



Concert planned in Scott City.

A3



Picture This

Colby Kempke riding down a slide.

Photo contributed by Christy Kempke, Garden City.



Hoops success helps K-State.

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TUESDAY March 23, 2010



THE GARDEN CITY

# TELEGRAM

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## Wind brings windfall to Wichita Co.

By MONICA SPRINGER  
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LEOTI — On a windy morning the blades of 33 wind turbines glided through the air in Wichita County. And while the turbines were generating electricity, county commissioners gathered in Leoti to receive the first of 10 payments from Westar Energy, which owns and operates the Central Plains Wind Farm. Wichita County commission-

ers Vic Case, Rex Whalen and Steve Baker accepted the \$247,500 check on Monday morning.

Since renewable energy is not taxed in Kansas, Westar entered into a payment in lieu of taxes agreement, or PILOT agreement with Wichita County.

Ken Smith, wind site manager for Westar, said the payment is the first of 10 annual payments the company plans to make to Wichita County.

"To get something like this

is really going to be beneficial," said Case, chairman of the county commission.

Sharla Krenz, Wichita County economic development director, said the money will be used like it has been collected from taxes and will be distributed to various county entities.

How much each entity will receive is based on the mill levy, Krenz said. The county will receive \$138,430.33, the hospital \$15,154.76, Wichita County USD

467 \$88,821.52, rural fire districts \$1,353.31, and the cemetery \$3,740.17.

Whalen said the county hasn't decided how to spend its portion of the money and added that the funds will go into the county's general fund.

The county general fund budget is about \$1.2 million, County Clerk Carol Cary said.

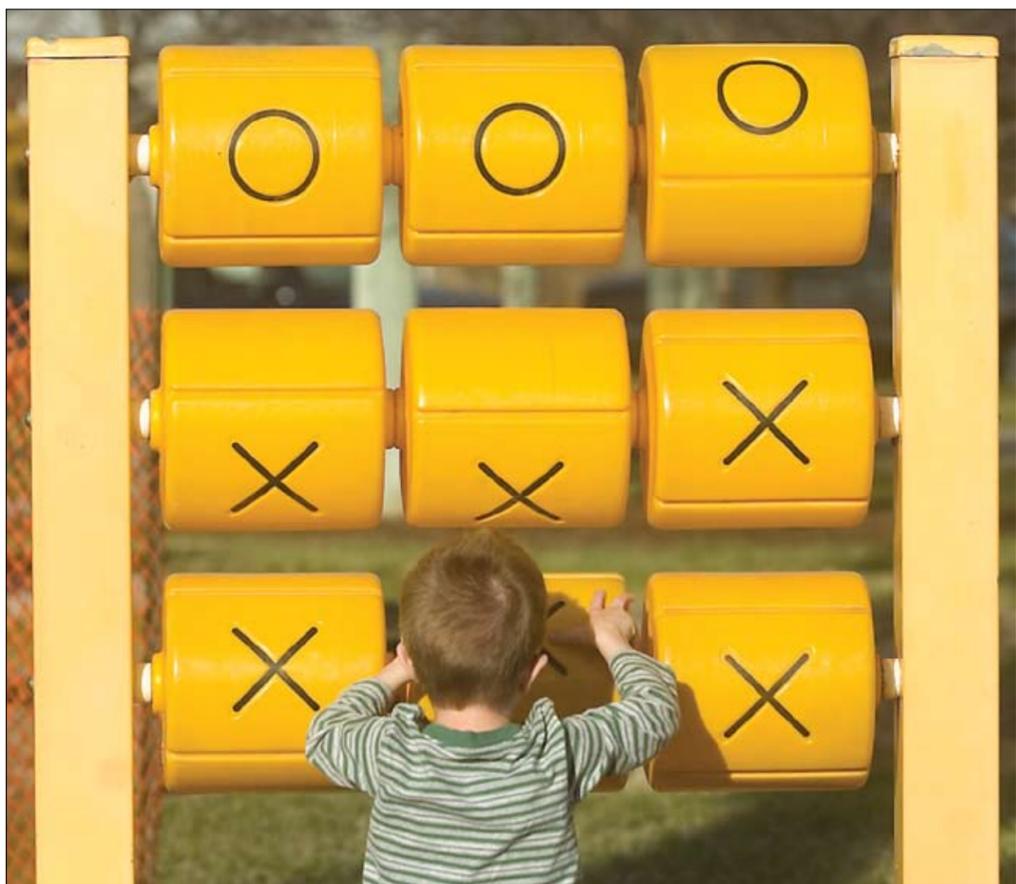
Wichita County USD 467 Superintendent Jim Hardy, who also attended the short ceremony,

said the school district will use its portion to help offset budget cuts from the state.

The school district has lost about half a million dollars through declining enrollment and state budget cuts, Hardy said. The school district operates on a \$3.4 million budget.

"We're extremely appreciative," said Hardy, who added the district is especially thankful of

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Laurie Sisk/Telegram



Laurie Sisk/Telegram



Laurie Sisk/Telegram

### A great day to play

TOP: Ethan Unger, 3, tests his skill on tic-tac-toe as a large contingency of people flock to A. Harold Long Park on a sunny, Monday afternoon. LEFT: Maria Becerril helps her daughter, Jazmine Becerril, 3, onto the monkey bars at the park. ABOVE: Children play in the background as new playground equipment is being installed at A. Harold Long Park on Monday afternoon.

## Obama signs off on health care overhaul

WASHINGTON (AP) — A beaming President Barack Obama this morning signed a historic \$938 billion health care overhaul that guarantees coverage for 32 million uninsured Americans and will touch nearly every citizen's life, presiding over the biggest shift in U.S. domestic policy since the 1960s and capping a divisive, yearlong debate that could define the November elections.

Celebrating "a new season in America" — the signature accomplishment of his White House so far and one denied to a line of presidents before him — Obama made the massive bill law with an East Room signing ceremony. He was joined by jubilant House and Senate Democrats as well as lesser-known people whose health care struggles have touched the president. Obama scheduled back-to-back events to mark the moment, with much of his White House audience, as

well as hundreds of others, heading to the Interior Department immediately after the signing.

"With all the punditry, all the lobbying, all the game-playing that passes for governing here in Washington, it's been easy at times to doubt our ability to do such a big thing, such a complicated thing, to wonder if there are limits to what we as a people can still achieve," Obama said, his remarks interrupted by applause after nearly every sentence. "We are not a nation that scales back its aspirations. We are not a nation that falls prey to doubt or mistrust. We don't fall prey to fear. We are not a nation that does what's easy. That's not who we are. That's not how we got here."

Across the capital, Republicans remained firm in their universal opposition to the giant remake of

See Historic, Page A5

## Health 'freedom' measure falls short in state House

TOPEKA (AP) — A proposed "Health Care Freedom Amendment" to the Kansas Constitution has failed in the Kansas House.

The House's 75-47 vote today came the same day President Barack Obama signed sweeping federal health care legislation into law.

Most House members wanted to send a message that they disapprove of the new federal law. But opponents fell nine votes short of the two-thirds majority necessary to adopt a proposed change in the state constitution.

The measure was designed to allow Kansas

residents to avoid new federal health insurance requirements. It would have amended the state constitution to prohibit Kansas from requiring any individual or business to buy health insurance or from imposing fines on those who didn't.

The measure received first-round approval Monday on a 76-44 vote.

The House's 2 1/2-hour debate Monday on the proposal at least gave Republicans a chance to air their complaints about the federal health care overhaul as tea party movement members watched.

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Inspiring Minds

"A man who fears suffering is already suffering from what he fears."

— Michel de Montaigne, French essayist (1533-1592).

Wednesday's weather



Tonight, rain, low 38.  
Wednesday, rain changing to snow, high 40, low 30. Details on page A8.

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