

Vermont dairy farm powered by cows

BRIDPORT, Vt. (AP) — The cows at the Audet family's Blue Spruce Farm make nearly 9,000 gallons of milk a day — and about 35,000 gallons of manure.

It's long been the milk that pays, but now the Audets have figured out how to make the manure pay as well. They're using it — actually, the methane that comes from it — to generate electricity.

With the help of their power company, Central Vermont Public Service Corp., the Audets have devised a way to extract the methane from the manure and pipe it to a generator.

They make enough electricity to power 300 to 400 average Vermont homes. It's renewable energy, and they're not the only ones interested in it. Four other Vermont farms now have similar projects in the planning or early construction stages, power company officials said.

The Audets "deserve to be congratulated. They're the pioneers among Vermont farmers," said Dave Dunn, a senior energy consultant with CVPS who worked with them on the cow power project.

Elsewhere in the country, farmers are using similar technology to make energy, said Corey Brickl, project manager with Wisconsin-based GHD Inc., which built a device that the Audets use to harvest the methane.

One in Washington uses tomato waste from a salsa factory and waste from a fish stick plant as fuel, Brickl said.

For the Audets, the electricity has created an important new income stream at a time when low wholesale milk prices have squeezed their margin. The utility pays 95 percent of the going New England wholesale power price for electricity from the Audets' generator.

In addition, the utility charges customers willing to pay it a 4-cents-per-kilowatt-hour premium for renewable energy and then turns the money over to the Audets. So far, more than 3,000 CVPS customers have signed up to pay the premium to support the renewable energy effort.

The bottom line is more than

\$120,000 a year from electricity sales. When they add in other energy savings enabled by the project, the Audets expect their \$1.2 million investment in project equipment to pay for itself in about seven years.

The program has piqued interest.

Marie Audet, who describes herself as wife, bookkeeper, and milker, has become a tour guide, showing people from the United States and a handful of other countries around the farm's cow power operation.

Managing the hundreds of milking Holsteins — as well as young stock — is a high-tech operation.

In their stalls, cows munch contentedly on a mix of hay and silage while they make an occasional contribution of fuel for the Audets' power plant. An "alley scraper," which looks like a big squeegee on wheels, comes by to push their manure down the row and through grates to a conveyor belt below.

From there, the manure goes to an anaerobic — meaning oxygen-free — digester, a 100-foot-by-70-foot structure similar to a covered swimming pool built by Brickl's company. The manure spends 20 or 21 days in the digester, being pushed slowly from one end to other as more is added.

Three products result: a liquid that contains enough nutrients that it can be used as fertilizer for the farm's feed crops; a dry, odor-free, fluffy brown substance that is used as bedding for the cows and some of which goes to a local firm that bags and sells it as fertilizer on the home-and-garden market; and methane.

The methane is piped into an adjacent shed that contains a big Caterpillar engine that powers the 200-kilowatt generator.

Audet said the farm was saving the \$1,200 a week it formerly spent on sawdust bedding for the cows, as well as some of the cost of heating the milking barn.

A study by agricultural scientists from the University of Vermont found that the bedding produced from the manure was better than the sawdust. "Wood harbors a lot of bacteria," she said.

Library offers college saving drawing

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe." In other words, brain is more important than brawn.

Although Abe Lincoln must have learned a hard lesson about cutting down a tree, the key is that he learned.

Education takes place under a variety of circumstances and in many different ways, but the majority of students today reach the pinnacle of their educational process by going to college.

College is only growing more expensive and Abe Lincoln's quote is truer than ever today. Had he been alive today Abe might have said "Give me 18 years to raise a child and I will spend the first 17 saving for their college education."

No matter how old your kids are, now is not too late to start saving. Libraries encourage education and to promote this, each library system in Kansas is offering a drawing to win a \$500 account giveaway. All you have to do to be eligible is attend at least one children's program (with your child) at Pioneer Memorial Library this summer.

Each child in attendance is eli-



Jeff Friesen

• Library Link

gible to sign-up for the drawing. Your odds of winning are enhanced due to the fact the Northwest Kansas Library System is one of the smaller library systems in Kansas in terms of population. With this opportunity you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

To be eligible for this drawing, there are still plenty of programs at the library to attend. We have FREE weekly programs for students through eighth grade.

For specifics on our regular programs, please contact the library at 460-4470 or inquire at the front desk.

Along with our regular programming we have two special programs left this summer to highlight our theme of Paws, Claws, Scales, and Tales. Thursday, July 6, we will have a creature feature put on by the folks at the Sternberg Museum. You

can come to the library and see a host of creepy crawly critters beginning at 1:30 p.m.

Finally, to wrap the summer programs up we are going to "ham it up" with the final special program. The Top Hogs will be live at the Sacred Heart School gymnasium at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, July 29. These

hogs are talented - so much so that they were featured on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno. If this makes you curious take a sneak peek at the Web site www.tophogs.com

Hope to see you at the library! Pioneer Memorial Library is located at 375 W. Fourth and open seven days a week. Summer hours are as follows: Monday through Wednesday, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Thursday, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. For more information contact the Library at 460-4470 or visit our website at www.colbylibrary.com. As always, we are here to serve you.

Student News

EMPORIA — Maureen Cassidy of Colby was awarded the Irene Wooton Buckley Memorial Scholarship for 2006-2007 during Empo-

ria State University's annual student nurse recognition ceremony held May 12.

**Brighten
Someone's Day!
Give Blood.**

For more information on donating blood, please call 1-888-719-8929 or in the Wichita area, 268-0834

**SLAVENS FAMILY
PRACTICE**

**will be closed on
Monday, July 3rd
and
Tuesday, July 4th
in observation
of the holiday.**

NORTHWEST ADMISSIONS
Kansas Technical College **REPRESENTATIVE**

NWKC is seeking an individual with people skills and sales experience. Position requires strong communication and computer skills. This individual is responsible for assisting with the college recruiting program and college admission practices. Position requires travel, evening and weekend work. Prefer a bachelor degree, associates degree required. Competitive salary and benefits.

Send letter of application, resume and references to:
Kenneth A. Clouse, President,
PO Box 668 Goodland, KS 67735
Phone: (785) 890-3641 Fax: (785) 899-5711
Email: kclouse@mail.nwkc.org
E.O.E.

Stop 2 Shop East
E. Hwy 24, Colby
460-7879

got gas? **NO! better yet....**
E10
(ethanol)

Helping the Midwest instead of the Middle East!

Seamless Rain Gutter

Siding, Soffit, Fascia
FREE estimates
22 colors available

Installed by Ron Lucke
719-346-8840
cell 719-349-8840 Burlington CO

**WE WILL BE
CLOSED TUESDAY,
JULY 4th!**

Happy Birthday, America!

**We hope everyone
enjoys the holiday.
Please be safe!**

EARLY DEADLINES:
Wed., July 5 Free Press: Monday, July 3 @ noon, word ads.

**COLBY
FREE PRESS**
155 W. 5th • 462-3963

Hot Savings

**Open July 4th
9-3**

**BUY ONE, GET ONE
FREE!**

Flannel, Fleece, Cotton, Backing
Home Dec, Books and Patterns (in store sales only)

1525 S. Range
462-3375

PRICES SLASHED FOR QUICK SALE!

<p>2005 Buick Lacrosse CXL <input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Roof <input type="checkbox"/> Leather <input type="checkbox"/> 19 K Miles</p>	<p>Was \$21,500 Now \$19,900</p>
<p>2005 Ford Taurus <input type="checkbox"/> Storm Gray <input type="checkbox"/> All Power <input type="checkbox"/> CD <input type="checkbox"/> 10 K Miles</p>	<p>Was \$13,900 Now \$11,995</p>
<p>2005 GMC Yukon XL <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Leather <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Passenger <input type="checkbox"/> 27 K Miles</p>	<p>Was \$29,900 Now \$27,995</p>
<p>2005 Cadillac Deville <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Heated Leather <input type="checkbox"/> Aluminum Wheels <input type="checkbox"/> 17 K Miles</p>	<p>Was \$29,500 Now \$26,500</p>

SCHOOL CAR SPECIALS

<p>1998 Chevrolet S-10 Regular Cab 2WD <input type="checkbox"/> Black <input type="checkbox"/> Stepside <input type="checkbox"/> 70 K Miles Only \$4,900</p>	<p>2000 Pontiac Sunfire <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Sunroof <input type="checkbox"/> 93 K Miles Only \$5,900</p>
<p>1996 Olds Cutlass Supreme <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Leather <input type="checkbox"/> 120 K Miles Only \$3,650</p>	<p>2002 Olds Alero <input type="checkbox"/> Silver <input type="checkbox"/> CD <input type="checkbox"/> 60 K Miles Only \$8,950</p>

FINLEY MOTORS, INC.
Highway 27, Goodland, KS • (785) 899-2346
or 1-800-525-3701 www.finleymotorsinc.com
Steve, Danny, Terry or Rich Your Volume and Variety Dealer!

Visit Oakley!!

Birthplace of the Legend "Buffalo Bill" Cody

Oakley Business Directory

**Advertising pays!!
Give Jasmine Crotinger a call TODAY!!**

Come see our
"GREEN"
greens at
Oakley
Municipal Golf
Course
Operated by
the Oakley
Country Club
785-672-3081
Mention this ad and get a
discount!

118 W. 2nd • 785-672-3238
www.oakleymotors.com
Give Dan a call!

SAM'S STYLING & MANICURES

520 S FREEMAN • OAKLEY • 785-672-4267
CALL FOR YOUR APPOINTMENT TODAY!
WALK INS WELCOME

*Beautiful Nails
Tropical Tans
Flattering Hairstyles*