

Weather



**National Weather Service Tonight:** Mostly clear, with a low around 20. West wind between 5 and 10 mph.

**Saturday:** Sunny, with a high near 50. West wind between 5 and 10 mph.

**Saturday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 24. West wind around 5 mph.

**Sunday:** Sunny, with a high near 53. South wind between 5 and 10 mph.

**Sunday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 25.

**Monday:** A chance of rain and snow. Partly sunny and breezy, with a high near 36. Chance of precipitation is 30 percent.

**Monday Night:** A 20 percent chance of snow. Partly cloudy, with a low around 19.

**Tuesday:** Sunny, with a high near 37.

**Tuesday Night:** Mostly clear, with a low around 20.

**Wednesday:** Sunny, with a high near 43.

**Wednesday Night:** Partly cloudy, with a low around 23.

**Thursday:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 39.

Thursday: High, 43; Low 21  
Precip: Thursday None  
Month: 0.62 inches  
Year: 20.18 inches  
Normal: 20.65 inches  
(K-State Experiment Station)  
**Sunrise and Sunset**  
Saturday 7:58 a.m. 5:22 p.m.  
Last quarter Moon at 6:48 p.m.  
Sunday 7:59 a.m. 5:23 p.m.  
Moon: waning, 42 percent  
Monday 7:59 a.m. 5:23 p.m.  
Moon: waning, 31 percent  
(U.S. Naval Observatory)

# Proposals made to conserve water

From "WATER," Page 1

to make use of five year's worth of water at any amount within that five years.

Mike Meyer, a water commissioner from southwest Kansas, said the flex accounts are not often used due to some of the rules, such as the 10-year average and the 10 percent removed for conservation.

The committee is proposing there be three options. The first is to have a traditional flex account without the 10 percent off the top. The second is to use the net irrigation requirements for the county as a base rather than the 10-year average. The third option would be for the local groundwater management district to come up with a plan and have it approved by the chief engineer.

Meyer was asked if the flex account could be changed to a rolling average instead of

fixed to 2000 to 2009. Meyer said a user could work with their groundwater management district to come up with a plan like that, but it would still have to pass muster with the chief engineer.

Meyer said the proposal would also allow users to roll drought permits into the program.

"Whatever amount you went over this year would be subtracted from your flex plan," he said.

Streeter said the administration is also recommending that the Water Transition Assistance Program, which puts up state money to retire some or all of a user's water rights, be made preeminent. The program was to sunset in 2012, but a renewal will be before the Legislature at the coming session.

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeier of the 40th district, which includes Groundwater Man-

agement District Four, was at the meeting. He said conservation efforts for the Ogallala Aquifer have been an ongoing issue that everyone has been aware of.

"We have had good interest and participation and a good reception for the ideas," he said. "We're already working on it to have it ready to go to committee in January."

State Rep. Rick Billinger was also at the meeting. He said he doesn't anticipate any trouble passing the proposals through the House.

Streeter said a contingent of state legislators was at the meeting in Wichita, and they expressed support for the proposals. Ostmeier said he wasn't surprised.

"Eastern Kansas is very interested in western Kansas water policy," he said. "They know that water flows east."

# College considering four-day schedule

From "SCHEDULE," Page 1

actly the schedule would work and Washburn said the students would have longer days, most likely one class longer Monday through Thursday. She also said they will have to work out gym usage, which could mean athletes may have to be the first to enroll.

"Our programs like nursing, vet tech, dental hygiene, they won't be on this (schedule)," Washburn said.

"The thing that's nice about this is it gives some flexibility," Vacik said. "As for students, if they live in say Colorado or eastern Kansas, if you have classes all the way through Friday, the chance of being able to go home on a weekend are not terribly good. However, if you had an extra day to travel, you could travel on Friday and come back on Sunday and you have a day in the middle. I think that appeals to a lot of people who are from a distance."

He also said that students will benefit from the Monday-Wednesday class schedule changing into the same format as

the Tuesday-Thursday schedule, where the students will have an extra day to work on homework, reading, etc. Vacik then said that on Fridays, it would give the college an opportunity to do more planning with professional development for its faculty and staff, which he thinks is really important.

"So I think this is a win for us if we can pull it off," Vacik said.

Trustee Dale Hershberger asked if they would implement the new schedule next fall and Vacik said that would be the plan.

Washburn also announced to the board that the Kansas Board of Nursing approved a nursing program in WaKeeney and the expansion of the nursing program in Norton.

In other business, the board:

- Heard from Dr. Keegan Nichols, vice president of student affairs and marketing, about spring enrollment. She said there are 99 new students enrolled and didn't want to announce any numbers concerning student retention because the

numbers are still rolling in every day. Dr. Stephen Vacik, college president, said many students have yet to register and Nichols added that they have just begun looking at grades.

- Heard from Barry Kaaz, dean of external affairs, who updated the board on the new wind turbine on campus and other projects within the Honeywell contract. Hershberger asked if the lines are in the ground yet and Kaaz said they are, but they are not connected yet. He said it might not be serviceable until next week. Shields then asked how much energy the turbine would provide and Kaaz said the target is 54 percent of the energy used by Living Center Northeast and more than 193,000 kilowatt hours per year.

Shields also asked how the additional projects from the Honeywell contract are going and Kaaz reported that the building envelope is completed, the water conservation is completed, the light sensors are almost finished, the pool work and ductwork is done and the structural support work is in progress.

"Everything is really mov-

ing forward well," Kaaz said. "We've had problems with things, I don't want to tell you we haven't, but with a large project like that, you're gonna always have screwups and problems and you just work through them."

Herschberger asked if the leaking roofs had been fixed and Kaaz said they had, but there are now new leaks that need to be fixed.

Kaaz then gave a brief update on the Community Service Partnership program. He said 110.5 community service hours were completed in November, with 81.75 of those hours being served by Colby Community College students.

"It's going well, and to be honest, I've had no complaints on any kind of custodial work for over a month," Kaaz said. "The work that Judy's doing has been exceptional. All of your community service work has pretty much totally taken care of mopping floors, cleaning up Northeast, cleaning stairwells and she's even had them cleaning the windows."

# Briefly

## Schools to let out on Wednesday

Colby Public Schools and Sacred Heart Catholic School will dismiss for Winter Break on Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. Heartland Christian will dismiss at noon that day. This is a day earlier than the school calendars have listed.

## Hays church to hold celebration at school

The Celebration Community Church will hold a night of worship beginning at 6 p.m. Saturday in the Colby High School auditorium. The event will include live music by The Ignite Band. For information, call (785) 625-5483.

## Sing Christmas carols at College Drive church

The College Drive Assembly of God Church will hold a Christmas carol sing-a-long at 6 p.m. Sunday at the church, 245 W. College Dr. Everyone is invited to the sing-a-long and the fellowship hour after. For information, call 462-8235.

## Come for the soup, stay for the scripture

The Thomas County Ministerial Association will be holding Soup and Scripture at noon Wednesday at Smofees. The menu is soup (usually three kinds), homemade bread, dessert and drink for \$6. This year's theme is "Gift of God." The speaker Wednesday is Jarrod Spencer of the Church of Christ. For information, call Spencer at 460-6322.

## Organization to hold open house

Wings Upon the Prairie will have an open house from 5 to 8 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday at its office on Franklin Avenue. Hot chocolate, apple cider, coffee and cookies will be served. Donations will be accepted. For information, call 460-7477.

## College pool, gym closed until Jan. 2

The Colby Community College pool will be closed through Sunday, Jan. 1, for renovations and repairs. The pool will reopen on Monday, Jan. 2. The college fitness lab will be closed Saturday through Jan. 1. It will also reopen on Jan. 2. For information call 460-5411.

## Ring the bell for the Salvation Army

The Salvation Army is in need of bell-ringers for its Walmart kettle. Money raised is used locally. To volunteer, call Sue Draper at 462-7511.

## Courthouse entrance closed for stair repair

The west entrance of the Thomas County Courthouse will be closed while repairs are made to the stairs. For information, call 460-4500.

# Social services official resigns less than year into tenure

From "OFFICIAL," Page 1

ceived cool – and even hostile – receptions from legislative committees. Democrats have strongly criticized him, but some Republicans also have questioned his decisions and public statements.

The Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services is among the state's largest agencies, with 5,500 employees and a budget of more than \$1.7 billion. SRS also has five hospitals for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled, and it administers cash assistance for poor Kansans, oversees the foster care system for abused and neglected children and administers substance abuse programs.

But Brownback is proposing significant changes for the agency under a plan he's outlined for overhauling the state's Medicaid program, which covers medical care for needy Kansans. SRS would become the Department for Children and Family Services, adding programs for child care and foster home licensing, pregnancy maintenance and prevention programs and juvenile justice grants.

In November, several Republican legislators criticized moving the juvenile justice programs to SRS, and one suggested the idea hadn't been properly vetted, even as Siedlecki touted it as necessary to bring all issues dealing with children and families under one agency.

He had an exchange with a GOP committee member who criticized the administration for hiring outsiders who, the lawmaker said, hadn't done their homework. Siedlecki said he'd bought a home in the area and, "I prefer you call me a Kansan."

The same month, a legislative committee questioned him over comments attributed to him questioning whether some poor Kansans would rather retain their state services than look for jobs. He acknowledged that he believes some participants do that, but added, "I believe there is hope for everyone."

Some legislators were put off by the administration's moves to involve faith-based groups in programs, fearing money would

flow to conservative, evangelical Christian organizations with little experience in providing assistance, such as substance abuse treatment. But SRS said it is will be partners with existing organizations to improve services.

And House Minority Leader Paul Davis, a Lawrence Democrat, attacked Siedlecki over the pay for 40 top SRS positions, including four new ones. Siedlecki's salary was slightly higher than his predecessor's, and total salaries for those jobs were 10 percent higher than previously. But SRS produced

figures showing that for 60 positions filled by Siedlecki, overall salary spending had dropped and said Davis had "cherry picked" data.

## Corrections

Candidate John Davis' appearance in Colby will be from 11:02 to 11:22 Saturday at the Thomas County Courthouse. The wrong date was given in the article "Presidential candidate to stop here" on Page 1 of the Thursday, Dec. 16, *Free Press*. This was an editing error.

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# LOCAL TV Listings

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Monday Evening December 19, 2011										
	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30
KAKE/ABC	Panda	Chipmunk	You Deserve It	Castle	Local	Nightline	Jimmy Kimmel Live			
KBSL/CBS	How I Met	2 Broke G	Two Men	Hawaii Five-0	Local	Late Show Letterman	Late			
KSNK/NBC	Still Standing	Fear Factor	Rock Center	Local	Tonight Show w/Leno	Late				
KSAS/FOX	Terra Nova	Local								
<b>Cable Channels</b>										
A & E	Hoarders	Hoarders	Intervention	Intervention	Hoarders					
AMC	A Christmas Carol			A Christmas Carol						
ANIM	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth	Planet Earth				
BRAVO	Real Housewives	Real Housewives	Real Housewives	Happens	Housewives/Atl.	Real				
CMT	Tombstone	Tombstone								
CNN	Anderson Cooper 360	Piers Morgan Tonight	Anderson Cooper 360	E. B. OutFront	Piers Morgan Tonight					
COMEDY	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Sunny	Daily	Colbert	South Pk	South Pk	
DISC	Gold Rush	Raw Alaska	American Guns	Raw Alaska	American Guns					
DISN	Random	Beauty and the Beast	Jessie	Shake It	Random	ANT Farm	Wizards	Wizards		
E!	E! News	Kardashian	Scouted	Chelsea	E! News	Chelsea				
ESPN	Countdown	NFL Football				SportsCenter				
ESPN2	SportsCtr	Poker-Eu.	Poker - Europe	Poker - Europe	SportsCtr	Football	SportsNation			
FAM	Aladdin	The Incredibles			The 700 Club	Panda	Merry			
FOOD	Diners, Drive	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	Diners	
FX	Christmas-Krank			Marley & Me						
HGTV	Love It or List It	House	House	House	House	House	House	House	House	
HIST	Pawn	Pawn	American Pickers	Pawn	Pawn	Invention	Real Deal	Pawn	Pawn	
LIFE	America's Supernanny	The Holiday						America's Supernanny		
MTV	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Ridic.	Beavis	Ridic.	Ridic.	True Life	
NICK	SpongeBot	SpongeBot	70s Show	70s Show	George	George	Friends	Friends	Friends	Friends
SCI	House of Wax	Haunting in CT					Population 436			
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	Conan	Office	Office	Office	
TCM	A Tale of Two Cities			Scrooge					I Could	
TLC	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next	Candy	Candy	Cake Boss:Next	Cake Boss:Next				
TNT	The Closer	The Closer	Rizzoli & Isles	Rizzoli & Isles						
TOON	Adventure	MAD	King-Hill	King-Hill	Amer. Dad	Amer. Dad	Fam. Guy	Fam. Guy	Aqua Teen	Moral
TRAV	The Layover	The Layover	No Reservation	No Reservation	No Reservation	The Layover				
TV LAND	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Raymond	Raymond	Raymond	The Exes	King	King	King	
USA	NCIS	WWE Monday Night RAW			Good Luck Chuck					
VH1	Love & Hip Hop	Celebrates Soul			Love & Hip Hop	Celebrates Soul				
WGN	Funniest Home Videos	Funniest Home Videos	WGN News at Nine	30 Rock	Scrubs	Scrubs	Sunny			
<b>Premium Channels</b>										
HBO	The Blind Side	Gladiator							Wall St	
MAX	The Book of Eli	Beatdown						Dangerous Attractions		
SHOW	I Am Number Four	Dexter	Homeland					Dexter	Homeland	

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