

Weather Corner



National Weather Service

Friday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 72. Breezy, with a north wind 5 to 10 mph increasing to between 15 and 20 mph. Winds could gust as high as 30 mph.

Friday night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 49. East wind around 5 mph.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 72. North wind 10 to 15 mph becoming east.

Saturday night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy and breezy, with a low around 49.

Sunday: Mostly cloudy, with a high near 72.

Sunday night: A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Partly cloudy, with a low around 60.

Memorial Day: Sunny and windy, with a high near 86.

Monday night: Mostly clear and breezy, with a low around 56.

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 79.

Tuesday night: A 20 percent chance of rain. Mostly clear, with a low around 58.

Wednesday: Mostly sunny and breezy, with a high near 89.

Wednesday: High, 72; Low 50 Precip: Wed. 0.04 inches Month: 2.95 inches Year: 5.83 inches Normal: 7.21 inches (K-State Experiment Station)

Sunrise and Sunset Friday 6:22 a.m. 9:01 p.m. Saturday 6:21 a.m. 9:02 p.m. Sunday 6:21 a.m. 9:03 p.m. (U.S. Naval Observatory)

Governor signs 20 new laws

From "LAWS," Page 1

ing initiative. Ways and Means Committee Chairwoman Carolyn McGinn, a Sedgwick Republican, said it will help Kansas train its residents as engineers - so people holding high-paying jobs are more likely to stay in the state.

But another bill Brownback signed will abolish an agency created in the 1980s to nurture high-technology businesses.

Most duties of the Kansas Technology Enterprise Corp. will go July 1 to the state Department of Commerce. Brownback proposed the move to save \$1.7 million a year and said Wednesday economic development programs will be better coordinated.

Other signings by Brownback were in line with the Republican governor's anti-abortion views and opposition to last year's federal health care overhaul.

In July, the state will prohibit insurance companies from offering abortion coverage as part of their general health plans, except when a woman's life is at risk. Individuals and employers in the state who want abortion coverage will have to buy supplemental policies that cover only abortion.

Supporters have said the new law will protect employers who oppose abortion rights from having to pay for policies that cover the procedures. Critics have argued that the policy is designed to limit access to abortion.

The new law says no state or federally administered health-insurance exchange in Kansas established under last year's federal health care overhaul can offer coverage for abortions, other than to save

a woman's life.

Another part of that federal overhaul - a mandate that most Americans buy health insurance - is the target of a new "health care freedom" law.

The new statute says Kansas residents have the right to refuse to buy health insurance and can't be forced to pay penalties for refusing. The federal mandate taking effect in 2014 includes tax penalties for Americans who don't buy insurance.

Some legislators questioned whether the Kansas law will have any practical effect, arguing that federal law will trump state policy, unless the U.S. Supreme Court strikes down the overhaul.

But measures aimed at blocking the federal insurance mandate have been approved in more than a dozen states, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Also in July, Kansas will require first-time drunken driving offenders to use ignition interlock devices that prevent them from starting their vehicles without testing their breath-alcohol levels.

The new law also requires the state to set up a central database of driving-under-the-influence cases to track of offenders' histories.

Current law suspends a first-time DUI offender's license for 30 days and allows a judge to order use of an ignition interlock for 330 days after that. The new law will mandate 180 days' use after the suspension.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving pushed Kansas to make its laws tougher. Last year, federal statistics showed alcohol-related traffic deaths in Kansas jumped in 2009, even as they dropped nationwide.

Brownback considers pension fix

By John Hanna

AP Political Writer

TOPEKA - Gov. Sam Brownback planned to sign legislation Wednesday to pump more taxpayer dollars into Kansas' public pension system while also requiring teachers and government workers to make concessions on their future retirement benefits.

The bill also establishes a commission to study other issues, including whether the state should start a 401(k)-style plan for new public employees. Such a plan would tie a worker's benefits to investment earnings; the state's traditional plans guarantee benefits up front, based on an employee's salary and service time.

The new law is designed to close a projected long-term funding shortfall for the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System. It projects a \$7.7 billion gap between anticipated revenues and benefits promised to retirees and current

employees through 2033.

The shortfall has led some legislators to question whether the state can sustain traditional pension plans, and Brownback favors starting a least a "hybrid" allowing new hires to join a 401(k)-style plan. But public employee groups strongly oppose moving toward a 401(k)-style plan.

Public employee groups also have argued that much of the long-term funding problems faced by KPERS were caused by the state shorting its annual contributions for years. The new law phases in an estimated \$28 million increase in that annual contribution over four years, starting July 1, 2013.

The bill also directs the state to identify surplus real estate and sell it when possible, with 80 percent of the money raised going to close the KPERS funding gap.

However, teachers and government workers also face making concessions, starting in 2014. Most would be forced to choose

New pool to open for first time Friday

From "CENTER," Page 1

On Fridays, general swim will be 1 to 6 p.m., exercise programs and lap swimming from 6 to 7 p.m. and family swim from 7 to 9 p.m.

On Saturdays and Sundays, the pool will have general swim from 1 to 6 p.m. and time for private parties from 6 to 9 p.m.

In order to keep the pool running, the city hired two managers and 36 life guards. To prepare for the opening, the city

staff has planned a trial run for the pool tonight. During the trial run, employees will get to go to the pool with their families and run their shift just like they will when the pool opens Friday.

"This was absolutely a needed project," Armstrong said. "The original pool was a WPA (Works Progress Administration) project in the 1930s. It's basically just a square box with two diving boards. This new pool was really needed."

State to help upgrade airport weather system

From "AIRPORT," Page 1

said Mike Albers, city technology director.

Albers said the system then posts the information online for pilots to access. The data is also available of the city website, www.cityofcolby.com.

The current system was installed in 1994, Albers said, and is now out of date. There are no

replacement parts being manufactured, he said, and no support for the software. The state-funded project will upgrade the hardware and software.

"We're fortunate to get this grant," Albers said.

Other projects in northwest Kansas include: replacing a beacon in Norton; ramp and taxiways repair in St. Francis; and a site selection study in Quinter.

LOCAL TV LISTINGS sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Table with columns for dates (May 28, 2011) and times (7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30). Lists TV channels and programs like KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, KSNK/NBC, etc.

STUDENT OF THE YEAR BRITTANY BANGE Parents: Paul & Tawnia Bange. Text describing her achievements and scholarship.

OPEN HOUSE DARRELL PABST 40 years serving Thomas County customers. PLEASE JOIN US IN CONGRATULATING DARRELL May 27 | 10AM-3PM. Includes Sunflower Bank logo.

Table with columns for dates (May 29, 2011) and times (7:00, 7:30, 8:00, 8:30, 9:00, 9:30, 10:00, 10:30, 11:00, 11:30). Lists TV channels and programs like KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, KSNK/NBC, etc.