

# Areas sees some temporary heat relief

HEAT WAVE, from Page 1

However, Bossert said, there is an index well in Thomas County which is measured every hour. It reached the lowest level ever recorded last week, three weeks earlier than its usual yearly low. The lack of rain means farmers are needing to pump more groundwater.

"This doesn't mean farmers are wasting water," he said. "They just need more."

The December test will include more than 280 wells in northwest Kansas, 60 of those in Sherman County. The results will be released in March or April, and Bossert said he is not optimistic about what those tests will find. Last year southwest was the hardest hit, with an average water level decline of 3 1/2 feet. Northwest Kansas was dry, he said, but not as dry as the southwest or south central parts of the state.

While more than half the counties in the United States – including all 105 in Kansas – are under drought disaster declarations, Congress has been slow to act on relief measures. On Thursday, the House of Representatives passed disaster relief for cattle and sheep producers, but the Senate didn't act on the bill, or the larger 2012 Farm Bill, before leaving for a five-week recess.

In the mean time, some measures are being taken. Last week several officials, including Gov. Sam Brownback and Rep. Tim Huelskamp requested – and got – the U.S. Department of Agriculture to lift haying restrictions on Conservation Reserve Program lands designated CP-25. CP-25 is a designation for rare and declining habitat.

"I am pleased that Secretary Vilsack responded to the pleas of Kansans and opened this additional land for haying," Congressman Huelskamp said. "Roughly

45 percent of all CP-25 acres are in Kansas, and those acres make up about 25 percent of all CRP acres in our state, so this will provide some much needed relief for our farmers and ranchers. The drought is not getting any better, and I am pleased that USDA is responding."

According to the Agriculture Department, there are about 30,000 acres of CP-25 land in Sherman County. Those seeking to hay their land must obtain a revised conservation plan from their local Natural Resources Conservation Service office, may only cut once, may only cut half their field, and must have the haying completed by Aug. 31.

Brownback, along with Sen. Pat Roberts, also got the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to stop releasing waters from three Kansas lakes on the Missouri River, allowing that water to stay in the state for drought relief.

# Students stop in Goodland while on cross-country walk

WALK, from Page 1

decided to go ahead on his own.

Keene is a doctoral student at Cornell working on his dissertation on how junior high and high school teachers teach leadership to their students. He graduated from the University of Florida and has taught middle school in Miami and high school in Tampa.

He said go walk America uses the money he raises to buy uniforms. Each \$20 buys a kid a uniform so that he can go to school. Without a uniform kids cannot go to school in some countries, said Keene. If the kid's family doesn't have the money to buy a uniform the kid

is locked out of an education and a way out of poverty. Part of the money goes to set up sewing centers to make the uniforms and give the parents work and an income. There are sewing centers in Haiti and Uganda.

He has raised enough money for 16,000 uniforms and has provided parents with five months of work.

Keene is looking for places to stay on his way to Denver and he may be contacted through the website [gowalkamerica.org](http://gowalkamerica.org). He said the people of West Kansas are the greatest and have shown me what Southern hospitality is really like.

"Walking in this area is great," he said. "you don't have to worry about traffic."

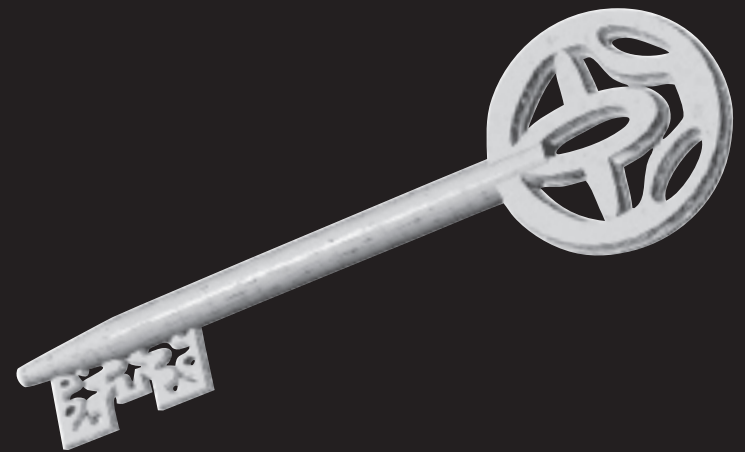
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