



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press



Halloween starts early for local kids

Members of the Colby Community College softball team helped local kids carve pumpkins at the Colby Community Building on Thursday.

Water expert talks supply and demand

By Kevin Bottrell Colby Free Press kbottrell@nwkansas.com



KEVIN BOTTRELL/Colby Free Press Professor Robert Glennon spoke about water supply and demand at a Max Pickerrill lecture on Thursday at Colby Community College

Professor Robert Glennon painted a grim picture of America's water supply at a lecture Thursday night at Colby Community College, suggesting that, like the buffalo, water may soon be over-used to extinction.

Glennon, a professor of law and public policy at the University of Arizona and author of "Unquenchable: America's Water Crisis and What To Do About It," spoke to a crowd of students and community members as part of the Max Pickerrill Lecture Series.

He began by talking about Las Vegas. The city has numerous water attractions, such as the fountains at the Bellagio Hotel, and an ever-increasing population, but it was built in the middle of a desert.

City officials have taken steps to reduce water usage in recent years, he said, including paying people to rip out lawns and plant native landscaping, offering to build desalination plants on the coast in exchange for the clean water they produce and proposing a pipeline from reservoirs on the Nevada/Utah border.

"As a guy who studies fights over water, there's nothing better than one that pits Sin City against Mormons," he joked.

Glennon said Las Vegas has been able to force casino builders to recycle water, use low-flow fixtures and make other changes, so now Las Vegas uses only 3 percent of the state's water. Agriculture uses 60 to 70 percent, he said, and accounts for about 6,000 jobs,

while just one casino can employ that many and the Strip as a whole pumps significantly more revenue into the state economy.

Supply and demand is very important when talking about water, Glennon said, and the energy production sector is one of the heaviest users of water. Nuclear and coal-fired plants use steam to move turbines, using up a lot of water in the process.

Even clean energy producers use water. Glennon said it can take as much as four gallons of water to produce one gallon of ethanol. An audience member said some plants use as little as 2.7 gallons of water. Glennon replied that he has heard that figure, but has not personally observed it in any ethanol plants he has been to.

Neither number takes into account the water used to grow the corn needed to produce ethanol. About 40 percent of the corn grown in the United States now

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Turn in prescription drugs at sheriff's office Saturday

Saturday is the time to rid your home of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs as the Thomas County Sheriff's Office joins law enforcement agencies across the nation for National Drug Take Back Day.

Bring your medications for disposal to the Law Enforcement Center at 225 N. Court Ave., just south of the Thomas

County Courthouse. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked.

Last April, Americans turned in 376,593 pounds - 188 tons - of prescription drugs at nearly 5,400 sites operated by the Drug Enforcement Agency and more than 3,000 state and local law enforcement partners.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines

that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse.

Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Studies show most abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from

the home medicine cabinet.

In a drug summit last month Barry Grissom, U.S. Attorney for Kansas, cited some statistics from the Centers for Disease Control.

• Drug overdoses are the second most common cause of accidental death in America. Only automobile accidents cause more deaths. Prescription drug

abuse causes more deaths than gunshot wounds or homicides.

• Prescription drugs cause more overdose deaths than cocaine or heroin.

In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines - flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash - both pose potential health hazards.

Memorial fund established 30 years after child's death

A new memorial fund has been established at the Thomas County Community Foundation to help provide food for children in Thomas County suffering from food insecurity, said Director Melinda Olson.

The Darren Miller Memorial Fund was recently established by Colby residents Bill and Peggy Miller in memory of their son, who died in a farm accident in 1981.

"Bill and I cannot stand the thought of children going hungry and we wanted to do something to help. Honoring Darren's life with this fund seemed like the perfect thing to do, and since this year is the 30th anniversary of his death, it seemed like the right time

to take action," explained Peggy Miller.

According to Olson, "even in Thomas County there is a great need to provide healthy food options for weekends and school breaks to children who would not otherwise have access to regular meals."

About 50 school-aged children in the county have been identified as having food insufficiency, said Olson.

In addition, Genesis-Thomas County reports that they have increased their efforts in the last two years to help families feed their children, and in the sum-

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Fewer delinquencies on farm loans

By Roxana Hegeman The Associated Press

WICHITA - Farm loan delinquencies remain low in Kansas as fall harvest wraps up, but it is too early to know what impact the drought will have on loan repayments, a top Farm Service Agency loan official said Thursday.

The agency, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is the state's biggest single lender for

farmers. Loan chief Arlyn Stiebe said the agency had a delinquency rate of 2.7 percent on its farm operating loans as of the Sept. 30 fiscal year end.

The rate has been lower this time of year only once in the past 13 years - in 2008, when the delinquency rate was 2.4 percent, Stiebe said.

"Typically this time of year is when delinquencies are at their lowest," Stiebe said.

Most loan payments come due between December and February, after the fall harvest is in.

But despite the drought in Kansas, agency officials in the field aren't hearing about a lot of problems that may cause farmers to default on those loans, he said.

"The drought is severe. It has caused a lot of crop damage and all, and there have been lots of losses, but the saving grace has been one of the forms of multi-peril crop insurance," Stiebe said. "That is helping out tremendously."

At the industry trade group, Kansas Wheat, spokesman Bill Spiegel said farm delinquencies

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Ready for adoption



KAYLA CORNETT/Colby Free Press

This 5-week-old kitten is one of several animals available for adoption at the Colby Animal Clinic. The clinic also has a 2-year-old spayed female boxer mix. Call or stop by 810 E. Fourth St. All animals have current shots, and costs are minimal. For information, call 460-8621.

