



## County hears engineer talk on landfill cap

By Vera Sloan  
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A short lesson on covering the first cell at the landfill seemed like the second verse of the same song for the Thomas County commissioners Monday, but until the day comes when the procedure is approved, the cell is covered, tested and declared complete to the state's satisfaction, the song may have many more stanzas.

Dana Daniels of Miller and Associates from Kearney, Neb., along with Larry Jumper, county landfill supervisor, and Leah MacNeill, a geologist with Milco Environmental Services at Millers' Colby office, were on hand Monday to visit with commissioners about closing the cell.

Daniels, a 25-year veteran of landfill design, gave an overview of construction for the landfill cap and closure. He said when Nebraska decided to go to regional landfills, his company helped take the state's 300 landfills to 33, with

transfer stations in most counties. In northwest Kansas, he said, they have worked with Rawlins, Decatur and Cheyenne counties.

He said his company has taken soil samples from the Thomas County landfill and found that quality liner material for construction of the cap already exists at the site.

He said certification of the liner construction would be done by a geotechnical engineer from outside his firm.

"Another plus is that we have a local office where a geologist can be on the site every day," Daniels added.

He said the firm estimates construction costs to close and cap the nine-acre cell at \$253,600, including the cost of field verification, testing and sample collection.

"The money is in the budget, due to proactive measures in the past," Jumper said.

Commissioner Paul Steele said the county knew this day was

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KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press

The Colby Middle School seventh- and eighth-grade band performed at the Northwest Kansas League Junior High School Music Festival this morning at Colby Community College. Three judges sat in the audience, scoring each band on mu-

sic difficulty and how well they played. The sixth-grade band performed later in the morning and the middle-school choirs in the afternoon.

## Lawmakers threaten to cut schools to help courts

TOPEKA (AP) — An effort to keep furloughs from shutting down Kansas courts for several weeks in the spring got tangled up Friday in some legislators' frustration with school districts seeking to reopen a budget lawsuit.

Legislators appear to agree that they should add \$5 million to the court system's current budget to limit the number of days workers are furloughed. Without the extra money, the courts could close up to 24 extra days between March and mid-June.

But some conservative Republicans argue that the state can't afford to provide the extra dollars without taking the money from another part of the budget. And they're targeting aid to public schools.

At least a few GOP conservatives want the court's money to come out of the aid to the 74 school districts asking the Kansas Supreme Court to reopen a 1999 lawsuit against the state.

Supreme Court rulings in that case in 2005 and 2006 forced legislators to dramatically increase spending on schools.

The districts argue that backsliding last year in the face of the state's budget problems wasn't permissible.

"If they can find the dollars to fund a lawsuit, I don't think they're in as bad a shape as they say they're in," said Rep. Joe McLeland, a Wichita Republican serving on the House Appropriations Committee.

The issue could arise next week when the House debates a bill revising parts of the current state budget.

But Newton lawyer John Robb, the

districts' lead attorney, said an effort to single out some school districts wouldn't be constitutional.

"It's a mean-spirited attempt to punish school districts that are attempting to exercise their constitutional rights to receive adequate funding," he said.

Other members of the GOP-controlled Legislature and Democratic Gov. Mark Parkinson don't want the court budget linked to the school lawsuit.

"We need to get the courts funded, and we need to do it quickly," said Senate Ma-

jority Leader Derek Schmidt, an Independence Republican.

Spokesman Ron Keefover said the Supreme Court is staying out of the debate over how to provide the additional money.

The court had estimated that the judicial branch faced an \$8 million shortfall in its current budget. It drafted a plan to furlough workers up to 30 days between Feb. 15 and June 15, a week at a time for

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VERA SLOAN/Colby Free Press

Figuring a patient's resting metabolism rate, body-mass index and body composition are a piece of cake with new equipment at Citizens Medical Center. Dietician Courtney McCarty demonstrated Monday how simple the procedure is.

## New technology and staff figure diets at Colby hospital

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With new equipment and two certified adult-weight-management workers on staff, dieticians at Citizens Medical Center no longer need to rely on standard formulas or cumbersome testing devices to estimate the number of calories a patient needs.

Using a new hand-held device, they can tell you exactly how many calories you need to chew through each day, whether you want to lose weight or gain a little.

Courtney Albers McCarty and Martha Collins, registered and licensed dieticians at the hospital, have learned to use a new, portable Fitmate machine to help patients fighting diseases such as diabetes and cancer manage their nutritional needs.

The women can use the Fitmate

to help people interested in losing a few extra pounds and for weight management to keep them off, said McCarty. They offer patients "direct access," meaning they can make an appointment for the testing without a doctor's order.

In the past, she said, a breathing test to get a measurement called a "repository quotient," which measures resting metabolic rate, and basic metabolism tests were done on huge, expensive equipment that had to be rolled into a patient's room. Usually, this was done at medical research centers or large university teaching hospitals.

"With this new cutting-edge piece of hand-held equipment, we can measure resting metabolic rate, body mass index and body composition," said McCarty. "The testing is done by a simple breathing test through a mask and takes about 15 minutes while the person is resting.

"The amount of energy required (calories per day) by each individual can vary from person to person, and with this machine, we are able to provide a person with a scientifically recommended daily food intake."

"And it's not just for weight loss," Collins added. "We also use it to measure nutritional needs for people needing to gain weight."

She said that for years, dieticians have calculated people's calorie needs by using standard formulas, but the formulas are not equipped to handle overweight and obese adults. The new medical equipment enables them to tell exactly how many calories are needed, and there's no other way to get this kind of accuracy.

"This piece of equipment has been used on America's popular TV show, *Biggest Loser*, McCarty

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## Briefly

### Lube up to help cancer victims

The Northwest Kansas Foundation for Hope will partner with Kansas Quick Lube for a "lubeathon" from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. For every vehicle serviced Saturday, Quick Lube will donate \$10 to the foundation, which helps cancer victims and their families with expenses. For information, call Carrie Bartlett or Sarah Laubscher at 462-2224.

### Foundation has grants for kids

The Thomas County Community Foundation is accepting applications until March 1 for the first quarter cycle for Kids Can Do! grants. Teachers, principals and club sponsors are encouraged to apply for the \$200 grants for student-run projects. For information, go to [www.thomascountycommunityfoundation.com](http://www.thomascountycommunityfoundation.com) or call Executive Director Melinda Olson at 460-9152.

### Food sign-up ends Friday

Prairie Land Food sign-up for the month will be open through Friday at the State Farm Insurance office, 905 E. Fourth St. Delivery will be at 10 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 27, at the Sacred Heart School gym, 1150 E. Sixth St. For information, call Gene Griffin at 460-3579.

### Low-income tax help at library

The American Association of Retired Persons will offer a tax help seminar from 1:30 to 4 p.m. every Thursday until April 15 at the Pioneer Memorial Library. The seminar is designed for low- and middle-income people with special emphasis on those 60 or older. For information, call Alvin Volk at (785) 460-2645.

### Sacred Heart to display relics

Sacred Heart Catholic Church will sponsor a relic

display from 2 to 7 p.m. Sunday and 8:30 and 10 a.m. Monday. Dale Anderson from Manhattan will show relics going back to the time of Jesus and give a 45-minute talk, followed by time for questions and viewing. For information, call Laura Krejci at 462-9724 or the church at 62-2179.

### Food bank meeting is Monday

The annual meeting of Genesis-Thomas County Food Bank will be at 7 p.m. Monday in the meeting room of the Pioneer Memorial Library, 375 W. Fourth St. The public is invited. For information, call Wynn Duffey at the First Presbyterian Church, (785) 462-6342.

### Rotary to serve soup Tuesday

The Colby Rotary Club will hold its annual soup supper from 5 to 7:30 Tuesday at the Community Building during basketball games with Goodland.

The cost will be \$4 for adults and \$2 for children 12 and under. For information, call Sara Bryan at (308) 530-8363.

### Water district sets annual meeting

The 35th annual meeting of the Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District will be held at 1:30 p.m. next Wednesday at the Hoxie Elks Lodge, said Wayne Bossert, district manager. The agenda includes the 2009 audit, 2011 proposed operating budget and election of board members, representing Sheridan, Graham, Logan and Gove counties. For information, stop by the office at 1175 S. Range, Colby, call (785) 462-3915 or e-mail [wab@gmd4.org](mailto:wab@gmd4.org).

