

Big Brothers, Sisters offer mentoring

ERIN MANNING,
executive director
Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Norton County

January is known for many things—cold weather, New Year resolutions, and the month you step on the scale and regret eating all of those holiday goodies.

At Big Brothers Big Sisters, January is National Mentoring Month.

You've probably heard of Big Brothers and Big Sisters and maybe you're familiar with the lingo. Big brother/sister, little brother/sister, and match are a few of the most important words we toss around.

But, mentoring is exactly what the program is all about. Mentoring produces important results.

Children matched with a mentor are less likely to use drugs and alcohol, have violent confrontations and skip school. They are more likely to have a positive attitude, better grades and school attendance and positive relationships with adults.

Who would think that connecting two strangers of different age groups could provide such significant results? Just having an adult friend, who cares about you and is interested in what you do makes all the difference in the world.

Someone just asked me last week, "Are there really that many kids in Norton County that need a program like Big Brothers Big Sisters?"

My answer was yes, it is estimated that 200 children here qualify for the program.

Citizen brings in theft suspect

By BRANDON GAY

A man suspected of taking what didn't belong to him was brought into the Norton County Sheriff's Office Saturday morning by Lucas Maddy, 20, according to Norton County Sheriff Troy Thomson.

Mr. Maddy suspected Christopher Zvolanek of theft when he noticed him driving away with what appeared to be property belonging to the Maddy family ranch.

Mr. Maddy stopped Mr. Zvolanek, detained him and brought him into the sheriff's Office at about 2:18 a.m. on Saturday.

According to Sheriff Thomson, Mr. Maddy was carrying a gun, but did not necessarily bring the suspect in at gun point.

The suspect had a probable cause hearing and is being held in the Norton County jail.

Authorities have until Friday to file formal charges in district court.

In the meanwhile, Sheriff Thomson told Norton County Commissioners on Monday he was proud of Mr. Maddy, but unfortunately can't hire him because he isn't old enough.

The program is mostly focused on helping children from single parent families, but any child can take part with a referral from a teacher, counselor or other social service agency.

A common myth is that we only help troubled children and adolescents. Many children enrolled in our program are honor roll students, star soccer players and talented artists.

Becoming a Big Brother or Sister, doesn't mean you have to pull rabbits out of a hat or put on a three-ring circus every time you see your little friend. It's not about trying to entertain the child; it's about spending time together.

What you do when you're together isn't as important as the friendship and bond you develop from spending time with each other. Nine times out of ten, when I ask a child what is the favorite thing, they will tell me just spending time together or "hanging out" in their terms.

Finding time to spend with a little brother or sister is as simple as fitting them into something you are already planning to do — building a bench in the wood shop, cooking supper, watching your favorite basketball team or reading a book.

There is also a misconception that if you decide to volunteer, we pick a child for you.

Volunteers select the child they feel they would do best with based on age, interests and activities.

As it is tradition to set goals and resolutions for the New Year, we have done the same.

During 2004, our goal is to match 50 children. This means we need to find 30 new volunteers.

Do you think you could be the next person who makes a difference in the life of a child?

For more information, call 874-4200.

Articles related to mentoring will appear throughout January in honor of National Mentoring Month.

Paperwork threatens proposed landfill

(Continued from Page 1) representative of BG Consultants to come to a commission meeting to work out the problems the state has with the proposed landfill.

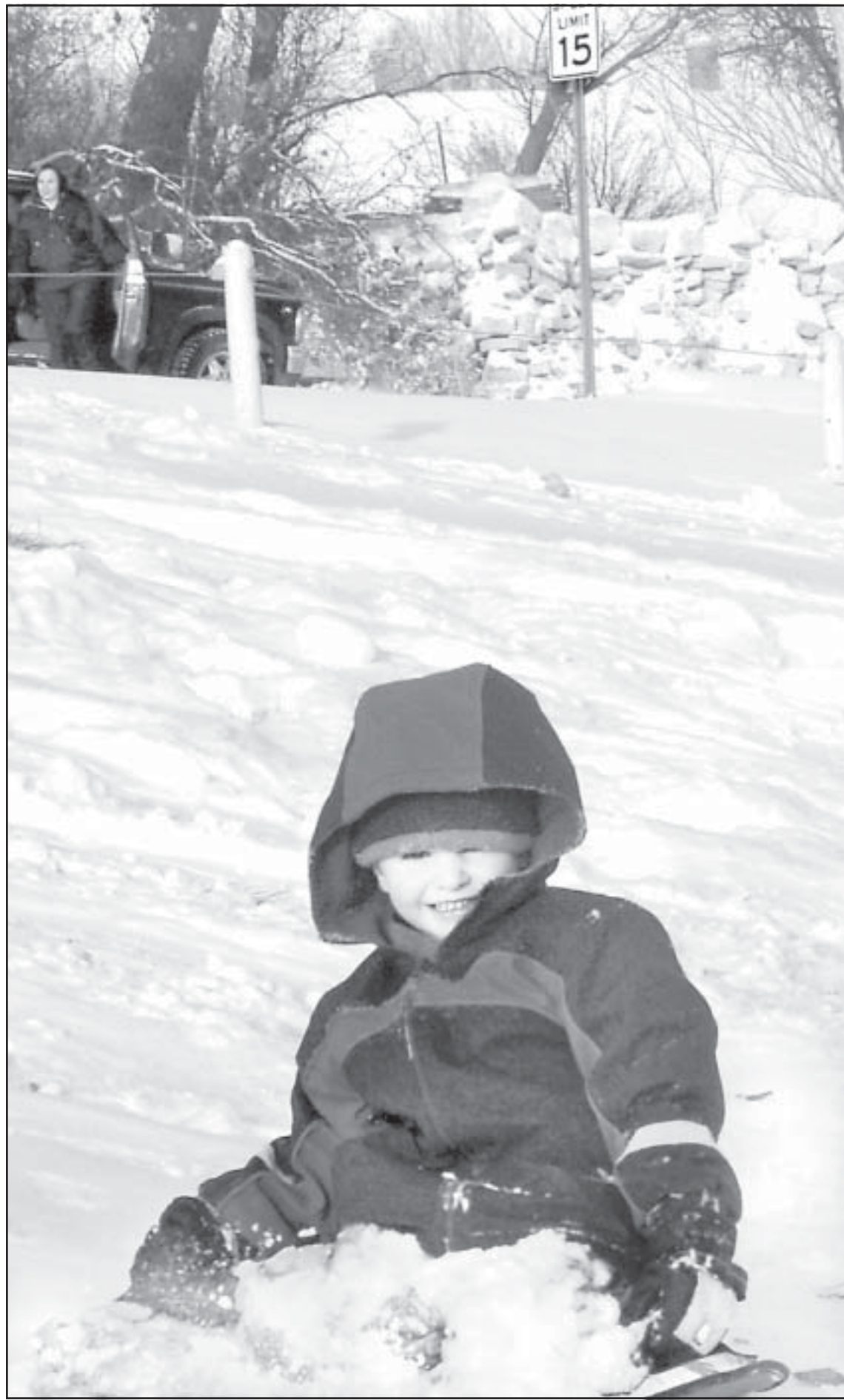
"We're running out of options," Mr. Miller said.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Accepted an amended, published budget to allow for transfer carry-over cash in several areas and due to extra, unforeseen expenses at the airport.

- Received information from County Treasurer Cynthia Linner that the county would be getting \$14,801 in sales taxes from the state before the end of the year. This is a once-a-month distribution, she said.

- Held a 15-minute closed session with Mr. Sebelius and Merrill Tibbets to discuss a possible law-



The hill at Elmwood Park, a popular winter attraction, was filled with sledders in the afternoon living-up the final hours of their break from school. Austin Danner's ride down the hill may have exceeded the speed limit. — Telegram photo by Brandon Gay

Snow blankets area crops

(Continued from Page 1) cally doesn't get a lot of moisture during the winter months. In 2003, the area had about 25 percent less than the 30 year average, but in 2002, it had 75 percent less than the 30 year average.

He said because of the lack of rain in the fall, the crops really need timely spring rain to survive. Because of that lack of fall moisture, he said not to be too optimistic about the wheat.

"We are in a moisture deficit," Mr. VanSike said. "The winter wheat and the pastures didn't get the moisture they needed in the fall and we really need some good spring rains."

"When it comes down to it, it's not how much moisture we get, but when we get it."

Emergency class planned

(Continued from Page 1) vices Acting Director Andy Nielsen said. An information meeting is set for 7 p.m. next Monday in Phillipsburg.

The cost of the class is \$450, which the county will pay if the participant agrees to give at least a year to the ambulance service. The testing fee is \$110, which the county will also pay. The test will be given on June 26.

The books for the class cost \$75, which needs to be paid by the participant.

Anyone interested in taking the class or in learning cardio-pulmonary resuscitation should call (785) 877-5784. Someone is usually in the office from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday unless there is an ambulance run.

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Norton County Forecast for January 6th - 12th

Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
25/10	40/15	48/19	53/23	45/20	30/12	35/16
Normal High	40	Sunrise 8:00 to 8:01am				
Normal Low	15	Sunset 5:30 to 5:36pm				

The New Year started off in the 60's, then after a light snow over the weekend, this week started off in the deep freeze. Lows the last two nights have dropped below zero and afternoon highs have remained below freezing. The rest of the week 40 and 50-degree weather will return. The next chance for precipitation will be Sunday when another system moves over the Rockies possibly spreading light snow over the High Plains.

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