

Funny prayers amuse senate

United Press International
TOPEKA, Kan. — Rev. Fred Hollomon doesn't mind his flock tittering or rolling their eyes during worship. To him that means they are paying attention.

The chaplain of the Kansas Senate has endeared himself to his congregation of 40 solons with provocative daily prayers distinguished by liberal doses of humor and catchy snatches of rhyme.

Now in his fifth session in the Kansas statehouse—and his second as Senate chaplain—Hollomon says he will use "anything short of blasphemy" to keep the lawmakers' attention when he steps up to the microphone.

"I had observed while working elsewhere in the Capitol that the chaplain's time was just a routine that everyone endured. It wasn't the preacher's fault, particularly, but no one listened."

Initially, Hollomon did not fare any better. "I got only two comments after I prayed my first prayer as chaplain—both of them negative. They said I was too long. I didn't particularly appreciate it at the time, but I learned something—I began to think of things that they could identify with as legislators."

Typical of Hollomon's devotions is a lament about the public's low opinion of lawmakers: "I get a little weary, Lord. In fact, my goose it cooks. To constantly be hearing. Politicians are all crooks."

Group asks for ban on sludge

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Home lawn and garden fertilizer and landfill made from municipal sewage sludge may present a health hazard and should be banned, an environmental group has told the government.

The problem, says the Chicago-based "Citizens for a Better Environment," involves high levels of two metals, cadmium and lead, in the widely available fertilizer products. They enter the waste stream from industry and are combined with municipal waste in publicly owned sewage treatment plants.

Because such metals can build up in the body, the environmentalists want to prevent additional exposure to them from vegetables and other food grown in sludge-fertilized garden soil.

They have asked the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ban such fertilizers as "hazardous products" under the terms of one law the agency enforces. The group says cadmium can cause kidney problems and lead can bring on anemia and brain damage, especially in children.

Bill Forcade, a lawyer for the organization, said one widely sold sludge product, Milorganite, now carries a

label warning against its use on soil for food crops. He contends the warning is inadequate.

Mike McCabe, speaking for the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, which distributes the product nationally, said the "minute amount of cadmium in Milorganite" simply does not constitute a health hazard if used in accordance with the instructions.

Even if the instructions are disregarded, McCabe said, it would take a vegetarian 50 years of eating only food grown on Milorganite-enriched soil before any theoretical harm could result.

He added that the amount of lead and cadmium in the product is considerably less than that of sludge sometimes sold for landfill use.

Forcade insists the only safe way of dealing with the problem of consumer misuse is a ban of commercial and landfill products.

A 1977 General Accounting Office study found sludge products for sale nationwide that contained three to seven times more lead or cadmium than the Food and Drug Administration and the Agriculture Department recommend. At that time the GAO recommended action by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mild winter 'snowed' nation

United Press International
Winter thunder has announced the demise of winter in the snow-swept South. The calendar has done the job in the North, writing the season's passing with bold, red ink in the ledgers of ski resorts and winter-related industries.

Helen Lane, who predicts the weather by observing nature around her home in Tennessee's Cumberland Mountains, predicted last fall the area would have six big snows. The area has had three, so far.

Lane says she heard thunder on Feb. 23. That, she says, means the

last frost in the Cumberland will be March 23—three days after the official debut of spring, which the National Weather Service set for 6:10 a.m. EST today.

"It's hard to predict weather around here and I'm not saying we are going to have three more snows. But I wouldn't be surprised if we did," she said.

Snowy, cold weather sent shivers through the Southeast. Even Florida had record cold and Georgia and the Carolinas got sleet and heavy snow. But late crop estimates indicated damage to citrus and peach crops and

to winter vegetables less severe than first was feared.

It was one of those backward winters when long underwear sold like hotcakes in the South and grass grew over the ski slopes.

Helen Wohlschlaeger, a Fenton, Mo., dog groomer, had predicted a "bikini" winter on the basis of the light-colored coats of the woolly bear caterpillars. For her children, it was too mild.

"I was getting complaints from my boys. They're allotted 16 days off school for snow days and they only got one," she said.

The dearth of snow in the Midwest allowed most cities to save money on snow removal—or at least keep pace with inflation. Minneapolis reported a saving of more than \$1 million.

But the snow drought was disaster for the winter resorts of New England, which got no appreciable snowfall until this month. The Small Business Administration has made emergency loans available to keep ski-related businesses from folding.

The snow-stingy winter of 1980 could mean changes for some businesses in the Northeast. "We have sold snowmobiles in the

past but this probably won't be our last year," said Bill manager of Advanced Ski Center Inc., in East Haven, Conn.

"There just wasn't any snow," he said. "Anything we had early. Once the season was over, there was nothing because there was no snow."

Snow smothered Virginia's mild Tidewater region, including Virginia Beach. Norfolk got a record 41 inches of snow—six times its winter

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