

## Snow not enough to end a year's drought

Anyone who thinks we're out of the woods when it comes to the drought, just because we got some snow, is as optimistic as a New York commodities trader.

Which, come to think of it, might be why those folks sent the price of wheat spiraling down this week. The market knocked 58 cents, nearly 8 percent, off the cash price over the last two weeks.

So, we had a blizzard. Oberlin got maybe 15 inches in two storms, and that amounted to about an inch of moisture. That, according to wire reports, was about what most of the drought belt was reporting, though the farther east you go, the more water they got.

It brought our moisture for the year to 1.41 inches, which was .4 of an inch more than we had at this time last year. And that sounds pretty good — until you realize that last year we got only 11.35 inches all year. That is less than half our normal precipitation — and dangerously close to the 8 inches that defines a desert.

The wheat crop? Kansas Agricultural Statistics says it's a little better now, but 41 percent remained in fair condition and 36 percent is poor to very poor. Statewide, 61 percent of the fields were short to very short of topsoil moisture. Here in the northwest, however, fully three-fourths of the fields were dry.

What would it take to end the drought? Not an inch of rain, not a foot of snow. Climate-

logist Mark Svoboda of the National Drought Mitigation Center in Nebraska told the Associated Press a foot of snow usually equals an inch of rain. That means, he said, it'd take two to four feet just to make up the deficit since fall, he said, and no one was asking for that — not all at once, anyway.

He estimated that we need 12 to 16 inches of moisture for fields and pastures to fully recover. So, the drought won't end anytime soon.

Still, an inch of water is an inch of water. Wheat plants that were beginning to parch in the sun now lie under the snow, protected from the dry winds of spring. When it melts, the moisture will keep them going for a while.

For a while. They'll need more in a couple of weeks, more after that. It's likely we'll get enough over the next three months to keep what's left of the crop going. We usually do.

With a dry fall, though, many fields were damaged. Some didn't come up at all. Farmers will be looking to plant milo or another crop in the spring — if there's enough moisture.

The price, down right now, will bounce around, jumping this way and that with news reports. There'll be a wheat crop, but nobody expects a good one.

One blizzard does not a drought break. A couple dozen more might, but only a New York commodities trader would bet on that.

— Steve Haynes

## Casey's Comments

By

Casey McCormick

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As the white blanket of snow covers our landscape of the plains and the wind howls, my mind is in Florida and Arizona.

If you ever get a chance to visit those states this time of year not only will you find pleasant weather, but you can catch a spring training baseball game.

In the early 1980s, while going to college, I had an apartment in Mesa, Ariz. Right behind our parking lot was Hohokam Park, the winter home of the Chicago Cubs. The best I could do is find

a baseball once in awhile when I jogged around the stadium. Cubby tickets where hard to come by because of all the "snow birds" from the upper mid-west.

Luckily we also had the Giants, Athletics, Mariners, Indians and a couple other clubs putting their rosters together and getting the veterans back in shape.

The great thing about those games is the access to the players. It was easy to stand along an outfield fence or in a concourse and get the guys to stop and say

"hi."

I'll never forget the time I ran into Harry Caray at one of the Chicago road games. He was pretty much the same as he was on WGN broadcasts.

So while old man winter throws what he can at us, I'm dreaming of pitchers sending balls to their battery mates.

## Hangin' With Marge

Pain

By

Margaret Bucholtz

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What is pain? I am always telling Kurt that I have a pain here and one there and bless his heart he always acts like he cares.

I have had some problems with my teeth lately and I had to have a couple of them pulled. I had already lost four and needless to say with two more gone eating has become a problem. Not that I have missed any meals it just takes a little longer.

One of the recent teeth was a nightmare to pull or rather break up and dig out. I am sure that after an hour the poor dentist was as happy as I was to finally get the

job done.

As Kurt and I were heading home I needed to change the gauze, but after I got it changed here I was with the bloody one in my hand. I looked at Kurt and asked him if it would be OK to throw it out the window. He told me to go ahead so I rolled the electric window down with my right hand and threw the cotton out with my left hand. Then I pushed the button to roll the window up.

Still feeling guilty about throwing something out the window I quickly started looking to see if anyone seen it and then it happened. In all the excitement I forgot to pull my left hand out of the window. Oh my, the pain

was something else and the more it hurt the harder I pushed on the button. My brain cells must have gotten confused!

Finally I got the window down again and my hand inside with a red mark running across it. Kurt had a grin on his face but I didn't have time to be upset because he was laughing. I was trying to decide which hurt the worst, my mouth or my hand.

I think it is called transfer of pain, but I sure am glad I used my hand to throw it out and didn't hang my head out the window to spit it out.

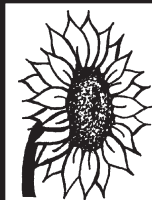
## Honor Roll

Edna Schiltz, Seldon; Floyd Jensen, St. Francis; Mary Zimbelman, McCook, Neb. Bob Elliott, St. Francis; Dorothy Zimbelman, Burlington, Colo. Dennis Novacek, Lawrence; Ralph and Wava Duell, Goodland; Barry Priest, St. Francis; Gary and Bonnie Cooper, St. Francis; Ron and Betty Loudon, St. Francis; Roger and Reva Pownell, Huron S.D.; Rodney Myers, St. Francis; George and Dorothy Baxter, Wheat Ridge, Colo.;

**GOD SAYS**

But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

**Romans 14:10-12**



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## Reader hopes for incorrect headline concerning landfill

### Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your headline concerning the last cell to be built at the landfill implies a policy that the county has hopefully not taken. Having lived in rural (and not so rural) counties that have parted with their local landfills, I can state that the loss of a local landfill does little to improve either the community or the environment. Usually, "impromptu" landfills fill the void as tipping fees and regulations become burdensome.

These impromptu landfills are our ditches, our river bottoms (for some reason bridges seem to be attractive for such pursuits), and that

part of your property you are not watching on a given dark night. The county should not travel that path. It does not work. I suggest that the County Commissioners look into two changes:

Secure an immediate piece of land beside the landfill and build a cell for construction debris. The permitting for construction debris is easier, and this would probably significantly extend the life of the so called last cell.

Concurrent with this, secure the

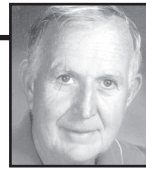
rights to an adjacent piece of land to the current landfill, and start the permitting process to expand the landfill. Trucking garbage to another county will not save taxpayer money in any form. Yes rates can be driven up to cover the gap; however, I can guarantee that some old couch and refrigerator will show up in the Republican River, where it will be a hazard that will have to be removed at taxpayer expense.

Thank you,  
Jeter & Nina Isely

## Legislative News

By  
Ward Cassidy

120th State Representative



Last week, I received the results of an analysis commissioned by the state Department of Health and Environment on the potential enrollment and budget impact of the Affordable Care Act's implementation to the state Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance Program.

Assuming that moderate statewide population growth will continue and using 2010 Medicaid enrollment as a base, the study estimates that if the state chooses not to expand Medicaid, the enrollment will increase by 20,653 in 2014, ramping up to 41,538 (23,740 for Medicaid and 17,798 for children's health) by 2016, when the Affordable Care Act is to be fully implemented. The anticipated 10-year state general fund increase with no expansion is \$513 million.

If the state chooses to expand Medicaid, enrollment will increase by 111,880 in 2014, ramping up to 226,003 (25,416 from currently eligible Medicaid, 49,384

from currently eligible Children's Health Insurance Program, and 151,203 from those newly eligible for Medicaid in 2016, once the Affordable Care Act is fully implemented.) The anticipated 10-year state General Fund increase with expansion compared to no Affordable Care Act will be \$1.1 billion.

Gov. Sam Brownback has not yet announced a decision on whether or not the state will expand Medicaid. \$1.1 billion over 10 years to state expenditures is a significant increase that would have an impact on the state's ability to pay for other core responsibilities, such as education. If the state expands Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act does say that the federal government will pay 100 percent of the cost of the expansion for the first three years and then 90 percent after that. However, if the federal government, which is currently running trillion-dollar deficits, is not able to make good on its offer, then the impact on the state would be even

greater.

I need to make a correction about a statement I made last week about KanCare. Most of the recipients had received their card by January 1. The problem was that, in some areas, very few were showing up to get prescriptions with their new card. Overall, KanCare is off to a very strong start. There would have to be problems, with such a large undertaking, but in the long haul I believe it will benefit the state.

I just finished updating my website [www.wardcassidy.com](http://www.wardcassidy.com). There is information about all of District 120 counties, my weekly news article, an update on the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System and other information. We will start our district tour soon and will be glad to answer any questions you might have.

**Church of Christ**  
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424  
502 W. Spencer  
Norman Morrow - Minister  
Bible Class 9 a.m.  
Morning Worship 10 a.m.

**United Methodist**  
Church Office 332-2292,  
Church 332-2254,  
512 S. Scott  
Pastor Warren Cico  
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday School 10:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.

**Seventh-Day**  
Adventist Church  
423-650-5663 • 3rd & Adams  
Pastor James McCurdy  
Sabbath School 9:30  
Morning Worship 10:45

**St. Francis of Assisi**  
**Catholic Church**  
625 S. River • 332-2680  
Fr. Carlos Ruiz Santos  
1st Sunday of the month  
Morning Mass 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday Mass 10:30 a.m.  
Weekday Mass 8:00 a.m.  
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

**Salem Lutheran Church**  
332-3002  
Pastor Chris Farmer  
Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Communion 3rd Sunday

**Solid Rock**  
**Baptist Church**  
412 S. Denison  
Welcomes You!  
Pastor Allen Coon  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30  
Prayer Meeting, Wed  
7:30 p.m.

**First Christian Church**  
Pastor Jeff Landers  
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster  
Church Service 10 a.m.

**First Baptist Church**  
2nd & Scott • 332-3921  
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Evening  
Service 6:30 p.m.,  
Wed. AWANA Club  
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**St. Francis**  
**Community Church**  
332-3150  
204 N. Quincy Street  
[www.sfccfamily.com](http://www.sfccfamily.com)  
Pastor: David Butler  
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.  
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.  
Potluck & Communion -  
Every 2nd Sunday  
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

**Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC**  
202 N. College  
Pastor Randy Nelson  
Church 332-2928  
Parsonage 332-2312  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Communion 1st Sunday

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