pinion



Free Press Viewpoint

Careful thought needed on campers

The Colby City Council has discussed a possible ban on vehicle campers parking at city parks.

They have their reasons. These campers take up space and use city resources. But the council should consider the image of the city when debating this idea.

Part of the appeal of Colby is a friendly environment to travelers. People like to stop here, and we need to keep it that

The main reason we want to keep our image is purely self interest, of course. A big chunk of what keeps Colby going is income from tourists and one-night stopovers.

We have a lot of motels, we have a lot of restaurants. We even have some tourist attractions. It's part of what is keeping us afloat when so many of the towns our size are shrinking.

In fact, a report last year ranked Colby as the No. 2 county in Kansas for bringing in retail sales. We're a stopover site for travelers, and some of them will want to camp.

On top of that, we're friendly people, and we want to have that reputation.

There isn't really a good place at our parks for more than one or two campers at a time. Villa High and Phillips parks are too hilly for many big vehicles. Buffalo Park doesn't have much actual parking.

Fike and Westside are probably the best for camping. Fike has a decent-sized parking lot and the attraction of a playground and pool (for the rest of this summer anyway). Westside has some nice open areas and is in a quiet part of town.

Colby has one commercial campground, with hookups and developed spaced. The county allows some camping at the fairgrounds. If there were more camping areas available, people might not need to go to the city parks.

If we do need more spaces, perhaps this is a job for the Economic Development Alliance. One of its primary functions is to bring in new businesses. It wouldn't even have to be someone new in town; it could be a landowner looking to make a little more and provide a good service.

What we need is a study. We need to know how many people come through with campers each year who give Colby a pass to find more camping spots. That will tell us how much potential income we could be sending down the road.

For now, restricting campers from city parks wouldn't do that much damage to the city's image. But you can imagine what 10 such decisions would do.

Everyone worries about going down a slippery slope, and this could start us sliding down one until we have so many restrictions on what out-of-towners can and can't do and where they can and can't go that people will just head on to Oakley or Goodland where they'd be more welcome.

Whatever the decision, we hope the council keeps the city's

image in mind. – Kevin Bottrell

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We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise. Nor do we run form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

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Opponents are trying to hang the oil spill around my neck like an albatross ...





Weather conspires against sales

I planned to go garage saleing this weekend.

It all started when I was proofreading the classifieds Friday and saw all those delicious ads. You know, almost anyone can make their old junk sound like really good stuff in a clas-

It probably was really good stuff, but I'll never know.

It was late when I left work, so my planned expedition to the Friday-afternoon sales was over almost before it began. I could see where they had been, but it was too late to shop.

I know you get the best stuff if you show up early, but I like to sleep in. And the weather wasn't great, or at least it didn't look wonderful from my viewpoint. (I can stretch a cloud into a major storm if I put my mind to it.) So the garage sales had to make do without me this time.

Have you ever noticed, you who have been on the selling end, at least, that the weekend you plan to finally get rid of all your treasures - or maybe just your spouse's junk - is the weekend the weather is likely to turn bad?

Seems like it never fails. You can have a month of sunny weekends, you can check the forecast six times, but the minute you start



wind picks up, the sky clouds over and sprinkles start coming down. It probably would be that way even if you lived in the Mojave Des-

Connections

Of course, that wild weather might have arrived for other reasons, too. It could be because school is out, and everyone wanted to celebrate with a weekend outside. We can't blame a local ball game – this weekend – but there was the fishing derby at Villa High Lake.

Yet, I'm convinced that storms would only arrive because of the garage sale connection.

Think about it. You spend days - weeks planning. You sort things out. You have a tugof-war or two over a favorite sweater or that painting one of you always hated. You round up tables, or racks, or whatever you need to spread out your merchandise. You take out ads and put up signs.

The day of the event, you don't get to sleep making signs and get that ad in the paper, the in. Up bright and early, you start setting things

out, arranging things just so. Some of us, in the process, see something we decide we don't REALLY want to get rid of. We pull it off the tables. We set out a few more things. We decide that our decision was right the first time. We put it back. We look at it three more times, and finally decide to stay away from that table.

Just because it belonged to Mom and Dad doesn't make it an undiscovered antique. Some things are just old.

You finally get set up. Having fought off the early birds, they have now vanished. You wait. One or two people come and go. Then a dozen show up at once, and that's when the weather turns against you. It could be rain. It could be wind. It could be blowing dust. If it's really not your day, it could be all three.

A few of your shoppers catch silk flowers and Tupperware lids before they land in the next county, but most pick that moment to des-

Another May, another garage sale.

Oh, well, there's still next year - and you didn't really want to get rid of Mom's ugly candleholders anyway.

Marian Ballard has collected careers as counselor, librarian, pastor, and now copy editor for the Colby Free Press. She collects ideas, which are more portable than other stuff.

Diet advice comes down to moderation

Consumer skepticism about dietary advice increases daily. Certainly, advice about what to eat or not to eat should be given with extreme care.

Instead, conflicting information about diet and health appears in the news media every week - sometimes every day. With the same regularity as turning over a new leaf on the calendar, it seems that the eating of red meat or too much meat is linked with obesity, cancer or some other calamity.

Because of such misleading information, scare tactics, hype in the headlines, television and social media, along with conflicting information about diet and health, there is a risk of consumer confusion and uncertainty. Overwhelming scientific evidence points to a diet of moderation and variety. That includes beef, pork, lamb, turkey – all kinds of meat.

Moderation and variety: a balanced diet includes meat, vegetables, fruits, nuts, breads and dairy products. The key is not to overdo any one.

One reason some Americans may be victims of health concerns is not because of the red meat they eat but rather the lack of vegetables, fruits and whole grains in their diet. It is essential to consume all of these food groups.

Individuals with specific health concerns that require dietary modification should be di-



John Schlageck

 Insights Kansas Farm Bureau

agnosed and have diets prescribed by a physician who knows a patient's history and con-

Few people today would disagree with dietary guidelines that recommend cutting back on fat, sodium and sugar. This is sound ad-

When it comes to fat intake today, many people remove most of the visible fat. They trim it off and throw it away.

America's cattle producers have, and continue to listen to the comments and wishes of consumers for low-fat content beef. Today, they are producing leaner cattle with less trimmable fat through advances in genetics, feeding and management.

To help inform people about healthy and helpful eating guidelines, livestock organizations regularly provide information on the nutritional value of meat as part of a healthful diet. Research projects on their products are

contracted with qualified academic institutions, private research or meat industry labs. Accuracy and credibility are, and will continue to be, reviewed by scientific specialists.

Examining the correlation of diet and different diseases remains an ongoing project. Some of the areas of specific concern include the correlation of diet and cancer, and the correlation between oxidation and heart disease.

The cattle and pork industries continually strive to listen to the concerns of consumers and their changing, ever-healthier lifestyles. The livestock industry is working every day to produce leaner, healthier meat products to satisfy today's market. It has learned to respond with products that meet new consumer desires.

Livestock producers also recognize the need to conduct research that provides data on food nutrition and safety. Consumers are hungry for new dietary products, but they also have a ravenous appetite for information supported by facts and science - not myths and miscon-

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