

WEEKLY FORECAST

# Blustery and cold weather expected

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Welcome to a “fool’s spring,” all you hardy residents of Omaha and eastern Nebraska.

A fool’s spring is a spell of warm weather in March or April followed closely by a cold snap, according to meteorologist Taylor Nicolaisen of the National Weather Service in Valley. Cold, blustery conditions have returned to the area after several glittering days of sunny, warm weather in early March.

“It was bright and sunshiny — but now it isn’t,” Nicolaisen said. “Normally, we should be at (a high of) 50 degrees, but there’s no normal for this time of year. The average temperature should be 50, but we’re more likely to get 40 or 60 (degrees).”

The high temperature for Omaha on Monday is forecast to be right at the freezing mark of 32 degrees. It’s expected to be breezy as well, but Omahans can expect the wind to shift and come out of the south on Tuesday to help produce a high in the mid- to upper 40s, he said.

“On Wednesday, we should see a high of 60 (degrees) in Omaha with southerly winds coming out of the Gulf Coast,” Nicolaisen said. “It will still be a little breezy, but it will feel nice.”

Nice until Thursday, that is. The forecast calls for a high of about 32 degrees with winds gusting up to 45 mph. A mix of rain and snow is predicted to fall for much of the day.

“We’re expecting about a half-inch of precipitation (in Omaha),” he said. “Omaha will see a slushy accumulation, but you can look to the east for more precipitation. Iowa will be the bull’s-eye (of the storm).”

Cooler air is expected to filter back into the area again on Friday with a high of 31 forecast for Omaha. Saturday and Sunday are also expected to see high temperatures remaining in the 30s.

“We’re in the middle of March,” Nicolaisen said. “Anything can happen.”

## Papio LV reaches settlement with family

District will pay \$1M after eighth grader died

LAUREN WAGNER  
World-Herald Staff Writer

The family of an eighth grader who died after eating a granola bar given to him by a teacher will be compensated in a wrongful death claim with Papillion La Vista Community Schools.

The district recently reached a settlement with Tom and Jill Shaw, parents of Jagger Shaw, and will pay a lump sum of \$1 million in exchange for the district’s release of liability. The settlement notice will be presented to the school board at its meeting on Monday.

Jagger’s parents declined to comment. But in a Facebook post on May 7, 2022, Tom Shaw said earlier that morning while at school, Jagger asked his teacher if he could go to the office to get a snack. Jagger was in eighth grade at Liberty Middle School.

“The teacher said you can have one of my granola bars, so Jagger took it and got halfway through eating it and felt like he was starting to have an allergic reaction,” Tom Shaw wrote.

Jagger went to the nurse’s office at 9 a.m. to get allergy medication before he eventually had to be given an EpiPen, he wrote. Jagger was then taken by ambulance to a local hospital, where he died later the next morning.

The settlement money will be paid from the district’s liability insurance. Papillion La Vista officials could not be reached for comment.



CHRIS MACHIAN PHOTOS, THE WORLD-HERALD

OPS driver Yvonne Johnson on her bus, dubbed the “Love Bus.” Every few months, Johnson spends days decorating the exterior and interior of the vehicle to match the season or holiday.

# ‘Love Bus’ is a safe and welcoming spot

OPS driver decorates bus to spread joy to students

LAUREN WAGNER  
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When a student boards Yvonne Johnson’s school bus for the first time, their eyes grow wide and fill with wonder.

Sometimes they even crack a smile, marveling at the twinkling lights, bright colors of paper, zigzagging streamers, stickers galore — all features of Johnson’s “Love Bus” that she drives five days a week for the Omaha Public Schools.

Students will find Johnson in the driver seat, welcoming them into her small sanctuary. Her patterned clothes, full face of makeup, curly hair and flowery scent make children so comfortable they call her “Momma.”

“They’re not my students. They’re my babies,” Johnson said. “And I tell my babies I love them, both the big ones and the little ones. I want them to know that I’m safe to be with.”

The 25-year veteran bus driver has been operating the Love Bus for the last five years. Every few months, she spends multiple days decorating the exterior and interior of the vehicle to match the current season or holiday, like fall, Christmas, Valentine’s Day and spring.

Most of the decor comes from a discount store. One year she spent \$200 decorating for Christmas because she couldn’t help herself.

Johnson created the Love Bus after being inspired by the bus of a co-worker, who has since retired. But instead of simple window stickers or trim, Johnson said she goes overboard each year to make the bus environment as welcoming as possible for her students.

“You have to give them something to focus on, or all they are going to do is go to sleep or misbehave,” Johnson said. “They don’t spend a lot of time with me, but it’s enough time that I can leave good memories that I had as a child.”

Leslie Lopez’s son, Julian, has been riding Johnson’s bus since he started prekindergarten in August at Gomez Heritage Elementary. Julian has autism and rarely speaks, but Lopez said he always has a big smile seeing the bus arrive each morning.

“My son loves the bus, how it is always decorated with seasonal colors,” Lopez said. “He loves her. She is very noble and sweet with children.”

Another of Johnson’s students from Gomez didn’t speak the entire first semester. But when Johnson decorated for spring earlier this month, the student boarded the bus, looked up and said “flower.”

“I said, OK, she is going to get flowers in her departing package,” Johnson said about the gifts she gives to stu-



Johnson decorated the bus for spring earlier this month.



Johnson drives the bus five days a week for the Omaha Public Schools.

dents at the end of the year.

Sometimes Johnson’s giving doesn’t stop at the bus — she’s been known to send high school students money after they graduate to help with their college experience. Johnson doesn’t have children of her own.

“I just love it,” she said. “I didn’t birth them, but they are mine.”

Days can be long for Johnson, who gets up at 2:30 a.m.

She said it takes her a while to get her lashes on for the day. At 5:30 a.m., she gets to work and goes through a safety checklist for her bus before taking off around 6 a.m. to pick up students enrolled at Gomez and Bryan High School.

Johnson said she occasionally helps with busing around noon, but work for the evening routes begins around 2:15 p.m.

“Of course with 13 babies on here, it can get pretty long, so I may get back by 5:45 p.m.,” Johnson said. “I’ve driven 12 hours a day before.”

Johnson is part of the bus driver fleet employed through OPS, not Student Transportation of America, which transports the majority of students in the district. OPS drivers transport

about 2,000 students, mostly in special education.

Student Transportation of America has been experiencing worsening staff shortages, impacting bus route coverage — about 74% of routes through the vendor are covered by a full-time driver.

On the routes that the district handles itself, 89% are covered by a permanent driver.

OPS bus drivers are like a family and work together to handle staff shortages when they happen, Johnson said. She thought about working as a substitute driver at one point but found out if she did, it wouldn’t be guaranteed she would drive the Love Bus.

She said without the decorated bus, she wouldn’t be able to bring joy to others.

“It matters not just to the students — my co-workers, principals and teachers come on here and love the feeling on here,” Johnson said. “People in traffic have honked me down, because it’s dark in the morning and you can see all these lights. And they’re like, ‘What’s going on in there? You do all that for the kids?’ I say ‘yes.’ And it’s kind of contagious.”