

## Brotherly competition



An open house was held Friday night at the Goodland Activities Center for the community to see the center's recent renovations. Kyle and Kevin Schulte played foosball Friday night, while others visited and looked around.

Photo by Janet Craft/The Goodland Daily News

## Johnson County rejects Oz theme park plan

OLATHE (AP) — A proposed \$860.5 million theme park and resort development based on the famed story of Oz was dealt a severe setback Monday as Johnson County commissioners were split on whether the plan should proceed.

With one member abstaining, the board's 2-2 vote effectively tabled the Wonderful World of Oz project indefinitely, with no assurances that commissioners would revisit the proposal later. The board must approve the deal for development to begin.

The board's chief counsel, Don Jarrett, said the commissioners' failure to decide means they could look at the issue again. He said state or federal agencies also involved in the project could request that the board reevaluate the proposal.

Robert Kory, chairman of the Oz Entertainment Co., said he would continue his effort to develop the former

9,065-acre Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant near DeSoto into a small community complete with the Disney-style theme park and resort complex.

Kory said Oz officials would decide in the next few days what their next steps would be.

Opponents of the plan said they would continue to fight the proposal.

Commissioner Johanna Lingle, who lost her seat in the August primary, and chairwoman Annabeth Surbaugh voted against it. Commissioners Doug Wood and George Gross voted for the project.

Commissioner Gary Anderson of Prairie Village did not vote on the land issue because of a conflict of interest.

Before about 150 people at the Johnson County Administration Building in Olathe, the commissioners voted twice on whether to approve the project and once on whether to deny it. All three votes were 2-2.

Surbaugh said she voted against the deal because she worried what would happen if the company failed after development has begun.

Gross and Wood, supporting the deal, cited the promised benefits: clean land, possibly millions in tax revenue and having the land developed in one chunk.

"I believe this project will help make Johnson County and the entire metropolitan area a destination area," Gross said.

The proposal calls for the federal government to transfer the land to the state through the Kansas Development Finance Authority, which could issue bonds for development, and would transfer the plant to Oz.

Oz would pay \$45 million to clean the land, which the Army used to make smokeless powder and rocket propellant. Oz also would take out \$300 million in insurance policies for unexpected costs.

## the goodland gazette

How this time flies. It seems like only a day ago and now it's time to put together another column.

I've not a lot of news this week. It seems to have been relatively quiet.

My sister, Martha, seems to be doing as well as can be expected. She still is having a lot of pain, but considering all they did, that's not surprising. Her one leg is going to be shorter than the other.

Depending upon what the final shortage is, they can correct it with a shoe insert or she'll have to have a shoe built up.

Time will tell. Just so she can walk again without much discomfort and get the length discrepancy corrected, so as not to damage her hips. Like I said last week, it's always something.

I'm not sure when I'll get back, as something has come up for the next two weekends. Maybe the weekend of Thanksgiving will work out.

I was very sorry to hear of Mrs. Gearhart's death. I had just visited with her a couple of weeks ago at the new assisted living center.

She had just been there a few days when I visited with her. I went there on an errand for one of the other residents.

She was a grand lady and I'll miss her ready smile. Sincere sympathy to her daughter, Barbara Mosbarger, and her extended family.

I got some of my leaves raked up, some in the dumpster and the others to fill a couple of Halloween pumpkin bags.

Jonathan McClung helped me with one of the bags after school. I think I'll wait till they are all down before I rake again.

I got the sprinkler system drained the



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weekend before we got all that rain and this colder weather.

My sweatshirts have sure felt good this week. I suppose that will be my usual wear now that the weather is getting colder. I'm always cold at the office. If we kept the front as warm as I like, I'd overheat them in the back. Occasionally, Dr. Beynon will comment on how cool it feels in the office and I'll hike the thermostat up a few degrees. That extra warmth makes me feel just great.

When I got home Thursday evening, there were three of the cutest kittens on my front porch. Where they came from I haven't a clue. I was able to pet one, but the other two took off into outer space. When I got back from running an errand, the one I had petted was on the sidewalk and again came up to me for a head rub.

Now I know that's not the right thing to do, but who cannot rub the soft fur of a tiny kitten. The doorbell rang a couple of hours later and one of the Armstrong girls was selling candy. After she left, I looked around and I think the kittens are at home in one of the bushes in front of my house. I went and got a flashlight and sure enough they were snuggled together in the leaves and under the bush.

I'm not a true cat lover, but I hope they go back to their home base. I really don't want any cats around on a

permanent basis. I'll probably lose the battle, but will hope the weather stays as pleasant for now, thus giving them time to grow a bit more and be capable of fending for themselves with winter coming on.

Those who are undergoing treatments and therapy, all seem to be doing better. Let's hope they continue to do so.

Guess there were parent/teacher conferences Thursday evening and Friday morning. There will be no mentoring on Monday as there is teacher in-service on the school calendar. As the girls next door said, the kids will have a four-day weekend, from Friday until Tuesday morning.

I only have one birthday to announce. James "Smitty" Smith has his on Nov. 5. There are no anniversaries that I know of. Special greetings to all who are having a birthday or anniversary this week.

Just a reminder to you readers to take in as many of the upcoming fund raisers put on by our local churches. For some that is the major fund-raiser for using of funds for things in the community. So get out and show your support for our community. A thank you to all in advance.

On this note, I'll sign off as I see no news notes on my desk. I hope you all get out and exercise your right to vote on Nov. 7. Even if there wasn't anything that really interested everyone, at least we can complain in the future if we did vote. With no further news to ramble on about, take care 'till next time.

## Small city claims to be 'living ghost town'

ELK FALLS (AP) — In a lot of tiny towns that used to be larger until the railroad bypassed them or the big business left, residents hate having their community described as a ghost town.

People in this small Elk County town, population 122, don't mind that description and even use it as a tourism slogan. It's just that — it may seem a stretch to outsiders — they don't want "ghost" equated with "dead."

"Remember, this is a living ghost town," said Edie Baker, owner of the Quilts and More store. "Much of what used to be here is gone, but we aren't dead yet."

Elk Falls, along U.S. Highway 160, about 75 miles south of Emporia, is the

self-proclaimed "world's largest living ghost town."

Seven years ago, former Elk Falls booster Barry McGuire dreamed up the slogan as a way of attracting visitors to what were then the town's only two businesses, the Elk Falls Pottery Works and McGuire's own downtown Village Variety Theater, where the veteran television and Broadway actor presented puppet and magic shows.

McGuire moved back to Hollywood two years ago at the age of 70 to resume his acting career, but the catchy slogan stayed behind.

"He didn't want to give a lot of false impressions of all the great and wonderful things we had here," said Steve

Fry, who owns the pottery store. "He took the opposite approach by downplaying what we didn't have with the ghost town image, so that people were pleasantly surprised at what we didn't have."

After McGuire came up with the slogan, the town experienced a spurt of growth. A local cafe reopened, and low real estate prices attracted craft shops run by artists.

Fry said residents had visions of a craft village, but those didn't materialize, especially not in the wake of McGuire's departure.

Nevertheless, the town plans its 21st annual Elk Falls Open House for Nov. 17-18.

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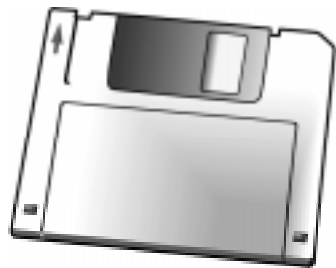
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