



# COLBY FREE PRESS

8 pages

## Service says tornado hit on Thursday

By Kevin Bottrell

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After reviewing damage east of Brewster, meteorologists from the National Weather Service have determined that it was a tornado and not straight-line winds that hit the area Thursday night.

Several buildings on Mason Krumrine's farmstead, about two miles east of Brewster, were damaged or destroyed late Thursday during a period of intense thunderstorms. Dave Floyd, warning coordination meteorologist with the service's Goodland office, said the radar Thursday night showed rotation, so the service issued a tornado warning for an area between Brewster and Levant. Krumrine said he and his wife took shelter in their basement.

The next morning, Krumrine said he discovered that the roofs of several of his larger buildings had caved in, one wooden shed was on its side and another metal

shed had been completely destroyed and the debris scattered in a nearby field.

After discovering the damage that morning, Krumrine contacted the *Colby Free Press*, who in turn called the National Weather Service, who sent Floyd, the office's science officer and another meteorologist out to survey the damage.

When determining whether or not a tornado struck after the fact, Floyd said he begins by checking the radar images captured that day. In this case, he said, the images show a distinct rotation, so he went into the survey with a clear notion that it was a tornado or a microburst from a severe thunderstorm.

On the scene, Floyd takes a look at the layout of the damage. Microbursts often cause debris to spread out in a cone from a point of origin, while tornadoes create what Floyd called a "convergent pattern," where debris is

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## College students to learn animal stem cell therapy

By Kevin Bottrell

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This Friday the Colby Community College veterinary technology program will become the first of its kind to train students on stem cell therapy.

Dr. Jennifer Martin, veterinary technology program director, and Dr. Larry Snyder of Topeka will perform the procedure on Rocky, Martin's 9-year-old Australian shepherd/blue heeler mix, who is suffering from severe arthritis in his hips.

Martin said Rocky will be anesthetized and the doctors will extract fat from his body. The fat will be processed to reactivate the stem cells in it. Martin said the

sophomore veterinary technology students will be trained on the fat processing.

"That's what a technician's role would be in the procedure," she said.

The activated stem cells will be extracted and injected into Rocky's hips and veins, where they will search out the cartilage, bone or muscle damaged by his arthritis and repair it. Because the stem cells come from Rocky's own body, there are no problems with cell rejection or diseases.

The procedure was developed by MediVet-America, an animal health company based in Kentucky. The company distributes kits that contain all the material

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## Lots to learn at county health fair

Gary Stewart (above) explained some of the facilities at Fairview Estates at Saturday's Thomas County Wellness Fair and Healthy Lifestyle Expo in the student union at Colby Community College. The fair included booths from many local and state health care and civic organizations (below) as well as a place for people to get the results of blood tests done earlier in the week. Attendees could also get a massage from college massage therapy program students (right)

KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press



## Colby debate team takes third in Hays

The Colby debate team earned third place out of 14 schools at the Hays High Debate Tournament on Saturday.

Junction City placed first and Salina Sacred Heart placed second.

In the Varsity Division, Michael Tubbs and Christina Ostmeyer placed third with four wins and one loss.

Colton Rundel and Ian Koerperich placed ninth with three wins and two losses. Sarah Lamm and Billy Selley had two wins and three losses.

In the Novice Division, Walter Vacik got a fifth place speaker award.

Vacik, Sterling Miller and Konnor Kriss got three wins and two losses as a team.

## State to survey U.S. 83 bridge

A team from the Kansas Department of Transportation will begin looking at a bridge on U.S. 83 just north of the Thomas/Logan County line next week.

Starting on Oct. 18, the department will be surveying a bridge over the South Fork Saline River, gathering information so that engineers can design a replacement project.

Survey activities will include the use of

survey instruments on the ground to determine locations of existing features within the survey corridor. When it becomes necessary for crew members to enter private property, they will first obtain permission from the landowner or tenant.

Dave Kneubuhl, with the consultant firm HW Lochner Inc., will be in charge of the survey.

The bridge replacement will be paid for

by T-WORKS, the transportation program passed by the Kansas Legislature in May last year.

For information, contact Northwest Kansas Public Affairs Manager Kristen Brands at (785) 877-3315 or kristenb@ksdot.org. Upcoming road construction projects may also be viewed at the newly launched website for T-WORKS at www.ksdot.org/tworks.

## New federal graduation rate formula has some schools trending lower

By John Milburn

The Associated Press

TOPEKA — Kansas education officials said Tuesday that a new method for calculating the high school graduation rate, mandated by the federal government, shows that nearly one in every five students doesn't receive a diploma within four years.

Statistics presented to the State Board of Education show that 80.7 percent of all Kansas students graduated in four years in 2010. The state's graduation rate in 2009 was 89.1 percent, but includes students who took longer than four years to graduate.

The rate among black students fell from 83.2 percent in 2009 to

66.2 percent in 2010.

Education Commissioner Diane DeBacker said because of the change required by the U.S. Department of Education, Kansas expected the percentages to decline. State officials said the figures are based on different criteria that aren't comparable, and that next year's results will be more telling.

DeBacker said there will be questions from policymakers and parents wondering why 1 in 5 students aren't graduating with their senior class.

"We're going to have to be able to explain that 20 percent somehow," DeBacker said. "But it's next year that the hard questions are going to be asked. What is that number now that schools know

how to code the students?"

The new method is part of an effort to track individual student progress, giving a more accurate account of how many complete high school and how quickly. The new figure is based on the percentage of students who complete their high school in education on time with their class in four years.

Deputy Education Commissioner Brad Neuenswander said the new system will make it easier to compare rates across the country with the uniform system. Districts are required to meet an 80 percent graduation rate as part of yearly progress. Those below 80 percent but above 50 percent must show a 3 percent annual gain. Those at less than 50 percent must show a 5

percent annual gain.

State officials said next year's results should show improvement, as districts learn how to account for students who have actually dropped out or moved to another district.

One factor counting against districts is homeschooling. If students take just one class at a public school that isn't offered at a private or home school, they are considered part of the public school population, even if there is no intention for them to earn diploma from that school.

The new system will account for those students and count them separately and avoid the interpretation that the state dropout rate is higher than it actually is.

"Schools will get better in how they report them," DeBacker said.

The graduation rate is one of several statistics Kansas officials use to determine if a school district is making adequate yearly progress. The rate is tied to state and federal education goals, including the No Child Left Behind act that requires all students to be proficient in math and reading by 2014.

Kansas determines if schools and districts are making sufficient progress based on, among other measurements, statewide assessments on core academic subjects, attendance and percentage of students taking state assessments. Districts that fail to meet the targets are required to make adjust-

ments or take corrective action, depending on how many years they have missed the goals.

In 2011, 212 school districts made adequate yearly progress, up from 210 in 2010. There were 1,152 schools that made the mark in 2011, compared with 1,126 in 2010.

DeBacker said Kansas was considering applying for a waiver to gain greater flexibility under the federal law to meet the achievement goals. It was also considering applying for a Race to the Top grant to target schools and students in most need of assistance.

