

Weather Corner



National Weather Service Tonight: Increasing clouds, with a low around 17. East wind around 10 mph.

Thursday: A 40 percent chance of snow, mainly before noon. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 34. East wind between 10 and 15 mph. New snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.

Thursday Night: A chance of freezing drizzle after 9 p.m. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 16. South wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Friday: A chance of snow and freezing drizzle. Cloudy, with a high near 28. North wind between 5 and 15 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

Friday Night: A 30 percent chance of snow. Cloudy, with a low around 13.

Saturday: A 20 percent chance of snow before noon. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 30.

Saturday Night: Mostly cloudy, with a low around 9.

Sunday: A 20 percent chance of snow. Partly sunny, with a high near 41.

Sunday Night: A 20 percent chance of snow. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 21.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 47.

Monday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 22.

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 51.

Monday: High, 40; Low 10 Tuesday: High, 55; Low 17 Precip: Monday none Tuesday none Month: 0.19 inches Year: 0.41 inches Normal: 0.45 inches (K-State Experiment Station)

Sunrise and Sunset Thursday 7:24 a.m. 6:31 p.m. (U.S. Naval Observatory)

Legislature plans budget compromise for special education

From "BUDGET," Page 1

districts. He said House members acknowledge the special education problem needs to be resolved but see the need to cut spending as aggressively as Brownback has asked.

"I'm hoping that this will be a compromise, that we can settle this part of the debate," said Rhoades, a Newton Republican.

Senators had little to say about the plan, except that they needed time to consider it. But Brownback spokeswoman Sherriene Sontag-Jones said the governor endorses the proposal, having discussed it with legislative leaders Tuesday, before budget talks resumed.

"They're just shifting money from one column to another account," she said.

Brownback wants to cut \$38 million in spending from the current budget, leaving cash reserves of about \$35 million when the new fiscal year begins July 1. Both the savings and the reserves would roll over, helping reduce a \$492 million shortfall projected for the next fiscal year.

The House's version of the budget bill met the goal. The Senate's version would have left cash reserves of less than \$3 million, out of \$5.76 billion in spending financed by state tax dollars.

But a majority of senators considered it irresponsible to risk a loss of federal special education dollars.

"We're going to negotiate - that's about all I'm going to say right now," said Sen. John Vratil, a Leawood Republican, a member of the Senate team in budget talks.

The special education problem concerns the state's use of federal economic stimulus dollars to help support special education programs over the past two years. Federal law allowed it, but required the state to maintain a minimum level of spending, based on a complicated formula. Federal officials have now concluded the state didn't comply.

Last week, Brownback's budget director, Steve Anderson, said the cost of complying could be as high as \$61 million, but the governor's office and state Department of Education were confident Tuesday in the \$26 million figure.

The plan outlined by Rhoades would cover the cost by the end of June by diverting money from the state's contributions to pensions for teachers and government workers. Then, as soon as the fiscal year begins July 1, the same amount would be diverted into the pension system from school districts' base aid.

The result is that base aid would drop \$40 per student, in addition to a cut of \$232 per student that Brownback already has proposed because of the state's financial problems. With the latest plan and his previous budget recommendations, the base aid figure would decline from \$4,012 to \$3,740, a drop of almost 7 percent.

Mark Tallman, a lobbyist for the Kansas Association of School Boards, said the latest proposal would at least end uncertainty about special education.

"Obviously, we would prefer if the revenues could be found to not have to cut further into the base," he added.

Board candidate says quality, integrity lacking at college

From "CANDIDATE," Page 1

He said Colby College was always well known for its excellence in basic education, with no problems in transferring credits earned here to state universities, especially in Kansas. He added that the agricultural students he advised excelled in math, science and English.

He said his intention as a college board member would be to work hard on programs, and to put quality and integrity back into the college, because he feels it has slipped.

When asked how long that would take, he replied it would probably take as long to turn things around as it took for them to get to where they are now.

"I've been here a long time, and there has never been an abundance of money for every program," he said, "but it all revolves around numbers. It's easy to blame the student decline on the decline in population in northwest Kansas, but with quality, we can show students there is something special here, that they can't get anywhere else. It's always been second to none in quality and care for the students."

Wells said he believes faculty needs to get involved in recruiting.

"If we take care of the students, they will take care of us," he said, and added that he agrees with the adage that "bad things happen when good people do nothing."

It holds true in educating students, Wells said. "Basic education and curriculum mean so much to students in every field," he said. "It's like the foundation for a house."

Wells said he made a phone call to the state Attorney General to see if a seat on the college board would be a conflict of interest with his job, and was told it would not be. As endowment director, he said, he was hired by the foundation and works for the foundation. He draws no salary from the college.

He said he feels that as a member of the college board, he will be able to close gaps between the college and the foundation by being more visible and available to the public.

"If there's one thing I've learned," he said, "it's that everyone will help if you show cause."

He and his wife Janet have a daughter Cassie, who is in the fifth grade. The family is involved in 4-H and he is president of the Colby Rotary Club. When counting up his time in Colby, Wells said he has been here for a total of 37 years.

LOCAL TV LISTINGS sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Thursday Evening February 24, 2011. Table with columns for time slots (7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30) and rows for various TV channels and programs.

Friday Evening February 25, 2011. Table with columns for time slots (7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30) and rows for various TV channels and programs.

Partnering To Bring Medical Specialists To Colby

Colby Outreach Clinic Schedule

Citizens Medical Center 100 E. College Drive - Colby

Cardiology - Dr. Christine Fisher Third Tuesday - (785) 625-4699

Orthopedic - Dr. Robert Bassett Third Wednesday (785) 261-7599 or (866) 428-8221

Orthopedic/Spine Dr. Vivek Sharma

First Wednesday (785) 261-7599 or (866) 428-8221

Urology - Dr. Wallace Curry Third Thursday (877) 312-1619 or (785) 628-6014

Colby Medical Surgical Center 175 S. Range - Colby

Urology - Dr. Darrell Werth First Thursday (877) 312-1619 or (785) 628-6014



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This is personal.



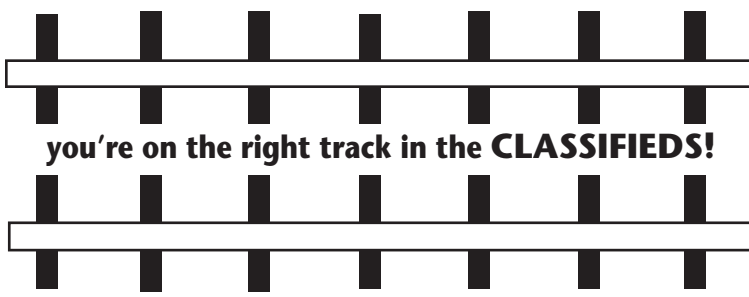
My mother died of colon cancer when she was only 56.

Terrence Howard, actor/musician



Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cancer killer in the U.S., but it's largely preventable. If you're 50 or older, please get screened.

1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) www.cdc.gov/screenforlife



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