

Weather



National Weather Service Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low around 40. West wind around 5 mph.

Tuesday: Sunny, with a high near 69. Northwest wind 5 to 15 mph.

Tuesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 40. North wind around 5 mph becoming calm.

Wednesday: Sunny, with a high near 73. Northwest wind 5 to 10 mph.

Wednesday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 41.

Thursday: Sunny, with a high near 72.

Thursday Night: Mostly clear, with a low around 39.

Friday: Sunny, with a high near 69.

Friday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 40.

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 58.

Saturday Night: A slight chance of rain and snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 37. Chance of precipitation is 20%.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 57.

Friday: High, 38; Low 19
Saturday: High, 52; Low 23
Sunday: High, 66; Low 32
Precip: Friday None
Saturday None
Sunday None
Month: 0.78 inches
Year: 1.69 inches
Normal: 19.29 inches
(K-State Experiment Station)
Sunrise and Sunset
Tuesday 8:11 a.m. 6:45 p.m.
Moon: waning, 99 percent
Wednesday 8:12 a.m. 6:43 p.m.
Moon: waning, 97 percent
(U.S. Naval Observatory)

Candidate says sheriff is next step

From "CANDIDATE," Page 1

up to the head jailer position, he attended a 12-week course at the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center in Hutchinson starting in November 2003 to become a sheriff's deputy. He later worked at the police department, first a dispatcher and then as an officer in 2008.

Rodriguez said many aspects of police work are overlooked. Many people show up to the academy with impressions of the job formed from watching movies.

The year and a half he spent as a police dispatcher also gave him an appreciation for that job, which he said many people cannot handle.

"A lot of people show up and think it's just answering phones," he said. "They don't know it's real police work."

He had been a city officer for two and half years before resigning in 2011 after an incident when he hit a parking block in the Walmart parking lot with a city-owned car while on a call.

Tired from working overtime, he said, he thought he saw something run in front of his car even though the Walmart security footage did not show anything.

He said former city manager Carolyn Armstrong told him she did not believe his story.

"I'm not the type of person who likes to be called a liar," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez has since been working for Dave Bixenman Construction, but says, "I was made to serve the public."

He admitted that he does not know how to write a budget - the only aspect of the job he finds intimidating - but said Taylor did not have any experience in that area either when he took over. Along with working as head jailer, his administrative skills and as a night manager at outlet stores and the Manhattan Mercury.

When asked about the jail, which county officials would like to replace or remodel, Rodriguez said the building should be improved or replaced.

"When I started in that building in 2002, it needed massive renovation," he said. "That was 10 years ago."

He said he would have a deputy on duty from 2 a.m. to 8 a.m. - a shift that's not normally covered now.

He said that could help stop crimes in rural areas such as theft of copper and farm equipment.

"Crime is deterred when people know they could run into a deputy," he added.

He conceded that budget could be an issue there.

"What I've always believed is right and what I'd be able to do as sheriff," he pointed

out, "are not necessarily the same thing."

Identity theft and high-tech crimes could become a bigger problem in the near future, Rodriguez said, along with the daily battles the sheriff's office already faces against drug traffic and criminals moving along Interstate 70.

Rodriguez said the deputies should have more interaction with the police department and should be involved more in community activities, particularly with kids.

"It's not just putting bad people in jail," he said. "It's showing your leadership to the rest of the community."

Rodriguez said he thinks that Taylor ran for sheriff for the wrong reasons in 2008, wanting to replace former Sheriff Mike Baughn, who had fired Taylor during the campaign.

He said he disagrees with the sheriff's leadership style, and feels there should be a better perception of law enforcement among the public.

A lot of problems within the sheriff's office and the community, he said, could be remedied with simple face time.

Rodriguez said he could not answer the question of whether he deserves to be sheriff, but said he loves being a law enforcement officer.

"I think Thomas County needs a leader who thinks that way," he said.

Incumbent touts experience as big asset

From "INCUMBENT," Page 1

didate."

Experience, he said, has a major impact on his confidence.

"I've probably received more education through experience than I have in the actual classroom," he said. "The different situations I've been in allow me to be very open minded with people..."

From being the public face of the department, to traffic stops and criminal investigations, Taylor said, the position of sheriff continues to evolve. He credits his staff for the way the office runs.

"We are fortunate to have Sheri Staab, who's been over there for 15 years..." the sheriff said, "and Undersheriff Marc Finley, he works as two people would work and is very knowledgeable."

"The last four years have been very successful in a lot of areas because of the people I work with. I don't look at it as, 'I'm the boss,' sure, I may be the elected sheriff, but ... we work as a team."

"But also, there's a stiff oath

that you take ... I'm not a perfect person, and I've made mistakes and some bad choices, but I've tried to learn from them and not repeat them. You've got to have compassion, honesty and integrity, and I've been proud to wear the uniform and represent the people of Kansas and Thomas County."

One of his biggest accomplishments as sheriff, he said, he attributes in large part to his staff.

In 2009, he said, he and his department were able to recover millions of dollars worth of farm equipment for people here and throughout five states.

"Being able to return a lot of expensive property to the owners opened the eyes in law enforcement and to other people," he said. "We had this big burglary ring going on and it taught us that you can never overlook what is going on right in front of you."

During his next term, Taylor said, if re-elected, he hopes to increase the staff, hopefully adding a couple more jailers and (a couple of) road officers. He said the sheriff's budget has been

increased about \$64,500 and the jail budget about \$50,000 to accommodate these additional employees.

"We have one of the biggest budgets in the county," he added, "and I think it says something for everyone at the sheriff's office that I put in for that amount. (The commissioners) see that we do maintain a tight lid on the budget, but if we can get some more people down there, citizens will benefit from it and the (jail) work site will be safer."

Safety of his employees has been a major goal of Taylor's, he said. The declining condition of the jail and their increased caseload have put security and safety at the forefront of his mind.

"Jails are meant to separate the bad from the good," he said. "The number of people we house have increased, so you have security issues for people who work there ... and that part needs to be improved."

Taylor has been working with commissioners and other county officials to expand and improve the jail and the Law Enforcement Center, where the depart-

ment shares offices with the Colby Police.

"I think that if we keep (educating) the public on the costs of taking prisoners to other towns and security issues," he said, "people will know it is needed. People have relatives who work here."

"We need to find a way to get money and make it happen. I know money is a big issue; it costs a lot of money (to expand or build a new facility), but if we do it right the first time, people down the road won't have to worry about it again, like we are staring at right now."

Taylor said it's come to his attention that people may be concerned about his health.

"I'm 69," he said. "I'll be 70 if I'm sworn in again ... but I can still hold my own and I can shoot well. If I ever get to the stage where I can't protect another officer or another citizen, I'll be sure to say 'enough is enough.'"

However, he said, that time has not come, and he's looking forward to serving the public for another term.

Candidate says he won't run in township race

From "TOWNSHIP," Page 1

ten in during the primary election.

The write-ins are Scott Collett, Levant, East Hale; Vernon Roerner, Gem, Lacey; and Mark Anderson, Menlo, Smith.

All of these candidates are incumbents

except for Collett in East Hale, who has been on the board previously.

Township trustee candidates who filed before the primary are Lyman Bear, Brewster, Barrett; John Steiger, Menlo; Lonnie Wilson, Colby, North Randall; and James Fellhoelter, Oakley, South

Randall.

Six write-ins were added to the ballot after the primary: Dale (A.D.) Deaver, Levant, East Hale; Kenneth Kammer, Brewster, West Hale; Jonathan Higerd, Gem, Lacey; John Schroeder, Colby, Rovolh; Thomas McCarty, Rexford, Smith;

Bert Stramel, Colby, Summers; and Larry Heier, Colby, Morgan.

All the trustee candidates are incumbents except for Heier in Morgan.

LOCAL TV Listings Sponsored by the COLBY FREE PRESS

Table with columns for Tuesday Evening (October 30, 2012) and Wednesday Evening (October 31, 2012). Rows include channels like KAKE/ABC, KBSL/CBS, KSNK/NBC, and various programs such as Dancing/Stars, Happy, Private Practice, Local, Nightline, Jimmy Kimmel Live, etc.



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