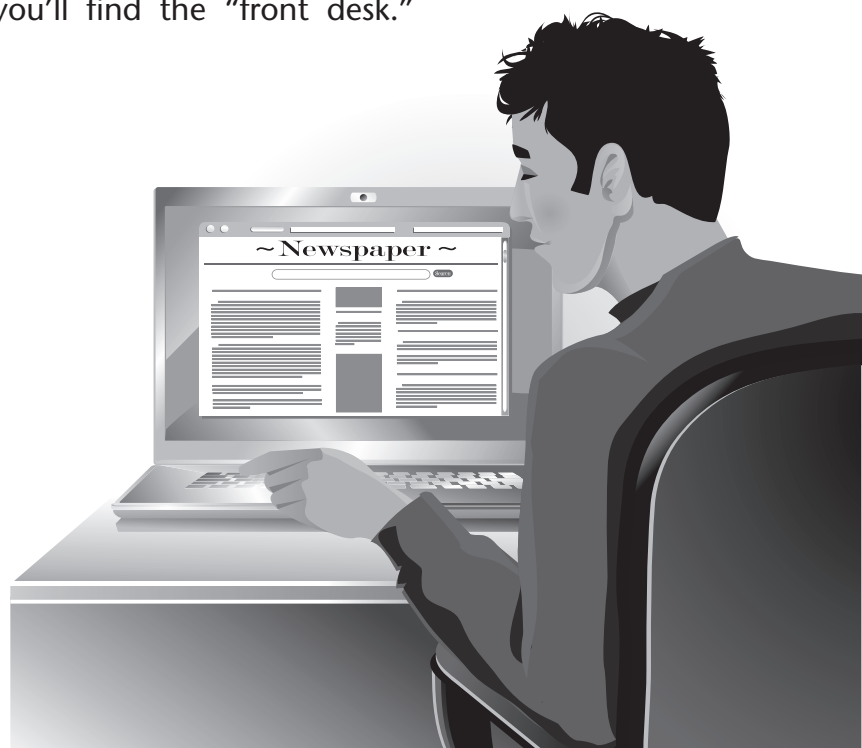
Heart Month

Nearly 8 million Americans age 20 and older have survived a heart attack (myocardial infarction). About 8.9 million have angina pectoris (chest pain or discomfort due to reduced blood supply to the heart).

We're Open!

• Because of the flooding, we are working in the back room. While repairs are under way, come to the front door, come on in, turn left and you'll find the "front desk."

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Table with columns for Sunday Evening and February 28, 2010, listing various TV channels and their programming.