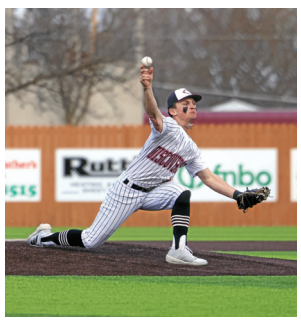
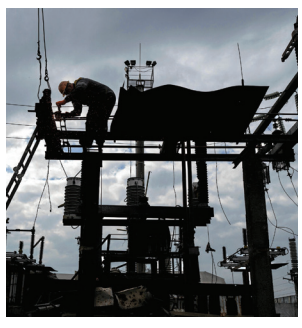
THE COLUMBUS
Telegram

Home baseball: Discoverers fall to LSW

SPORTS, B1





Agreement reached to ensure safe passage in the Black Sea

NEWS, A5

WHERE **YOUR STORY** LIVES

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

columbustelegram.com

Pillen, students, tout financial awareness at Capitol

JENNA EBBERS
Lincoln Journal Star

Dozens of elementary students from across eastern Nebraska sat quietly inside the Capitol on Tuesday morning as Gov. Jim Pillen signed a proclamation recognizing April as Financial Awareness Month and shared stories of how his own father taught him the merits of fiscal responsibility.

About 80 students, each of whom are members of their respective school's In-School Savings Program, gathered inside the Warner Legislative Chamber to celebrate the importance of financial awareness and learn the benefits of saving for a rainy day.

To this day, Pillen said he still remembers the advice his father gave him as a young boy about money, which he thinks about each time he makes a big purchase.

"My dad said we need to treat our nickels like manhole covers, which means we don't spend them for just anything," Pillen told the crowd of students.

The savings program, which is operated by the Nebraska Council on Economic Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, allows students to act as real-life bank tellers, collect savings deposits from their classmates and promote financial literacy within their schools.

The program helps create partnerships between elementary schools and local financial institutions to set up a special operating branch of the bank inside the school, allowing students to deposit actual money each week and earn small rewards.

Last year, the 5,439 students participating in the state's 60 programs saved a total of approximately $309,000. This year, there are 73 programs across the state — from Kimball Elementary School in the Panhandle to Clinton Elementary in Lincoln. Jennifer Davidson, an economics professor at the university, said she hopes the amount saved reaches $500,000.

"Students don't just learn about saving, they actually do it," Davison said.

At Tuesday's celebration, students not only learned about the benefits of saving,

Please see **FINANCE**, Page A3

KENNETH FERRIERA, JOURNAL STAR

Gov. Jim Pillen holds up cash as he addresses students during a ceremony recognizing April as Financial Awareness Month at the Capitol on Tuesday. The ceremony touted the benefits of the In-School Savings Program, which teaches students across the state the benefits of saving money. Last year, nearly 5,500 students saved more than $300,000 through the program.

LOCAL LEARNING

COURTESY PHOTO

Attendees of 2021's Parkinson's Disease Wellness Symposium by Columbus Community Hospital at the Ramada do exercises during a break between speakers. The symposium, featuring a spread of expert speakers on a variety of topics surrounding the disease, is focused on answering questions for those who have the disease and their caregivers.

CCH to host annual Parkinson's Disease symposium April 18, registration open

JARED BARTON
The Columbus Telegram

Parkinson's disease brings with it many questions, for those who have it, their caregivers, family and friends, which is why Columbus Community Hospital's Rehab Services organized its upcoming symposium at Prime 10 Steakhouse and Event Center.

The April 28 symposium will feature Dr. Erin Cameron-Smith, assistant professor of movement disorders at the University of Nebraska Medical Center Department of Neurological Sciences, said Michelle Ruskamp, assistant director of Rehab Services at CCH.

"We're going to have Dr. Cameron-Smith, who is a movement disorder specialist at UNMC, she'll be kicking off our speaker lineup talking about the latest research in Parkinson's disease," Ruskamp said.

After Cameron-Smith, Susan Olmer, a dietitian at Columbus Community Hospital, will discuss nutritional management with Parkinson's disease, followed by CCH's Dr. Luke Lemke, who will talk about lifestyle choices and how they can affect prevention and treatment of chronic diseases.

For caregivers, Jody Evans, director of Home Health and Hospice, will go over the finer points of in-home and home health, and CCH speech pathologist Joe Madde will discuss swallowing problems that Parkinson's can cause.

Lastly, Dr. Tanya Rudolph-Elgin, a licensed clinical psychologist at Foundations Counseling, Inc., will go over managing caregiver stress before a presentation by Parkinson's Nebraska, an

Please see **SYMPOSIUM**, Page A3

Job cuts threaten weather balloon launches

SETH BORENSTEIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With massive job cuts, the National Weather Service is eliminating or reducing vital weather balloon launches in eight northern locations, which meteorologists and former agency leaders said will degrade the accuracy of forecasts just as severe weather season kicks in.

The normally twice-daily launches of weather balloons in about 100 locations provide information that forecasters and computer models use to figure out what the weather will be and how dangerous it can get, so cutting back is a mistake, said eight different scientists, meteorologists and former top officials at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration — the weather service's parent agency.

The balloons soar 100,000 feet in the air with sensors called radiosondes hanging about 20 feet below them that measure temperature, dew point, humidity, barometric pressure, wind speed and direction.

"The thing about weather balloons is that they give you information you can't get any other way," said D. James Baker, a former NOAA chief during the Clinton administration. He had to cut spending in the agency during his tenure but said he refused to cut observations such as weather balloons. "It's an absolutely essential piece of the forecasting system."

University of Oklahoma environment professor Renee McPherson said, "This frankly is just dangerous."

"We should not degrade our weather system by skipping balloon launches," Ryan Maue, NOAA's chief scientist at the end of President Donald Trump's first term, wrote in an email. "Not only is this embarrassing for NOAA, the cessation of weather balloon launches will worsen America's weather forecasts."

Please see **BALLOONS**, Page A3

Weather
Partly sunny and mild
High 69 • Low 40
FORECAST • A3

Inside

6 18134 00003 4

$3 • T-F • Volume 143, Issue 85 • A Lee Enterprises Newspaper •

Follow us online: /columbustelegram /ctelegram

Symposium

From A1

Omaha-based nonprofit dedicated to educating Nebraskans with Parkinson's and their caregivers about the disease, through events such as this.

It's a busy schedule, starting at 9 a.m. and going to 3 p.m., but CCH has a lot of ground to cover for people who may not have much experience with Parkinson's, Ruskamp said. There is a lot to learn.

"A variety of topics that just help (attendees) gain knowledge so they can fight back against this disease," Ruskamp said. "There's a couple things that the general population just doesn't know enough about. It's very common for us to recognize tremor in people with Parkinson's or kind of a shuffling gait, but that's only part of the disease."

Motor symptoms like tremors or shaking are often the most evident, but Parkinson's can have other symptoms that are less visible.

"Those things include anxiety, depression, difficulty with regulating blood pressure, constipation … so there's a lot of non-motor symptoms that can be just not understood well," Ruskamp said.

Two members of the group that organized the event have Parkinson's themselves. The idea to hold events like this came several years ago from a similar event put on by UNMC. Omaha, however, can be quite a journey, especially for someone with Parkinson's or their caregiver. A local equivalent allowed for less travel and local experts.

"We're fortunate in Nebraska to have movement disorder specialists in Omaha and they're the gold standard when it comes to diagnosing and treating Parkinson's disease," Ruskamp said. "My goal was to be able to offer educational material and therapy to rural parts of Nebraska that otherwise might be difficult to travel to Omaha to receive."

The event is free thanks to donations to the CCH Foundation, though people interested in attending at asked to register so they know how many lunches they will need, which are also free.

For more information or to register, visit columbushosp.org/parkinsons-wellness-symposium. Attendees are asked to register by April 14.

Finance

From A1

but the discipline it takes, best practices and the importance of learning to count money even in a world of digital payments and credit cards.

For Tatum Tejral, a sixth grader at East Butler Public Schools in Brainard, being part of the banking program has helped her learn how to save money at a young age for later in life when she needs to pay for college, a car or even a house. By saving at least $5 a week, she can save up to buy something she wants later, she said.

"The experience I had while banking was wonderful," she said.

As part of the celebration, a copy of "I Am Money," a children's book co-authored by Julia Cook, who lives in Fremont, was sent to each of the state's 680 elementary schools.

Additionally, Pillen recognized this year's state Economic Educator of the Year, Ravenna Public Schools' Tanner Ellis.

"You guys are Nebraska, and you have the power to change the world for the better," Ellis told the students.

While the program has grown and made a lot of progress since its inception, Davidson said their work is far from over.

She encouraged students to continue making informed, smart choices about money and join business classes in high school to keep learning more about fiscal responsibility. Davidson also urged parents and teachers to start talking about money with their students now.

"Financial literacy is not just something you learn, it's a lifelong skill where you continue to learn and grow," she said.

Reach Jenna Ebbers at 402-473-2657 or jebbers@journalstar.com.

CHRIS GREENBERG, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A National Weather Service weather balloon sits ready for launch in the Upper Air Inflation Building at the National Weather Service in Sterling, Va.

Balloons

From A1

Launches will be eliminated in Omaha, Nebraska, and Rapid City, South Dakota, "due to a lack of Weather Forecast Office (WFO) staffing," the weather service said in a notice issued late Thursday. It also is cutting from twice daily to once daily launches in Aberdeen, South Dakota; Grand Junction, Colorado; Green Bay, Wisconsin; Gaylord, Michigan; North Platte, Nebraska and Riverton, Wyoming.

The Trump administration and its Department of Government Efficiency fired hundreds, likely more than 1,000, NOAA workers earlier this year. The government then sent out letters telling probationary employees let go that they will get paid but should not report to work.

Earlier this month, the agency announced weather balloon cuts in Albany, New York and Gray, Maine, and in late February, it ended launches in Kotzebue, Alaska. That makes 11 announced sites with reduced or eliminated balloon observations, or about one out of nine launch locations which include part of the Pacific and Caribbean.

Among regularly reporting weather stations, NOAA averaged about only one outage of balloon launches a day from 2021 to 2024, according to an Associated Press analysis of launch data.

Meteorologists Jeff Masters and Tomer Burg calculate that 14 of 83 U.S. balloon sites, or 17%, are doing partial or no launches. That includes two stations that aren't launching because of a helium shortage and a third that is hindered because of coastal erosion.

"The more data we can feed into our weather models, the more accurate our forecasts, but I can't speculate on the extent of future impacts," weather service spokesperson Susan Buchanan said in an email.

University at Albany meteorology professor Kristen Corbosiero works in the building where the Albany weather service used to go to the roof to launch twice-daily weather balloons. It's now down to one at night, which she said it is worrisome heading into severe weather season.

"For those of us east of the Rocky Mountains, this is probably the worst time of year," McPherson said. "It's the time of year that we have some of our largest tornado outbreaks, especially as we move into April and May."

Former National Weather Service Director Elbert "Joe" Friday said the weather balloons get "the detailed lower atmospheric level of temperature and humidity that can determine whether the atmosphere is going to be hot enough to set off severe storms and how intense they might be."

Satellites do a good job getting a big picture and ground measurements and radar show what's happening on the ground, but the weather balloons provide the key middle part of the forecasting puzzle — the atmosphere — where so much weather brews, several meteorologists said.

All of the 10 announced reductions are in the northern U.S. That's about where the jet stream — a river of air that moves weather systems across the globe — is this time of year, so not having as many observations is especially problematic, McPherson and Corbosiero said.

Weather balloons are also vital for helping forecast when and where it will rain, said Baker and another former NOAA chief, Rick Spinrad.

The weather agency has launched balloons regularly since the 1930s. During World War II, weather balloon launches in the Arctic helped America win the air battle over Europe with better forecasts for planes, Friday said.

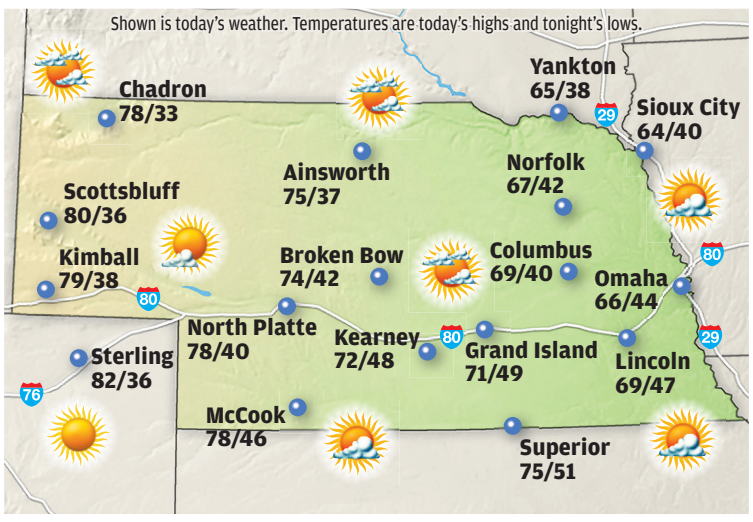
It takes 90 minutes to an hour to fill a weather balloon with helium or hydrogen, get it fitted with a sensor, then ready it for launch making sure the radiosonde doesn't drag on the ground, said Friday, who recalled launching a balloon in Nome, Alaska, with 30 mph winds and windchill of about 30 degrees below zero.

COLUMBUS' FIVE-DAY FORECAST

TODAY	TONIGHT	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly sunny and mild	Mostly cloudy	A couple of showers	Becoming windier and warmer	A shower and thunderstorm	Snow and rain in the p.m.
WIND S 7-14 mph	WIND SSE 7-14 mph	WIND E 7-14 mph	WIND SSW 12-25 mph	WIND NNW 6-12 mph	WIND N 12-25 mph
69°	40°	76° 55°	83° 51°	52° 33°	40° 29°

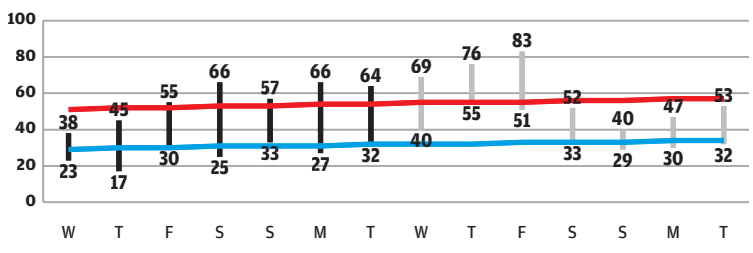
REGIONAL FORECAST

Partly sunny today; an afternoon shower or two in the north and east. A warmup is on the way. A couple of showers in the north and east tonight; mostly cloudy in Columbus. A couple of showers tomorrow. Friday: mostly sunny.



City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thursday Hi/Lo/W
Albion	68/41/pc	77/51/sh
Alliance	77/31/pc	82/42/s
Alma	77/49/pc	85/53/s
Ames, IA	63/41/pc	64/50/r
Aurora	71/47/pc	82/55/sh
Beatrice	72/52/pc	82/58/t
Broken Bow	74/42/pc	81/52/s
Burwell	74/41/pc	82/52/s
Cedar Rapids, IA	60/41/pc	60/49/r
Central City	72/45/pc	82/55/sh
Columbus	68/42/pc	75/57/sh
Council Bluffs, IA	62/45/sh	73/58/t
Des Moines, IA	64/44/pc	66/54/r
Falls City	69/46/pc	83/58/sh
Fremont	65/43/pc	74/56/t
Geneva	72/49/pc	81/55/sh
Hastings	70/51/pc	80/57/s
Holdrege	75/50/pc	84/51/s
Hyannis	76/39/pc	81/50/s
Imperial	80/39/s	88/45/s
Kearney	72/48/pc	82/53/pc
Lincoln	69/47/pc	79/60/sh
Manhattan, KS	76/56/pc	86/60/t
Mason City, IA	57/38/pc	60/47/pc
McCook	78/46/s	86/53/s
Minden	74/50/pc	82/53/s
Nebraska City	68/45/pc	79/61/t
Norfolk	67/42/pc	73/54/sh
North Platte	78/40/s	85/44/s
Norton, KS	78/49/pc	86/54/s
Oberlin, KS	81/47/s	86/53/pc
Omaha	66/44/pc	75/59/t
Ord	74/41/pc	82/50/s
Rapid City, SD	74/35/pc	78/50/s
St. Paul	73/46/pc	83/54/s
Scottsbluff	80/36/s	84/42/pc
Sidney	77/38/s	80/45/s
Sioux City, IA	64/40/pc	70/49/t
Stanton	67/40/sh	73/52/t
Superior	75/51/pc	85/56/pc
Topeka, KS	72/53/pc	83/62/t
Valentine	77/32/pc	77/49/pc
Wahoo	65/42/pc	75/58/t
York	69/46/pc	80/55/sh

TEMPERATURE TRENDS



ALMANAC

Statistics through 4 p.m. Tuesday

Temperature

High/low	64°/32°
Normal high/low	54°/32°
Record high	83° (1956)
Record low	3° (1964)

Precipitation

24-hour total	0.00"
Month to date (normal)	1.52" (1.01")
Year to date (normal)	1.91" (2.39")
Record for this date	1.51" (1942)

Snowfall

24-hour total	0.0"
Month to date (normal)	9.7" (3.3")
Season to date (normal)	20.9" (24.0")
Last season to date	24.2"
Record for this date	3.0" (1983)

Heating Degree Days

Degree days are an indicator of energy needs. The more the total degree days, the more energy is necessary to heat.

Tuesday	17
Month to date	541
Normal month to date	686
Since July 1	5103
Normal since July 1	5568

RealFeel Temperature® Today

An exclusive index of effective temperature, wind, humidity, sunshine intensity, cloudiness, precipitation, pressure and elevation on the human body.

32°	58°	66°	57°
8 a.m.	noon	4 p.m.	8 p.m.

UV Index Today

Shown is the highest value of the day.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11+

The higher the **AccuWeather.com UV Index™** number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

Today's Air Quality airnow.gov

Forecast index based on presence of man-made particulates affecting aspects of human health.

Good | Moderate | Unhealthy (sensitive) | Unhealthy | Very Unhealthy | Hazardous

Skywatch

	Rise	Set
Sun	7:22 a.m.	7:48 p.m.
Moon	6:05 a.m.	4:41 p.m.

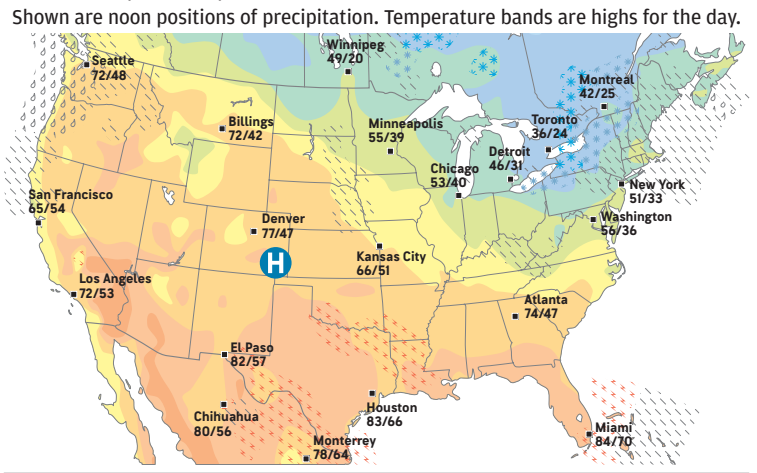
New Moon	First Quarter	Full Moon	Last Quarter
Mar 29	Apr 4	Apr 12	Apr 20

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather.com** ©2025

AccuWeather Proven Superior Accuracy Get the AccuWeather App

National Forecast: While warm weather is expected to extend from the West Coast to the Plains and Southeast today, rain will approach the Northwest coast as thunderstorms erupt farther inland. The Northeast can expect spotty snow and rain showers. Storms are forecast to expand from northern Texas to Arkansas and northern Louisiana early in the day.

Shown are noon positions of precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thursday Hi/Lo/W
Albany	45/29/sn	47/33/pc
Albuquerque	80/50/pc	77/49/pc
Anchorage	44/30/pc	41/26/s
Atlanta	74/47/s	74/53/s
Atlantic City	52/33/c	53/42/s
Billings	72/42/pc	74/45/c
Birmingham	74/46/pc	77/57/s
Boise	82/52/pc	69/45/pc
Boston	48/34/c	49/37/pc
Buffalo	36/24/sf	46/32/pc
Charleston, WV	53/31/pc	60/48/s
Chicago	53/40/pc	54/46/c
Cincinnati	53/36/c	56/47/pc
Cleveland	40/29/sf	56/40/pc
Dallas	82/64/t	75/60/t
Davenport	57/42/pc	56/50/r
Denver	77/47/s	79/51/c
Des Moines	64/44/pc	66/54/r
Detroit	46/31/pc	58/37/pc
Duluth	48/28/s	46/30/pc
El Paso	82/57/c	84/56/pc
Houston	83/66/pc	72/65/t
Indianapolis	54/37/c	52/47/r
Kansas City	66/51/pc	77/58/t
Las Vegas	89/64/pc	85/59/pc
Little Rock	78/54/s	84/62/s
Los Angeles	72/53/pc	65/56/pc
Memphis	75/54/s	78/62/s
Miami	84/70/pc	83/71/pc
Milwaukee	45/37/pc	54/41/c
Minneapolis	55/39/pc	62/45/pc
Muskegon	43/32/s	49/39/c
Nashville	70/43/s	74/58/s
New Orleans	81/62/pc	79/66/s
New York City	51/33/pc	51/43/pc
Oklahoma City	75/57/s	79/57/s
Omaha	66/44/pc	75/59/t
Orlando	85/58/s	84/60/s
Phoenix	93/67/c	93/66/c
Portland, ME	47/30/c	47/31/pc
Portland, OR	80/50/t	61/49/r
Rapid City	74/35/pc	78/50/s
St. Louis	65/49/s	70/60/t
St. Paul	56/38/s	63/45/pc
Salt Lake City	77/56/c	76/48/c
San Antonio	80/63/pc	69/63/t
San Diego	65/57/pc	66/57/pc
San Francisco	65/54/c	64/52/pc
Seattle	72/48/t	58/46/r
Tampa	87/62/s	84/63/s
Trenton	50/30/pc	52/38/pc
Tucson	91/59/pc	92/58/s

National Extremes Tuesday for the 48 contiguous states

High: 99° in Palm Springs, CA **Low:** 0° in Crane Lake, MN

WORLD FORECAST

City	Today Hi/Lo/W	Thursday Hi/Lo/W
Amsterdam	56/38/pc	61/44/pc
Baghdad	83/55/pc	87/63/c
Beijing	65/48/pc	58/36/c
Bermuda	73/64/sh	68/59/s
Buenos Aires	77/68/pc	78/67/c
Calgary	46/31/pc	39/21/sh
Copenhagen	53/37/c	55/41/c
Frankfurt	60/39/pc	63/36/s
Hong Kong	80/71/pc	81/72/sh
Jerusalem	80/58/s	85/64/pc
Johannesburg	81/57/t	73/56/t
Kabul	50/36/t	50/30/s
Lima	80/68/pc	81/68/pc
London	64/42/pc	63/48/pc
Mexico City	76/54/pc	76/53/sh
Montreal	42/25/sf	45/24/pc
Moscow	45/38/c	47/40/sh
Nassau	82/71/c	79/71/s
Paris	60/41/pc	62/41/s
Rio de Janeiro	84/73/pc	83/73/s
Rome	64/50/s	61/49/sh
Singapore	91/77/sh	91/78/t
Sydney	81/67/pc	80/68/pc
Tokyo	76/55/s	71/64/pc
Toronto	36/24/sf	51/29/pc
Vancouver	59/48/r	55/47/sh
Vienna	63/44/s	58/40/pc
Warsaw	57/41/c	54/35/pc

W-weather, **s**-sunny, **pc**-partly cloudy, **c**-cloudy, **sh**-showers, **i**-ice, **r**-rain, **t**-thunderstorms, **sf**-snow flurries, **sn**-snow