pinion



Free Press Viewpoint

Save the space

By John Van Nostrand

Thomas County Commissioners and the Thomas County Landfill staff should be commended for finding some sort of biodegradable-based cover for the pit at the landfill.

But the bigger issue was what was discussed a few weeks ago. The amount of garbage entering the landfill is increasing and encroaching on some state regulations for landfills. What is happening at the Thomas County Landfill is not any different than other landfills across the country. A lot of landfills are filling up and flirting with various regulations. Today's landfills are becoming victims of America's lifeblood of consumerism, which goes hand-in-hand with packaging.

That does not mean we have to continue with the norm.

Recycling or reusing products are the best options we have to continue without drastically changing our daily lives. It may not be the prettiest sight having bins of recyclable materials sitting by our backdoors, but it will look better than seeing increases in garbage fees because of having too much stuff at the landfill.

It will also look better than seeing a closed sign in front of the Thomas County Landfill as the county was forced to change the operation and have garbage transported to another landfill in the state. That has happened in other places.

Recycling has been mainstream for at least 20 years now as all the "green" issues from recycling, economy cars, alternative energy and other items were emphasized starting in the late 1980s. Recycling may be a hassle for others as they think they need a

pickup to take all of their loaded recycling bins to the recycling center under the blue water tower near the corner of South Country Club Drive and College Drive.

That's not the case.

Recyclable materials can be kept in the plastic grocery bags. To avoid having numerous bags of recyclable material, (like tin cans, glass jars and beverage containers) make it a habit to drop off the recyclables on the way to the grocery store. (Out with the old, before in with the new.) Even the grocery bags are recyclable.

The Thomas County Recycling Center is handy as there are plenty of bins for plenty of recyclable materials.

Rather than find more landfill space because of our increasing amount of garbage, it would be great to see more recyclable bins

—John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press.

Where to write, call

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-4774

U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. 202/224-6521

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2202 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. 202/225-2715 or Fax 202/225-5124

State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 300 SW 10th St.

Rm. 143-N, Topeka, Kan. 66612. 785/296-7676

web: www.morrisonfamily.com

State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol, 300 SW

10th St., Rm. 128-S., Topeka, Kan. 66612, 785/296-7399

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail jvannostrand@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nw kansas.com. Opinions do not necessarily reflect the Free

Colby Free Press

155 W. Fifth Colby, Kan. 67701 (785) 462-3963

State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.

Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

John Van Nostrand - Publisher

NEWS

Patty Decker - Editor

Joe Falkoff - General Assignment/Sports Reporter

jfalkoff@nwkansas.com Kevin Johnson - General Assignment

kjohnson@nwkansas.com

ADVERTISING

Crystal Rucker - Advertising Sales/Director crystalr@nwkansas.com Jasmine Stewart - Advertising Sales

Hannah Pyle - Advertising Sales

hpyle@nwkansas.com

Avery Schultz - Advertising Composition

aschultz@nwkansas.com

BUSINESS OFFICE

Jeanette Applegate - Bookkeeping, Ad Building japplegate@nwkansas.com

Everett Robert - Circulation, Classifieds

erobert@nwkansas.com Evan Barnum - Systems Administrator

NOR'WEST PRESS

Jim Bowker - General Manager

Richard Westfahl, Lana Westfahl, Becky Foster, Jim Jackson, Kris McCool, Betty Morris, James Ornelas, Cheryl Holub, and Amanda Campbell

THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701. PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing of-

fices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.
THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to

Opinion 1-11-08 p2.indd 1

Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday. MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news credited to it or not otherwise herein. Member Kansas Press Association, Inland Press Association and National

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$40, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$74. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$53, 8 months \$65, 12 months \$82. Other Kansas counties: 4 months \$60, 8 months \$70, 12

months \$85. All other states, \$85, 12 months.

A good work out in Colby

Ever since I moved to Colby in July, it's been a struggle for me to exercise or workout on a consistent basis.

A lot of it has to do with my busy work schedule, and of course part of it is laziness, but I think the majority of it is from a lack of mo-

If you could only see the gym I worked out at in Overland Park last summer, you would know why.

I'll do my best to paint a picture for you, but words don't do it justice. The gym, called Lifetime Fitness, was built in 2006 and cost nearly \$30 million.

You're probably wondering how a fitness center could cost that much money, but without even going inside of it you can tell right away this isn't your normal gym

Picture a gym on steroids.

When you drive up to it, you feel like you're going into an NBA arena or something.

It truly blows you away.

The features inside don't disappoint either. You walk in and there's a salon on the right, a cafeteria on the left and a big screen TV surrounded by three leather couches straight ahead of you (It probably sounds like I'm talking about a mall, but just wait).

You can see an Olympic size indoor pool off to the right as well, but it's not until you look up that you'll notice some actual workout equipment.

But oh man, there's plenty of it.

There are enough dumbbells, bench press stands, machines, Stairmasters and treadmills to make an NFL team jealous.

Just the weight room itself is probably as long as a football field.

There's a Pilates room, a dance studio, a yoga room and just about any other exercise room you can think of.

Walk downstairs from that area and there are

Joe Falkoff

 A Sideline View

two full-sized basketball courts, a rock climbing wall and two racquetball courts.

When you're done with whatever workout you choose, there are two full-sized locker rooms to shower in or steam off in big enough to fit a military unit.

There are also two hot tubs and a second indoor pool with a water slide that compares to an amusement park.

Outside, there's another pool which goes beyond any community pool you'll find.

For a family of four to enjoy all of that, cost is a one-time payment of \$332 and \$110 a month after that. The place was so amazing I actually looked

forward to going to work out. It wasn't just something to do, it was something I enjoyed To go from that, to the workout facilities we

currently have available in Colby is like going from the Taj Mahal to a one-bedroom shack

I'm not trying to down the two gyms that currently exist in Colby, because without them, we'd be in a lot of trouble. But for me, the drop-off has been so large it's been pretty tough for me to get energized to go workout even when I have time.

That's why when I got word the city was thinking of building a multi-purpose activity center next to the high school, all I could think

in my mind was, "It's about time."

It's exactly what this town needs. For our population, we've got enough places to eat, to bank, to buy a car, etc., but what we don't have is a place where people of all ages can go have fun and be healthy at the same time.

Maybe I'm stupid, but where do kids play basketball this time of year? Is the only way they can work on their game is if a coach opens a gym up? If so, that's sad. As much as this town loves sports, what

could be a better fit than a fitness center that includes a basketball court and sand volleyball? The possibilities are limitless. And from what it sounds like, this activity center is going to be more than just a place to

work out or play basketball. It will include laser tag, miniature golf and a skate park, among other things. If the MAC turns out to be as cool as it sounds on paper, it will not only be a hit in

Colby, but it's going to attract people from at least 30 miles away in each direction. You want economic development and Colby to emerge as the unquestioned leader in north-

west Kansas, there it is. Colby is a great town, and this comes from someone who has lived in Kansas City, it's only a couple of places away from being a very

I know the MAC isn't going to be the \$30 million dollar facility I worked out at in Overland Park, but it's a giant step in the right di-

attractive place to live. This is one of them.

I don't care what it takes, we need to get this thing financed and built as soon as pos-

Until then, I guess it's up to me to just suck it up and hit the gym.

-Joe Falkoff is a reporter for the Colby

Fool me once ...

Our foreign policy is a real mare's nest. Nobody knows what anybody else is doing. Our intelligence agencies, Congress, and the Administration are confused. I sometimes suspect, maybe, they are not as confused as the public is led to believe.

Feigned confusion covers up intentional gaffs and illegal procedures. Eighteen minute gaps in tapes, destroying taped interrogation interviews and staged background photo ops are not unintentional slips. Knowing where the weapons of mass destruction (exactly how many gallons or pounds) didn't hold up, when the facts became known.

We later learned that there was considerable disagreement in the agencies, but the Administration unilaterally chose to publish the intelligence that gave justification for doing what they wanted to do, before any intelligence

Ken **Poland**

Ken's World

Back room negotiations and secret contract writing, usually, leaves John Q. Public bound by shady deals and holding the bag.

I came across a very succinct quote from Piet Hein, poet and scientist (1905-1996). "Knowing what / Thou knowest not / Is in a sense / Omniscience."

None of us are omniscient. The old saying, "What you don't know won't hurt you," is intended to give false security.

We don't seem to be overly concerned about secrecy in our national governing bodies. Isn't that a little baffling, when we also think that when our politicians get to Washington they become crooks.

When we get all bent out of shape over our local governing bodies not strictly adhering to "executive session" protocol, how can we be so trusting of our national governing bodies and the bureaucracy that runs our govern-

I have always been a little suspect, when someone says; "Trust me, I know what's best for you."; "Trust me, I'm honest."; "Trust me, I know the facts."; "Trust me, I'm a Christian." And I'm really hard put to trust someone, who has already pulled the wool over my eyes, a time or two.

-Ken Poland contributes to the Free Press.

About those letters . . .

The *Free Press* encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, if at all possible, and should include a telephone number and an address. Most importantly, all letters must include a signature. Unsigned letters cannot be published. We reserve the right to edit for clarity and length, and, likewise, reserve the right to reject letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive or libelous.

Mallard **Fillmore**

Bruce

Tinsley

