# Don't melt down your radon – get house and body both healthy

Radon, Melt Down....???

No there hasn't been a nuclear melt down in Northwest Kansas. I just want to use this column to remind you how important it is to test your home for radon and to encourage you to get a team together and sign up for the healthy lifestyle program: Thomas County Melt Down. Read on for more information on both.

#### Radon

January is Kansas Radon Action Month. It is a great time to take action because it is best to test your home when all windows and outside doors are kept shut as much as possible. Yep, that would be January and February.

Is this something I really need to worry about in Colby? Yes. While nationally one out of every 15 homes is estimated to have high radon levels, in Kansas the estimate is one in every four homes.

A safe level of radon is considered 4 pCi/L or lower. Several tests from the Colby area have come back with a reading in the 12-13 pCi/L range.

The health risk from radon is increased lifetime risk of lung cancer. Radon exposure accounts for approximately 12 percent of annual lung cancer deaths in the United States – about 21,000; it is the leading cause of lung cancer death for non-smokers. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment estimates

Radon is easy to detect and mitigate at a



moderate cost. To determine your home's radon level, I recommend that you purchase a radon test kit from our office, the Thomas County Extension Office, 350 S. Range, Suite 16. It only costs \$5. That is our cost – we make no profit. We sell the kits as a service to the community. Other test kits can be found in some home and hardware stores and on the Internet,

for Life

usually for \$25 or less. The kit we sell is extremely easy to use and comes with easy-to-follow directions. I'm glad to give you a quick overview when you pick up the kit. In just a few minutes you will have the test going, wait for 3-7 days, mail it in, no extra costs and then get your results via Internet or wait for the letter that comes in the

Testing is important, because it's the only way to tell how much of the gas is present in your home. Stop by the Extension Office and pick up a test kit this week.

we have the program for you. Join the Thomas sion office.

County Melt Down, Tuesday, Jan. 24, to Tuesday, March 13, a free eight-week program that promotes healthy lifestyle.

The goal of the program is to encourage increased exercise and healthy eating habits that will promote healthy life styles and desired weight in a fun team format. Having teams with six members lets you have fun and develop a support system.

We will have weekly weigh-ins but no weekly meetings. Instead there will be weekly assignments; this is the learning portion of the program. We are working to make these assignments fun and relevant while helping you work toward a healthier lifestyle.

The registration deadline is Friday, Jan. 20. To register, simply e-mail team name, team members names, addresses, e-mail addresses and phone numbers (indicating which member is the team captain) to Kasiah at the Thomas County Health Department at findir@thomascohealth.com or mail that information to 350 S. Range Suite 2, Colby, Kan., 67701. This program is being provided by the

Thomas County Coalition Healthy Lifestyle Committee. For information or questions give me a call at 460-4582 or Kasiah at 460-4596.

Stay healthy – have your home tested for radon, strive for a healthy lifestyle and sign up for Thomas County Melt Down.

Diann Gerstner is the family and consumer

#### that residential radon exposure in Kansas **Melt Down** causes around 200 new cases of lung cancer Did you, or should you, make a resolution to exercise more, lose weight, eat healthier? If so, sciences agent for the Thomas County Extenannually in Kansas.

Statins linked with small diabetes risk

By Lauran Neergaard

AP Medical Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) – A new side effect seems to be emerging for those cholesterol-lowering wonder drugs called statins: They may increase some people's chances of developing Type 2 dia-

A study published Monday adds to the evidence, finding a modest risk among older women who used a variety of statins.

It's a puzzling link, and specialists say people who most need statins because of a high risk for a heart attack should stick with the

"What I fear here is that people who need and will benefit from statins will be scared off of using the drugs because of reports like this," says Dr. Steven Nissen, cardiology chairman at the Cleveland Clinic, who wasn't involved with the research. "We don't want these When they are, this effect is not a can calculate. significant limitation.

urging otherwise healthy people to use the pills as a way to prevent heart disease. For them, the findings add another potential compliand exercise or add a medication.

CLARKSVILLE, Tenn. (AP) –

Someone obviously liked the back

deck of a Clarksville home. They

Jadranko Beslic told The Leaf-

Chronicle he and his wife lived

in the house while he was in the

Army, but it has sat vacant for

about a year since the couple

moved to Atlanta (http://leafne.

They're still paying a mortgage

But when the couple's friend

and her fiance went to look at

the house, the 10-foot-by-12-foot

on the house and were delighted

when a friend wanted to rent it.

ws/txCNGW).

Former soldier's deck stolen

"The statin should not be seen as the magic pill," says Dr. Yunsh- blood sugar rise enough that eng Ma of the University of Mas- someone crosses the threshold to sachusetts Medical School, who diabetes has been confusing. led the study of postmenopausal

Statins are one of the most widely prescribed drugs, and among the most touted with good reason. They can dramatically lower so-called "bad" LDL cholesterol. Studies make clear that they save they want. lives when used by people who already have heart disease. What's debated is how much the

drugs help people who don't yet for years. They culled the records have cardiovascular disease but whose chances are higher because didn't have diabetes when they enof other factors such as smoking rolled in the Women's Health Inior high blood pressure – or diabetes. In fact, long-term diabetes is so heart-risky that the American Diabetes Association urges fairly aggressive statin use by many diabetics. For everyone else, Nissen 6.4 percent of the older women says the general rule is statins help people who have at least a 10 per-study's start, Ma concluded. The drugs in the water supply, but we cent chance of a heart attack in the findings were reported online want the right people treated. next 10 years, something a doctor Monday by the journal Archives

All drugs have side effects that But more and more doctors are are important to consider while observational study, which can deciding whether they're a good bet for an individual. Statins have long been known to cause muscle pain that on rare occasions becation as they consider whether to comes a serious breakdown of assigned to take a statin or some tackle their cholesterol with diet muscle that can lead to kidney failure, even death.

Beslic said he traveled to Clarks-

ville to see and, sure enough, the

deck had been removed. He filed

reports with the police and his in-

Quotes as of close of

previous business day

Hi-Plains Co-op

\$6.48

\$6.36

\$10.89

\$10.89

Beslic said he was baffled.

surance company.

**Markets** 

Wheat (bushel)

Milo (hundredweight)

Soybeans (bushel)

Corn (bushel)

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After all, some of the same risks for heart disease - such as being overweight and sedentary – also increase the odds of developing Type 2 diabetes. And Ma says too many statin users wrongly assume the pills will let them eat whatever

Ma's team examined a huge government study that tracked the health of postmenopausal women of more than 153,000 women who tiative in the 1990s. Just 7 percent were taking statins at the time.

Fast forward to 2005: Nearly 10 percent of the statin users had developed diabetes, compared with who hadn't used the drugs at the of Internal Medicine.

This is what scientists call an hint at a risk but can't prove it.

But it comes after a number of smaller but more precise studies where patients were randomly other treatment - that also have found a link. The first to prompt

But whether statins can make doctor head-scratching was in 2008, a study of the drug Crestor. Last June, a report in the Journal of the American Medical Association analyzed five additional randomized trials and concluded the increased risk was small but real for people taking higher doses of That report calculated that one

fewer patient would experience a heart attack or other cardiovascular problem for every 155 patients treated for a year – and there would be one additional case of diabetes for every 498 patients treated. At the National Institutes of

dith Fradkin says statins' benefits outweigh the potential side effect, and that newly developed diabetes won't harm right away. 'The danger here is alarming

Health, diabetes specialist Dr. Ju-

people and having them go off a medication that's of proven benefit," she says.

But Dr. Beatrice Golomb of the University of California, San Diego, welcomed the new study as a needed note of caution for women, saying there's less certainty about the drugs' overall effects in them. Stay tuned: Her own research aims to narrow down which statin users are more likely to experience a blood-sugar jump.

The Solomon Valley 4-H Club met Dec. 12 at the 4-H Building and welcomed three new mem-

Club leader Danita Comfort initiated Rachel Unruh, Joev Unruh,

For new business, the club voted to donate \$150 to Genesis-Thomas County. Pizza fund raising was discussed; dates and instructions given to members.

Kurt Sloan gave the treasurer's

report and Chandler Comfort reported Dec. 8 as the publication date of the November meeting re-

The 16 members who were present told their favorite holiday memory for roll call and played elbow for recreation. After recreation members were treated to refreshments provided by the Niblock and Thummel families.

- Chandler Comfort, Reporter

#### Deaths

### Gary A. Garrett

Gary A. Garrett, 67, Gem, died at the Logan County Hospital in 462-7979.

Services are pending with today, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2012, Kersenbrock Funeral Chapel,

#### Daughters of Isabella

The Immaculate Heart of Mary Daughters of Isabella met at 7 p.m. Court ruling of Roe versus Wade. Jan. 2 at the Sacred Heart Catholic

Regent Theresa Baker welcomed guests state regent Janet Huss and state financial secretary Connie Rockers, both from Law-

Along with opening rituals, Ceanne Rinehart read a spiritual reflection about the Eucharist. A thank you was read from Sis-

ter Loretta Podlena for the Christmas dinner and gift. Baker read letters from the state and international offices. Several members reported visiting the sick. Rinehart requested pravers for her mother, Helen

Helm, who is in the Cambridge, needs prayers as it is getting harder to communicate using her com-The group enjoyed their Christ-

mas party and recognized the circle's 65th anniversary. Members were recognized for their years of service with red carnations presented by Lucy Curtin, Rosetta Bremenkamp, Edna Poole and Jeane Mallory. Four members were recognized for over 60 years or to cake with ice cream, coffee of membership. Members were encouraged to

pray a novena for Right to Life from Saturday to Monday, Jan. 23,

the anniversary of the Supreme

Laura Krejci announced First Communion will be Sunday, April 15; the group will hold the recep-

A Daughters of Isabella Conference will be held Friday through Sunday, April 20 to 22, in McPher-

Joan Albers suggested a donation be made to the state organization's scholarship fund. It was approved. Officers for 2012 were installed

by Janet Huss and Connie Rockers with Pat Mumm assisting. Officers are Charlene Barnett, regent; Laura Krejci, vice regent; Baker, past regent; Donna Juenemann, financial secretary; Margaret Denneler, Neb., hospital. Sue Harter also recording secretary; Rhonda Rogers, treasurer; Marge Mowry, custodian; Joan Ziegler, chancellor; Albers, first year trustee; Pauletta Bieker, second year trustee; Louise Dougherty, third year trustee; Ziegler, card chairperson; Albers, Charlene Barnett and Dougherty, calling committee.

Following closing rituals the meeting adjourned.

Mumm and Barnett served car-- Margaret Denneler

### Recycling up in Kansas Additional findings from the

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment has survey include: published the results of its 2011 Community Recycling Survey that shows 85 percent of Kansans surveyed are recycling household waste and 96 percent of respondents consider recycling to be im-

According to the survey, the recycling of all household waste, which includes plastics, aluminum cans and cardboard, has grown cle cardboard, up from 10 percent significantly since this survey was last administered in 2005.

"We are encouraged that so many Kansans recycle their household products," said the department's Secretary Robert Moser. "We all must do our part to keep Kansas clean and avoid sending waste to the landfills.

Corrections

when the brief was printed.

460-4570 to set up an appoint-

\* \* \* \* \* \*

The Colby Free Press wants to

maintain an accurate record of

our town. Please report any error

or lack of clarity in a news story to

cycle plastics, up from 33 percent 56 percent of households re-

81 percent of households re-

70 percent of households re-

cycle aluminum cans, up from 65

percent in 2005.

cycle newspapers, up from 52 percent in 2005. 45 percent of households recy-

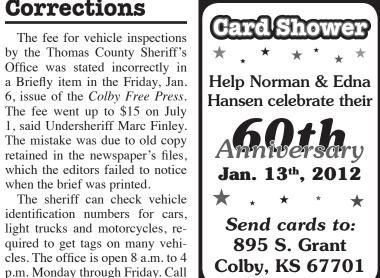
44 percent of households re-

cycle other paper, up from 14 percent in 2005.

96 percent of respondents consider recycling to be important, up

from 92 percent in 2005. To learn more visit www.kd-

heks.gov/waste.



We want your local news: e-mail to colby.editor @ nwkansas.com

### Solomon Valley 4-H Club

and Jillian Niblock.

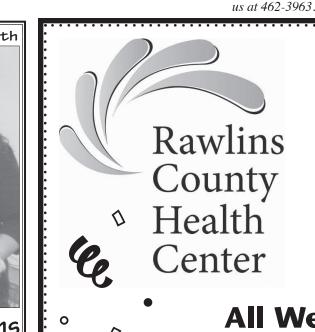
Teacher of the Month

## Congratulations

to teacher of the month Dana Butt and Gracie 1st Grade Frank Bergman Elementary Manhattan, KS

> She is the daughter of Stan & Verda Wancura

port in the *Colby Free Press*.



Tuesday, January 4 - 6 p.m.

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