



Sunday rain totals vary across town

Over an inch of rain was dumped here Sunday afternoon during a brief but heavy storm. The storm started sometime around 4 p.m. and lasted for maybe half an hour, but over an inch of rain fell in that brief period. Thunder could be heard overhead, and a stream of rain water was soon washing down the streets.

The National Weather Service took reports online of .34 of an inch of rain in Colby, .33 of an inch northeast of town and .67 northwest. But the Northwest Kansas Research-Extension Center on the west edge of Colby reported 1.22 inches in that brief period at the town's official weather station. The extension center reported that Colby had measured 7.29 inches of precipitation so far this year after the storm, just over half the average for this time of year, which is 13.61 inches.

There was no other significant rain Sunday except for that brief storm. The weather was overcast and humid, but warm, most of the day, but the clouds were gone by this morning. The service is predicting a dry week, with high temperatures more moderate than last week, in the 80s and 90s.

Four injured over weekend

Four people were hurt in three separate accidents over the weekend in Sherman and Logan counties.

The Kansas Highway Patrol reported that the first accident sent a Castle Rock, Colo., couple to the hospital after their car struck a sport-utility attempting a U-turn through median on Interstate 70.

The patrol said Robert L. Overschmidt, 52, Washington, Mo., was eastbound and slowed to make U-turn at mile 77.3, a mile east of Oakley, at 12:10 p.m. Friday. Rhea L. Powers-Krueger, 71, who was also going east, hit the 2008 Dodge Durango driven by Overschmidt with her 2012 Honda Odyssey. She and a passenger, Christopher A. Krueger, 61, were taken to the Logan County Hospital in Oakley. Rhea Powers-Krueger was later flown to Swedish Medical in Littleton, Colo.

Robert Overschmidt also was taken to the Logan County Hospital, along with his passengers, Dustin Overschmidt, 25, and Corbin Overschmidt, 8. Only Cyndi Overschmidt, 45, got off without a trip to the hospital. All six people in the accident were wearing their seat belts, the patrol said.

The second accident happened about 5:50 p.m. Saturday when a Hugoton man rolled off the road south of town.

Ramiro C. Melgarego, 41, Hugoton, was headed north towards Colby on K-25. He went off the road and into the ditch on the west side of the road 17 miles from town, in Logan County. His 1998 Chevy Tahoe rolled, and he and another Hugoton man, 35-year-old Armando J. Tinoco, were taken to the Oakley hospital. Although they were both wearing seat belts, the patrol listed their condition as "disabled."

The last accident was Sunday, when a Rexford teen lost control of his car, which swerved twice across the median of I-70 and rolled.

The patrol said William Hayden Best, 18, was westbound about 6 p.m. when his car went off the road and into the median at mile 28.9, about 10 miles east of Goodland. He went into the eastbound passing lane, then swerved a back across the median and across both westbound lands.

The 1995 Buick LeSabre rolled into the ditch north of the highway. The driver was taken to Goodland Regional Medical Center. He was wearing a seat belt, the patrol said.

Twinkies slim down

NEW YORK (AP) – Twinkies are back, but they may be a bit smaller than you remember.

The new owners of Hostess have leaner operating costs now that they're no longer using unionized workers. It turns out the spongy yellow cakes may also be a little smaller than the last Twinkies people ate.

The new boxes hitting shelves list the cakes as having 270 calories and a weight of 77 grams for two cakes, or 135 calories and 38.5 grams for one.

Right before it went out of business, the predecessor company had told the Associated Press that Twinkies were 150 calories per cake. Photos of past boxes online also indicate the weight to have been 42.5 grams per cake.

A spokeswoman for Hostess, Hannah Arnold, said in an e-mail Monday that the size change was made in "mid-2012" by the predecessor company. That would mean it happened in the months leading up to its bankruptcy, as the company was trying to keep its head above water.

Arnold has also said that the longer shelf life of Twinkies reported by the Associated Press earlier this month was posted by the predecessor right before it went bankrupt. The 45-day shelf life, up from 26 days, was a separate change and hit shelves Nov. 1, she said.

For retailers who request it, the company said, it's freezing Twinkies so stores can stamp their own expiration dates on them.

Twinkies and other snack cakes were purchased by private equity firms Apollo Global Management and Metropoulos & Co. after Hostess Brands said it was closing down in November. The firms are known for fixing up struggling brands.

Hostess has said that Twinkies will remain the same price, at \$3.99 for a box of 10.



SAM DIETER/Colby Free Press

Ashleigh Hill waited while her daughter Tessa, 9, picked out one of the family's chickens (above). Sister Cheyanne, 5, watched Thursday morning at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. Hill's son Caleb held one of the birds (below) while LewAnn Schneider, a veterinarian for the Kansas Department of Agriculture, took a blood sample to test the bird for pullorum typhoid.

Blood tests taken for fair

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Thomas County is preparing for its fair with a series of state-mandated tests for poultry.

People brought their birds to officials from the U.S. and state departments of agriculture, who took blood samples from beneath the bird wings. They should be back with the results next week, Diann Gerstner, extension agent for the county, said.

A total of 58 chickens were tested Thursday morning for pullorum-typhoid, a disease that strikes poultry, Gerstner said. About half the chickens came

from Gove county. About 33 people brought the chickens in. They were in 12 groups of two to 15 birds each.

These included various breeds of chicken, but only chickens, Gerstner said.

"I know one lady said she was going to bring in their peacock, but she couldn't catch it."

The state of Kansas requires all birds but waterfowl to be tested before they are exhibited in a county fair. Gerstner said the tests have been going on for three years.

"I have never heard of anybody being turned down," she said.



Scale accuracy issues continue

TOPEKA (AP) – Gov. Sam Brownback is monitoring efforts by the Kansas Department of Agriculture's to increase the accuracy of heavy-capacity scales.

The department has been criticized for a lack of accuracy in its regulation of more than 4,000 large scales used to weigh scrap metal, recyclables, agricultural products and other goods.

Brownback told the *Topeka Capital-Journal* (bit.ly/12rJkAt) that Kansas' system, which uses licensed private inspectors to certify scales, with follow-up inspections by state staff, may need some changes. The former state agriculture secretary has met with state agriculture staff about the issue.

However, the Republican governor said the result of the "check the checkers" program is

better than when scales were examined only by state inspectors.

"We had a terrible quality program before we made the changes when I was agriculture secretary," he said. "We were having inaccuracy of scales at a high percent when it was strictly a state-run program. It's continued through multiple administrations, so people haven't changed the program, but I think it's time to tweak and look at it and see if we're getting it done right."

The governor helped develop the semi-privatized system as secretary from 1986 to 1993.

The Division of Weights and Measures oversees the more than 4,000 large scales. Spot checks by the state's three inspectors approved just 19 of the 72 large scales between

July 2012 and February 2013. Of the 72, records show, 34 failed to meet state accuracy standards. The Department of Agriculture has promised changes in enforcement of the accuracy of scales and inspections.

Mike Beam, vice president of the Kansas Livestock Association, sees Brownback's involvement as a sign that scale problems have become a high priority. Accurate scales are important to buyers and sellers who are KLA members, Beam said.

"I think we'd like to see this program tweaked in a way that gives everyone more assurances and confidence that the scale companies are doing a good job in their role as private testing on behalf of the state," he said.

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