

Landfill the worst end for old Christmas trees

The answer to whether real or artificial Christmas trees are "greener" can depend on whether your viewpoint is short- or long-term.

"A farm-grown Christmas tree has real ecological advantages," said Amy Jordan, horticulturist with Kansas State University. "While growing for six to eight years, it shelters wildlife, traps carbon dioxide and produces oxygen. After harvest, it's 100 percent biodegradable."

If buried in a landfill, however, a real tree takes up space and degrades slowly. It becomes a benefit only if recycled for mulch, fish or wildlife habitat, erosion control or the like.

"Fortunately, estimates run from 65 to 93 percent for the number of real-tree buyers who recycle," Jordan said.

So many artificial trees come from China that the petroleum used in shipping is fairly low on a per-tree basis, she said, possibly as good if not better than for the gas used in shipping live U.S. trees.

"That's because many Americans buy from out-of-state farmers," Jordan added.

Even so, artificial trees' real advantage is that they're reusable. Some estimates put the trees' average life in service at between six and 10 years.

"Usually, the problem then is just that they've lost their looks," Jordan said.

Burning artificial trees can be hazardous, but recycling is all but impossible. Plastics may break down on their own, but that requires centuries, Jordan said.

Plus, the tree plastics are petroleum-based products. However, a

company in Brazil is beginning to make plastics from cane-based ethanol, which might help reduce future trees' carbon "footprint."

Today's artificial trees also are likely to have PVC or polyvinyl chloride content. It still shows up as filler in most new molded-from-life trees that carry the PE (polyethylene) label and look so realistic. PVC and its additives are associated with serious toxins, Jordan said, and child safety groups are working to ban it in toys.

"In the United States, PVC is probably best known for its uses in construction — including lawn irrigation systems," Jordan said. "So, at the very least, you'd have to say we've been producing a lot of it without having a good way to recycle or dispose of it. And that has to include our look-alike, but artificial, Christmas trees."

Thomas County Jail

Booked into the Thomas County jail:

- Ciara Diane Carnes, 19, Colby, Dec. 6, minor in possession/consumption, Colby Police Department, released same day on notice to appear.
- Andrew Dale Munn, 19, Colby, Dec. 6, minor in possession/consumption, possession of drug paraphernalia, Colby Police, released Dec. 7 on notice to appear.
- Scott McIntyre Argo, 25, Brentwood, Tenn., Dec. 7, using communication facility to arrange sales, possession of marijuana with intent to sell/distribute, no drug tax stamp, Kansas Highway Patrol, released same day to other agency.
- Ryan Daniel Hull, 27, Tulsa, Dec. 7, driving with license suspended or revoked, Thomas County Sheriff's Office, released same day on notice to appear.
- Casey Allen Smith, 20, Tupelo, Miss., Dec. 7, distribution of hallucinogens, no drug tax stamp, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 9 on \$100,000 bond.
- Scott Winters Thorpe, 31, Brentwood, Dec. 7, distribution of schedule V drug or analog, conspiracy, no drug tax stamp, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 9 on \$100,000 bond.
- James Wade Coplin, 26, Colby, Dec. 8, theft, Colby Police, released same day on notice to appear.
- Stevy Ray Geise, 23, Colby, Dec. 9, disorderly conduct, Colby Police, released same day with charges pending.
- Brandy Nicole Greene, 28, Clinton, Mo., Dec. 11, driving under the influence, Thomas County Sheriff, released Dec. 13 on recognizance.
- Raul Tarazon, 25, Colby, Dec. 11, disorderly conduct, Colby Police, released Dec. 12 on notice to appear.
- Sinahi Romo-Cruz, 24, Rexford, Dec. 13, driving without a license, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day on notice to appear.
- Charles Dean Hamilton, 51, Plainville, Nov. 29, failure to appear/driving under the influence, Rooks County/Thomas County Sheriff, released Dec. 3 by county attorney.
- Christopher Shawn Hughes, 30, Colby, Dec. 5, disorderly conduct, pedestrian under the influence, Colby Police, released same day to responsible party on notice to appear.
- Victor Adeyiza Shaid, 24, Gainesville, Fla., Dec. 8, possession of marijuana with intent to sell/distribute, no drug tax stamp, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 14 on recognizance.
- Chad Allen Pettit, 33, Tabernash, Colo., Dec. 13, possession of hallucinogenic drugs, no drug tax stamp, unlawful use of communication facility, released Dec. 14 on recognizance.
- Eliceo Fuerta, 32, Anaheim, Calif., Dec. 14, possession of drug paraphernalia, Highway Patrol, released same day on recognizance.
- Jesse William Beckmann, 24, Central Point, Ore., Dec. 15, possession of marijuana with intent to sell, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 17 with charges not filed.
- Lucas M. Boudinot, 23, Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 15, possession of marijuana with intent to sell/distribute, no drug tax stamp, unlawful use of communication facility, Thomas County Sheriff, released Dec. 17 on recognizance.
- Kenneth Ray Heinze, 23, Phoenix, Dec. 15, possession of marijuana with intent to sell, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 17 with charges not filed.
- Joseph John Machado, 21, Medford, Ore., Dec. 15, possession of marijuana with intent to sell, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 17 with charges not filed.
- Matthew P. McGrath, 23, Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 15, possession of marijuana with intent to sell/distribute, no drug tax stamp, unlawful use of communication facility, Thomas County Sheriff, released Dec. 17 on recognizance.
- Kenneth Edward Leonard, 44, Lakewood, Colo., Dec. 16, possession of a narcotic drug with intent, Highway Patrol, released Dec. 17, on recognizance.
- Donna M. Lowe, 53, Goodland, Dec. 16, failure to appear, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day on recognizance.

Sheriff, released Dec. 3 by county attorney.

- Ryan Christopher Nobile, 27, Denver, Dec. 16, possession of marijuana, Highway Patrol, released same day on recognizance.
- John Gramling Adams, 19, Columbia, Mo., Dec. 17, possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day on recognizance.
- Dusken Allen Juenemann, 19, Colby, Dec. 17, probation violation, Thomas County Sheriff, released Dec. 20 with probation continued.
- Cory David Knowles, 23, Oakley, Dec. 18, driving under the influence, possession of drug paraphernalia, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day on recognizance.
- Aaron Lee Brown, 25, Colby, Dec. 19, domestic battery, Colby Police, released same day on notice to appear.
- Wendy Nicole Brown, 25, Colby, Dec. 19, domestic battery, Colby Police, released same day on notice to appear.
- Daymond Christopher Hanley, Brewster, Dec. 19, minor in possession/consumption, driving under the influence, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day to responsible party.
- Taylor Linn Brown, 21, Colby, Dec. 22, probation violation, Northwest Kansas Community Corrections/Court Services, released Dec. 28 for time served.
- Jeffrey Davis Weiss, 24, Colby, Dec. 23, aggravated battery, disorderly conduct, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day on bond.
- Joseph Abraham Coffman, 37, Colby, Dec. 24, driving with license suspended or revoked, accident involving damage, Colby Police, released same day on notice to appear.
- Joseph Abraham Coffman, 37, Colby, Dec. 26, protective custody, Thomas County Sheriff/Colby Police, released Dec. 27 to other agency.
- Jeremiah J. Bastin, 28, Colby, Dec. 27, driving under the influence, Thomas County Sheriff, released same day on notice to appear.

Senior Progress Center

Tuesday the Thomas County Health Department will do blood pressure checks at the Senior Progress Center. There will also be a board meeting that day.

Activities: **Monday:** 10:30 Skip Bo. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m. exercise, 11 a.m. blood pressure checks, board meeting following lunch. **Wednesday:** cookies and hot chocolate. **Thursday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 dominos. **Friday:** 10 a.m. exercise, 10:30 pool game.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** Pasta beef and tomato casserole, spinach, applesauce, cooks choice

complement. **Tuesday:** ham and beans, orange pineapple salad, cornbread, cookie. **Wednesday:** meat balls, creamed potatoes, mixed vegetables, strawberries. **Thursday:** turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn dinner roll, tropical fruit. **Friday:** chef salad, ambrosia fruit salad, bread sticks, brownie.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older and guests to lunch Monday through Friday at the senior center.

Make reservations at (784) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

On the Beat

COLBY POLICE

Tuesday

- 1:14 a.m. — Alarm: everything appeared OK. Management contacted; report filed for attempted burglary.
- 2:42 a.m. — Security check.
- 3:47 a.m. — Responded to ambulance run.
- 4:26 a.m. — Security check.
- 7:59 a.m. — Fire department reported accident at 1125 S. Country Club Dr.
- 8:49 a.m. — Criminal damage to property, theft: subject came

to station reporting damage to vehicle at 1150 S. Franklin.

9:21 a.m. — Cat at large at 1775 W. Fourth St. taken to Colby Animal Clinic.

4:48 p.m. — Three 911 calls reported accident at Range and Fourth.

9:12 p.m. — Security check at Great Plains Spraying, everything OK.

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF

Tuesday

11:50 a.m. — Caller reported

vehicle on side of road, driver slumped over on U.S. 83 1 1/2 miles south of Breton. Nothing found to the county line; ambulance was paged out.

12:29 p.m. — Subject called Brewster marshal to report someone possibly in house at 102 First St., Brewster. Not found.

5:59 p.m. — Cattle out one mile south of U.S. 24 on U.S. 83 chased into a field.

10:26 p.m. — Vehicle hit a calf a mile north of the I-70-U.S. 83 interchange.

Student News

Brewster

Activities: **Monday:** second semester begins. **Tuesday:** 6:30 p.m. high school basketball, Hoxie. **Thursday:** 4 p.m. junior high basketball, Rexford. **Friday:** 6:30 p.m. high school basketball, Brewster vs. Greeley County; no school. **Menus: Monday:** breakfast: pancakes, sausage; lunch: chicken patty sandwich, fries, veggie sticks, applesauce, apple crisp. **Tuesday:** breakfast: cinnamon rolls; lunch: cavatina, broccoli, baby carrots. **Wednesday:** breakfast: sausage cheese biscuit; lunch: rib-b-q, mashed potatoes, gravy, peas, corn. **Thursday:** breakfast: scrambled eggs; lunch: taco stew, green

beans, baby carrots, corn bread, fruit.

Colby Public Schools

Activities: **Monday:** no school; 7 p.m. wrestling area supervisors meeting, Colby High School. **Tuesday:** begin third quarter and second semester; lunch money due; grade cards sent home; 8 p.m. basketball, Goodland. **Wednesday:** last day students to add or drop classes; noon — grade school parent-teacher organization meeting; 7 p.m. Colby High School all sports booster club meeting. **Thursday:** noon — middle school site council, library; 6 p.m. wrestling, Goodland. **Friday:** 8 p.m. basketball, Holcomb; ACT test registration deadline for Feb. 12 test.

Saturday: 9 a.m. junior varsity wrestling, Wakeeney tournament.

Menus: **Tuesday:** breakfast: sausage patty, cinnamon toast, orange; lunch: mighty ribs on whole wheat bun, seasoned potatoes, celery sticks, corn, mixed fruit. **Wednesday:** breakfast: Belgian waffle sticks; lunch: chicken patty breast on bun, whipped potatoes with gravy, baked beans, pineapple chunks. **Thursday:** breakfast: French toast sticks; lunch: taco pie, refried beans, lettuce, tomato, salsa, hot roll, orange quarter. **Friday:** breakfast: pancakes, sausage patty, cinnamon applesauce; lunch: school pizza, green beans, romaine and spinach salad,

bread sticks, sauce, rosey applesauce.

Golden Plains

Activities: **Monday:** classes resume. **Tuesday:** high school basketball vs. Saint Francis, Rexford. **Thursday:** middle school basketball, Brewster. **Friday:** high school basketball vs. Logan, Rexford. **Menus:** Online calendar for month (left side in the red) and there is a link to lunch menus on the top of the calendar right under the month.

Heartland

Activities: **Monday:** no school. **Tuesday:** school resumes. **Friday:** 4 p.m. high school basketball vs. Healy.

Sacred Heart

Activities: **Monday:** no school. **Tuesday:** classes resume. Begin third quarter. **Friday:** kids savings club.

Menus: **Tuesday:** chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes with gravy, strawberries with bananas, green beans, roll. **Wednesday:** spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, pear halves, carrots, French bread. **Thursday:** tacos, mandarin oranges, corn, roll. **Friday:** pizza, apples, peas, garlic toast.

Is your school missing from this list? Send us your calendar and menus. E-mail: colby.society@nwkanas.com (text files are appreciated) Mail: Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

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