

Weather



National Weather Service

Tonight: Areas of freezing fog before noon. Partly cloudy, with a low around 16. East wind around 5 mph becoming west.

Saturday: Patchy freezing fog before noon. Sunny, with a high near 43. Southwest wind around 5 mph.

Saturday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 21. South wind between 5 and 10 mph.

Sunday: Sunny, with a high near 42. South wind between 10 and 15 mph.

Sunday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 20.

Monday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 37.

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

Tuesday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 38.

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

Wednesday: A chance of rain and snow. Partly sunny, with a high near 42. Chance of precipitation is 40 percent.

Wednesday Night: A slight chance of rain and snow. Partly cloudy, with a low around 22. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.

Thursday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 41.

Thursday: High, 40; Low 11

Precip: Thursday Trace

Month: 0.55 inches

Year: 20.18 inches

Normal: 20.65 inches

(K-State Experiment Station)

Sunrise and Sunset

Saturday 7:53 a.m. 5:21 p.m.

Full Moon at 8:36 a.m.

Sunday 7:54 a.m. 5:21 p.m.

Moon: waning, 99 percent

Monday 7:55 a.m. 5:21 p.m.

Moon: waning, 95 percent

(U.S. Naval Observatory)

Representative has employment idea

From "IDEA," Page 1

for things like education with less money coming in.

"What I've heard is that we're going to work to drop that down the road," he said, "not until we get this KPERS issue behind us. The proposal now is to go to more of a flat tax with two tiers."

The Kansas Public Employees Retirement System has an estimated \$8.3 billion gap between expected revenues and the benefits promised on existing plans through 2033. Billinger said the current proposal is to move to a 401(k) style retirement fund for new employees, while current employees would keep their plans. The state will also likely be increasing its contributions and may ask for concessions from workers.

Another economic issue the state may

face is federal budget cuts. Billinger said that when the session starts he wants to get a breakdown of all the federal money Kansas is getting and where it's going to. With the federal government being forced to make cuts, Kansas could easily lose a lot of funding, he said, and the state needs to plan for how it will cope.

Billinger told the gathering he is also concerned about Environmental Protection Agency regulations on power plants. Some utilities have said they are looking at rolling blackouts in some areas, he said, if they can't get the agency to back off. City Manager Carolyn Armstrong said the city has been asking all public officials to help pursue an exemption for power plants like the one in Colby that operate less than 100 hours a year.

When asked about property taxes,

Billinger said that because farm valuation is based on an eight-year average, the taxes fluctuate based on how good the crops were. Valuation is increasing because the average is now including some good years. However, he said, the price of farmland at auction is increasing much faster.

"I hope it doesn't go to high," he said. "Someday that bubble's going to burst."

A lot of the high-priced farmland is going to out-of-state buyers

Billinger said he had been to both of the post office closing meetings in Sherman County. Closing post offices is a hardship for older people and rural communities, he said, and because the offices are so small the cost savings are minimal. He said he had spoken to the governor about post offices about a month ago.

Mexico acknowledges Mayan 2012 reference

By Mark Stevenson

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Mexico's archaeology institute downplays theories that the ancient Mayas predicted some sort of apocalypse would occur in 2012, but last week it acknowledged that a second reference to the date exists on a carved fragment found at a southern Mexico ruin site.

Most experts had cited only one surviving reference to the date in Mayan glyphs, a stone tablet from the Tortuguero site in the Gulf coast state of Tabasco.

But the National Institute of Anthropology and History said in a statement that there is in fact another apparent reference

to the date at the nearby Comalcalco ruin. The inscription is on the carved or molded face of a brick. Comalcalco is unusual among Mayan temples in that it was constructed of bricks.

Arturo Mendez, a spokesman for the institute, said the fragment of inscription had been discovered years ago and has been subject to thorough study. It is not on display and is being kept in storage at the institute.

The "Comalcalco Brick," as the second fragment is known, has been discussed by experts in some online forums. Many still doubt that it is a definite reference to Dec. 21, 2012, or Dec. 23, 2012, the dates cited by proponents of the theory as the possible end of the world.

tical event in the Classic period. In fact, the third glyph on the brick seems to read as the verb huli, "he/she/it arrives."

Both inscriptions — the Tortuguero tablet and the Comalcalco brick — were probably carved about 1,300 years ago and both are cryptic in some ways.

The Tortuguero inscription describes something that is supposed to occur in 2012 involving Bolon Yokte, a mysterious Mayan god associated with both war and creation.

The institute's experts say the Mayas saw time as a series of cycles that began and ended with regularity, but with nothing apocalyptic at the end of a given cycle.

Utica couple killed in Las Vegas helicopter crash

From "CRASH," Page 1

of the helicopter went silent. He said the company was turning over pilot and mechanical records to the NTSB and FAA. The company offers daily tours to the Grand Canyon and boasts a 22-helicopter fleet.

"We work every day to prevent this from happening," Pietropaolo told the AP. "We don't know what happened."

Pietropaolo downplayed the previous accidents and safety violations, saying he would measure Sundance's accident rate per hours flown against any other company. According to data from the Clark County Department of Aviation, Sundance flew 167,182 passengers during the first 10 months of this year — nearly 17,000 per month.

"Sundance has an excellent safety record relative to the industry and general aviation," Pietropaolo said.

Nield had no history of accidents or violations, according to the FAA. He and his 13 siblings grew up on farms in Wyoming and Utah, said his sister Angalena Adams.

"We all learned to work hard

and love each other and appreciate each other," Adams said. "He loved everyone. He was an awesome brother and an awesome son."

Nield was hired by Sundance nearly three years ago. Pietropaolo called him a solid pilot and a "very nice young man."

Critics argue Sundance's troubled past is a symbol of relaxed safety practices enforced by helicopter tour companies nationwide.

Robb said chopper tours are the most dangerous form of aircraft travel because the pilots are expected to guide the aircraft and entertain passengers.

U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney, D-NY, repeatedly asked the FAA to address public complaints about helicopter safety issues, most recently in October, when a private aircraft crashed in the East River off Manhattan.

"Helicopter traffic is the wild west of aviation," she wrote to Federal Aviation Administrator Randolph Babbitt in October. "Helicopters are subject to much less scrutiny than other types of aircraft."

The FAA requires that pilots be certified. Pilots must fly safely

but are not restricted to specific altitudes. Gregor noted the FAA does random surveillance on air tour companies, "both overt and covert," to ensure they're operating safely.

Ken Boyer, executive director at Tour Operators Program of Safety, said Sundance Helicopters' membership has been in good standing with the industry group since 1997. That means it

has passed through annual audits, most recently in July.

"We truly believe this is a sector of the helicopter industry that can be done safely," Boyer said.

Contributing to this report were Associated Press writers Michelle Rindels and Oskar Garcia in Las Vegas, and Margaret Stafford in Kansas City, Kan.

Sheriff's office wants public help with thefts

From "THEFTS," Page 1

people who do try to sell stolen scraps are from out of town and it's virtually impossible to track it, especially if there is no report filed.

"We haven't had any problems lately," said Glenn Griffin, owner of Colby Salvage. "We turned in about a half a dozen earlier last summer, but when word gets around that you don't take stolen scraps they don't come back."

Griffin said they get calls from power companies and other law enforcement centers throughout the area to be on the lookout for stolen goods and suspicious persons.

"That helps catch guys trying to sell stolen property from outside of the county, but not so much with in-county thefts," Finley said. "For that, we have to be on the lookout, and the more reports filed, the better chances we have to putting a stop to it."

Briefly

Pets available at clinic for adoption

Looking for a pet? Colby Animal Clinic has a 4- to 5-year-old black and white longhaired female cat available for adoption. Lost or strayed animals are often brought to the clinic. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For questions, call 460-8621.

Church's nativity event postponed to weekend

The First Presbyterian Church's Nativity-Tea has been postponed because of Saturday's snowstorm. The event will be from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the church. For information, call 462-6342.

Piano students to play at church on Saturday

Piano students of Pat Ziegelmeier will perform in a Christmas recital at 3 p.m. Saturday at the Colby United Methodist Church. The program will be a variety of duets and solos of Christmas music. There is no charge, and everyone is welcome. For information, call 460-5518.

Branson, Mo., group to perform here Sunday

The Western Plains Art Association will present the Ozark Jubilee at 3 p.m. Sunday in the Colby High School auditorium. Comedian Randy Newman, also known as Doofus Doolittle, will headline the country, bluegrass and gospel show. Admission is by Western Plains season tickets or \$20 for adults and \$10 for students through 12th grade.

Seniors plan potluck

The group More Fun Together plans a potluck for people 50 or older who are alone, widowed, divorced, separated or who have partners in nursing homes at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the First Presbyterian Church. Bring a dish to share; table service and beverage will be provided. For information, call 462-6342.

Lions to serve pancakes

The Gem Lions Club will have its annual pancake feed from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Gem Community Building. Bring old or unused eyeglasses and hearing aids, so the club can recycle them. For information, call Ken Poland at 462-7809.

Help for vets available

A mobile services outreach van from the Kansas Commission on Veterans Affairs will be set up from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday at Dollar General. Commission staff will be on hand to assist veterans or surviving spouses with getting benefits from the federal government. For information, call 462-3572.

Learn about history at Food for Thought

The Prairie Museum of Art and History will hold the first Food for Thought program on the 2011-2012 season at noon Thursday with a talk by Jim Gray on cattle and the cowboy era. Food for Thought is offered every third Thursday each month through April. For information, call 460-4590.

Sell it in the classifieds 462-3963

Rawlins County Health Center

RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR

707 Grant Atwood, KS 67730 (785) 626-3211

Bringing Specialized Healthcare To Your Community

December 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	2 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	3
4	5 Dr. Rubinowitz Oncology	6 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Dr. Frankum Surgery	15	16 Dr. Curtis Cardiology	17
18	19	20 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	21	22 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	23 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A VISITING PHYSICIAN, PLEASE CALL (785) 626-3211 Cheryl Banister, RN Specialty Clinic Director



LOCAL TV Listings

Sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Monday Evening	December 12, 2011									
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
KAKE/ABC	Dog for Christmas	You Deserve It	Castle	Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live				
KBSL/CBS	2 Broke G	2 Broke G	Hawaii Five-0	Local	Late Show Letterman	Late				
KSNK/NBC	Fear Factor	House	Rock Center	Local	Tonight Show w/Leno	Late				
KSAS/FOX	Terra Nova	House	Local							
Cable Channels										
A & E	King's Bag of Bones	King's Bag of Bones	King's Bag of Bones							
AMC	White Christmas	White Christmas	White Christmas							
ANIM	Saved	Fatal Attractions	I Shouldn't Be Alive	Saved	Fatal Attractions	Fatal Attractions				
BRAVO	Real Housewives	Real Housewives	Chef Roblé & Co.	Happens	Real Housewives	Chf Roblé				
CMT	Unlikely Angel	CMT Crossroads	CMT Crossroads	CMT Crossroads	CMT Crossroads	CMT Crossroads				
CNN	Anderson Cooper 360	Piers Morgan Tonight	Anderson Cooper 360	E. B. OutFront	Piers Morgan Tonight	Piers Morgan Tonight				
COMEDY	South Pk	Work	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Daily	Colbert	South Pk	South Pk
DISC	Sons of Guns	Sons of Guns	American Guns	Sons of Guns	American Guns	American Guns				
DISN	ANT Farm	Good Luck Charlie	Wizards	Shake It	ANT Farm	Good Luck	Wizards	Wizards	Wizards	Wizards
E!	Fashion	Sex-City	Kourtney and Kim	Scouted	Chelsea	El News	Chelsea	El News	Chelsea	Chelsea
ESPN	Countdown	NFL Football								
ESPN2	Pardon	Bowl Mania Special					SportsCtr	Football	SportsNation	SportsNation
FAM	Date Christmas	Nat'l-Christmas					The 700 Club	Whose?	Whose?	Whose?
FOOD	Holidays Unwrapped	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners
FX	Kung Fu Panda	Kung Fu Panda	Kung Fu Panda	Kung Fu Panda	Kung Fu Panda	Kung Fu Panda				
HGTV	Love It or List It	House	House	House	House	House	House	House	House	House
HIST	Pawn	Pawn	American Pickers	Pawn	Pawn	Real Deal	Invention	Pawn	Pawn	Pawn
LIFE	Christmas-Para.	Nothing Like	Nothing Like	Nothing Like	Nothing Like	Nothing Like				
MTV	True Life	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Beavis	Beavis
NICK	SpongeBot	SpongeBot	70s Show	70s Show	George	George	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends
SCI	Red Planet	Underworld: Ev					Amity Horror			
SPIKE	1,000 Ways to Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die	Ways Die
TBS	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Conan	Office	Office	Office
TCM	A Christmas Carol	Oliver Twist								Nicholas Nickleby
TLC	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next	Candy	Candy	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next
TNT	The Closer	The Closer	Rizzoli & Isles	Rizzoli & Isles	The Closer	The Closer				
TOON	Adventure	MAD	King-Hill	King-Hill	Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Chicken	Aqua Teen
TRAV	No Reservation	The Layover	No Reservation	No Reservation	No Reservation	No Reservation	No Reservation	The Layover	The Layover	The Layover
TV LAND	Roseanne	Roseanne	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	King	King	King	King
USA	WWE Monday Night RAW						Elf			
VH1	Love & Hip Hop	T.I.-Tiny	Love & Hip Hop	T.I.-Tiny	Love & Hip Hop	T.I.-Tiny	Love & Hip Hop	T.I.-Tiny	Love & Hip Hop	T.I.-Tiny
WGN	Funniest Home Videos	Funniest Home Videos	WGN News at Nine	WGN News at Nine	WGN News at Nine	WGN News at Nine	30 Rock	Scrubs	Scrubs	Sunny
Premium Channels										
HBO	Dinner for Schmucks	Enlighten	Boardwalk Empire	Enlighten	Preview to 24/7 Flyers/Rangers					
MAX	Splash	Little Fockers	Sexual Witchcraft							
SHOW	Fair Game	Dexter	Homeland	Dexter	Homeland					