

Senate committee resumes work



Family members, kids and thousands of citizens signed a banner Saturday while waiting for the return of 24 crew members who had been detained in China for 11 days.

Photo by Debra Malmos / The Goodland Daily News

Crew in high spirits after arriving home

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would make up skits based on popular television shows to perform for each other before dinner.

"They're really neat kids," Jeff's father said, noting that he spent time with the crew at a homecoming party Saturday night. "They're really a kick to be around. They were all teas-

Roller coaster gets facelift

WICHITA (AP) — The 52-year-old Queen of the Prairie is getting a facelift.

Joyland's legendary wooden roller coaster is taking on new luster as it receives a fresh coat of paint this spring.

"When you see it from the bypass, it just glows," said Dave Rohr, owner of the management company that now runs the amusement park.

The coaster already glows in the hearts and memories of generations of Wichitans, for whom a ride was as much a rite of passage as it was a thrill.

Built in 1949, the 80-foot-tall coaster has become an icon that has earned a national following.

American Coaster Enthusiasts has designated the Joyland coaster an "ACE Coaster Classic," and its members gave the ride its informal royal nickname.

Rohr understands the attachment folks have to the coaster. That, he said, is why the management company has invested as much as \$50,000 in paint, new wood and labor to refurbish the ride, which he called "the crown jewel" of Joyland.

"I think it's going to let the community know that we're here to stay," Rohr said.

TOPEKA (AP) — Spring break was short for the Senate Education Committee, whose members returned today to the Statehouse with the unfinished business of drafting a school finance package.

They were greeted with dismal state revenue estimates, a history of four years of tax cuts and a three-ring binder full of comments from 180 of the 304 school districts.

The schools' message to legislators was clear: Send more help.

What isn't clear, legislators said, is what the state has to give. Instead of a big increase, they are laboring to save a modest \$50-per-student increase approved earlier.

"It is still our duty this session to do something that is responsible — something that is responsible to the schools and administrators and responsible to the taxpayers," said Chairman Dwayne Umbarger, R-Thayer.

With 85 days of the 90-day session completed, the committee expects to

spend today and Tuesday searching for the right combination of programs and revenue sources to augment the state's \$2.26 billion commitment to elementary, junior high and high schools.

The task comes in the wake of a \$205 million shortfall in the state budget for the current year and the 2002 fiscal year beginning July 1.

Before they recessed April 6, legislators approved a \$9.11 billion budget, which they knew would have to be trimmed — or new revenue sources found — to make the books balance.

Senate committee members were looking for a way to hold onto the \$68 million increase Gov. Bill Graves recommended in January and the Legislature approved. Committee members also would like to find a few dollars more.

Sen. Ruth Teichman, R-Stafford, said her school board is looking at ending a successful technology program

and not buying new buses to have money available to meet the next year's demands.

"It disturbs me that we're looking at cutting programs," Teichman said.

One proposal floated today was to reduce the ending balance in the general fund, now required to be at least 7.5 percent of total expenditures at the end of the fiscal year, to 3 percent. The change would generate \$210 million.

However, the balance is the state's rainy day fund. The general fund is the largest source of money for state programs and where the state deposits most of its tax money.

Graves' original recommendation would raise the base state aid per pupil by \$50, from \$3,820 to \$3,870.

Committee members expected to pare back their plan to raise an extra \$263 million over two years. Among other things, the money would have increased base state aid to the 304 school districts and rewarded teacher

and school achievement. It would have been financed through increase in sales, liquor, tobacco and a new soda pop tax.

The Senate sent that plan back to the committee for revisions.

The governor has proposed a one-year, \$112 million deal to raise base state aid, increase special education funding and reward teachers and schools.

The House rejected both Graves' last proposal and the Senate Education Committee's plan — in less than an hour.

House members have approved a bill authorizing an increase in the local option budget component of the school finance formula.

Currently, districts are allowed to raise their budgets by an additional 25 percent through local property taxes, subject to a protest petition. The House bill raises the limit to 30 percent, but makes the increase subject to a public vote.

matters of record

Goodland Accidents

April 2 — At 12:47 p.m., Anna M. Whiteman reported that an unknown vehicle hit her '91 Chevrolet while it was parked in the Wal-Mart parking lot.

April 3 — At 11:09 a.m., Jason R. Gotchall reported that an unknown vehicle hit his '99 Chevrolet while it was parked in the parking lot at 1209 Harrison.

At 12:01 p.m., Brian L. Bauman, driving an '84 Chevrolet pickup, was stopped on 13th when Christina Beeson, driving a '95 Chevrolet, proceeded around him. Bauman backed up at the same time and hit Beeson's vehicle near 13th and Walnut.

April 5 — At 8 p.m., David W. Riley reported that an unknown vehicle hit his '85 Ford while it was parked at 25th and Market.

April 6 — At 6 p.m., Kevin J.

Smith, driving a '90 Peterbilt semi-truck, was backing up at 1202 W. Highway 24 and hit a parked '89 tanker-trailer, owned by Ronald R. Callahan.

April 7 — At 12:15 p.m., Richard L. Grace, driving a '99 Nissan, stopped in traffic at the intersection of K-27 and Highway 24 and Lindsey K. Herl, driving a '97 GMC pickup, didn't see Grace stop and hit his vehicle in the rear.

At 1:40 p.m., Steven A. Sandoval, driving a '98 Chevrolet pickup, was turning onto Caldwell from 12th. After he made the turn, the front left wheel of his pickup fell off.

April 9 — At 7:24 a.m., Blayne W. Bahe, driving an '85 Ford pickup, was backing out of a parking stall at 520 W. 12th, but turned too sharply and hit a parked '95 Buick, owned by Larry and Linda Enfield.

Goodland Police Report

April 2 — At 8:20 a.m., Harold L. VanVleet reported that two tires on his vehicle were damaged at 1527 Syracuse between 7 p.m. on April 1 and 5 p.m. on April 2, \$160.

At 9:26 a.m., David Walker reported that two tires were taken off of his trailer at 1320 Colorado between 8 a.m. on March 30 and 8 a.m. on April 2, \$200.

At 4:31 p.m., the Goodland School District reported that a fire extinguisher was used inside a school bus and then taken from the bus while it was parked at 600 W. 11th. The incident occurred between 6 p.m. on March 30 and 8 a.m. on April 2. The extinguisher was recovered later.

April 5 — At 1:26 a.m., Joseph W.

Buster, 20, was arrested for driving under the influence and minor in consumption at 11th and Broadway.

April 6 — At 11:04 a.m., the Buffalo Inn, 830 W. Highway 24, reported that someone skipped out without paying for a meal between 8 p.m. on April 5 and 11 a.m. on April 6, \$22.

Sunday — At 3:32 a.m., Mary McCullough-Daley, 45, Carbondale, Colo., and Patricia A. Martinez, 42, Goodland, were charged with battery and disorderly conduct at 716 Main. The incident occurred between 2:50 and 3:32 a.m. on Sunday.

At 2:52 p.m., Melissa A. Fulton reported that a hammock was taken from 223 W. 12th between 10 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. on Sunday, \$40.

Employee completes school

Daniel L. Hayden, who works for Bankwest in Goodland, recently completed the School of Banking Fundamentals held March 12-16 in Kearney, Neb.

The school, sponsored by the Kansas and Nebraska Bankers associations and endorsed by the Colorado Bankers Association, is designed to instruct students in core banking concepts as they relate to the overall operation of a bank.

Completion helps students develop skills which allow them to serve their customers better, leaders say.

Hayden has worked for the Goodland bank for a year and a half.

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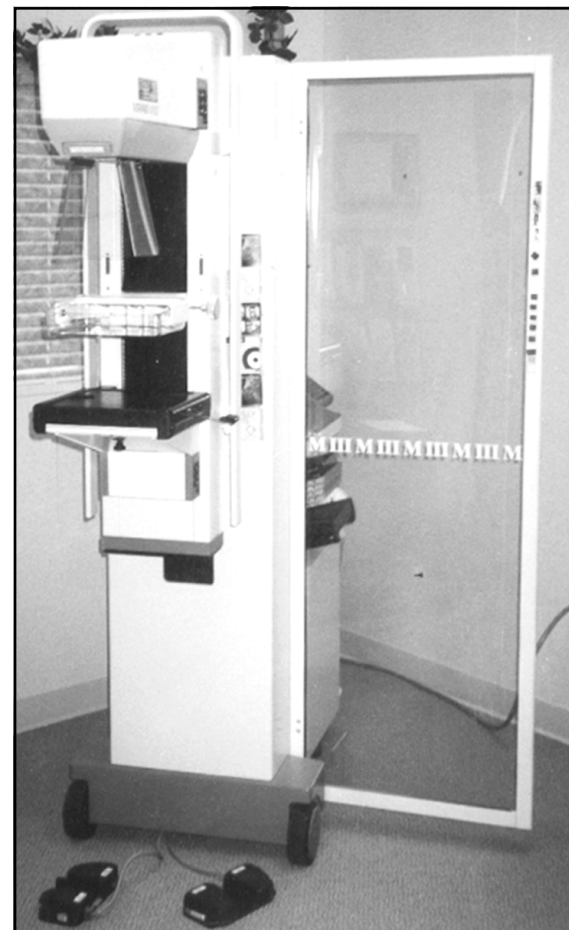


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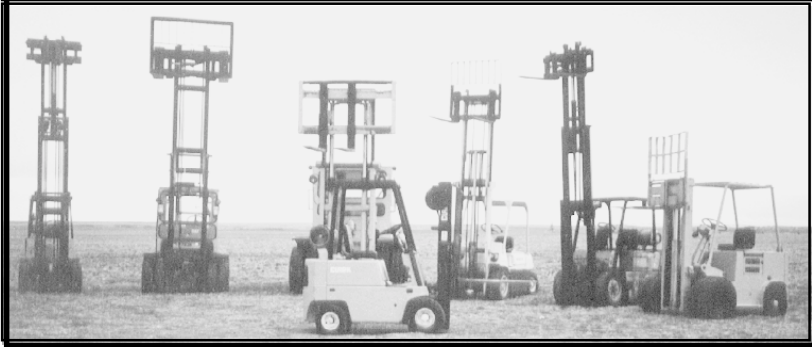
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