

The work never ends



Two workers for Brownridge Harvesting of Arcole, Saskatchewan, cleaned their wheat header at the Farmers Car Wash in Goodland.
Photo by Lester Bolen/The Goodland Daily News

Family farm continues on

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mation to the same system on their tractor and know where to spray. The yield monitor tracks the yields and moisture throughout the field. This lets them to know where their fields are most productive, said Hall.

Hall said their harvest has been pretty good this year despite some of their wheat being damaged by hail in May. Hall's son Matt has been driving the grain cart during harvest since he was 12 years old. "I haven't had to break Matt of bad habits he learned from someone else," said Hall, "He does it just the way we

would do it." Why has Gannon farmed all his life? "I'm just trying to make a living," he says. Gannon said he might retire when Hall and his sons Matt and Jarod take over the farm. Hall said his father-in-law jokes, "Nobody's made enough money yet to leave, so we're all still here."

Drug dealers help to catch others

WICHITA (AP) — Drug dealers are indirectly supporting the effort to catch other drug dealers, thanks to forfeiture laws. The Wichita Police Department's narcotics seizure fund has grown from about \$60,000 more than 10 years ago to about \$800,000 — even reaching \$1 million at times.

That money pays for efforts to catch other dealers and takes the costly burden of new equipment off taxpayers and puts it onto criminals, police said. "It's an excellent tool," said Deputy Police Chief Tom Stolz. "It's a big part of what we use to get better resources for our officers."

State laws were changed seven years ago to give authorities more freedom to pursue forfeitures, said Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Hudson, who handles most forfeiture cases for Sedgewick County.

The laws were designed to deter crime by depriving criminals of the profits of their illegal activities, but authorities have also found them to be an excellent source of funding.

The Sedgewick County district attorney has settled as many as 15 forfeiture cases this year and has three times that many pending, said spokeswoman Jeanette Clary. Some seizure cases are handled through the U.S. Attorney's office.

About 99 percent of the forfeiture cases involve money or cars, Hudson said.

Cars are commonly seized because proving their connection to a drug

transaction isn't difficult, said police Capt. Mike Bruce. A car can be seized if a police officer discovers a significant amount of drugs in it during a traffic stop.

If the car is in reasonably good shape, and the forfeiture is legal, the car often joins the department's undercover fleet, he said.

Once the cars wear out, or if they're in bad shape in the first place, they are auctioned off and the proceeds are put in the seizure fund.

Auctioning has become more common as drug dealers are apparently wising up to the risk of selling drugs out of nice or expensive cars, Bruce said.

"It seems like they've gotten smarter and don't want to risk getting a good

car seized," he said. "They're using older cars that have more problems."

Seized cash makes up most of the forfeiture asset fund, and police sometimes stumble onto big money.

Last year officers responded to a reported domestic dispute and found about \$250,000 in a container at the residence. A drug dog sniffed out the money because there were drug traces on it.

Drug forfeiture money may be used to buy safety equipment for officers, such as new bulletproof vests, high-risk-entry shields and other safety equipment.

Stolz said that while the money is valuable to the department, it wouldn't necessarily be bad news if the amount declines.

School board ready to get organized

The Goodland School Board plans to organize for the year on Monday, adopting a school calendar, setting lunch prices and approving textbooks. The district's new fiscal year started on Sunday and the board will devote its

first regular meeting of the month to organizing for the year. Members will elect board officers, make appointments to boards and committees and select an official newspaper, a board attorney and banks to hold district

money. Before working through a list of 26 items, the board will hear a report from Superintendent Marvin Selby. After, members may go behind closed doors to talk about personnel matters.

Lobbyists are spending less

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byists have been spending less this year, in large part because of a disclosure law enacted last year.

Philip Morris Management spent more than \$10,600 on communications in April. The company is best known for manufacturing cigarettes, such as the Marlboro brand, but it also has other interests, including beer brewing. Legislators considered increasing tobacco and alcohol excise taxes to help raise money for public schools and universities.

The Kansas Quarter Horse Racing Association spent more than \$6,800 on media advertising in April, promoting a proposal to allow electronic gambling machines at dog and horse racing tracks.

Lobbyists reported spending about \$408,000 during the first four months of the year, according to a report compiled by the state Governmental Ethics Commission. That's about 3.8 percent less than the \$424,000 spent during the same period in 2000.

Philip Morris' spending on communications put it among the top 10 spenders for the year and made the company the leader for April. Communications covers contacts, such as newsletters, by a group or company to members, employees or others, to get them to pressure legislators.

Philip Morris lobbyist John Bottenberg said the company keeps a list of retailers, smokers and others who have told it that they want to be kept informed about legislative issues. The company then contacts them when issues arise, he said.

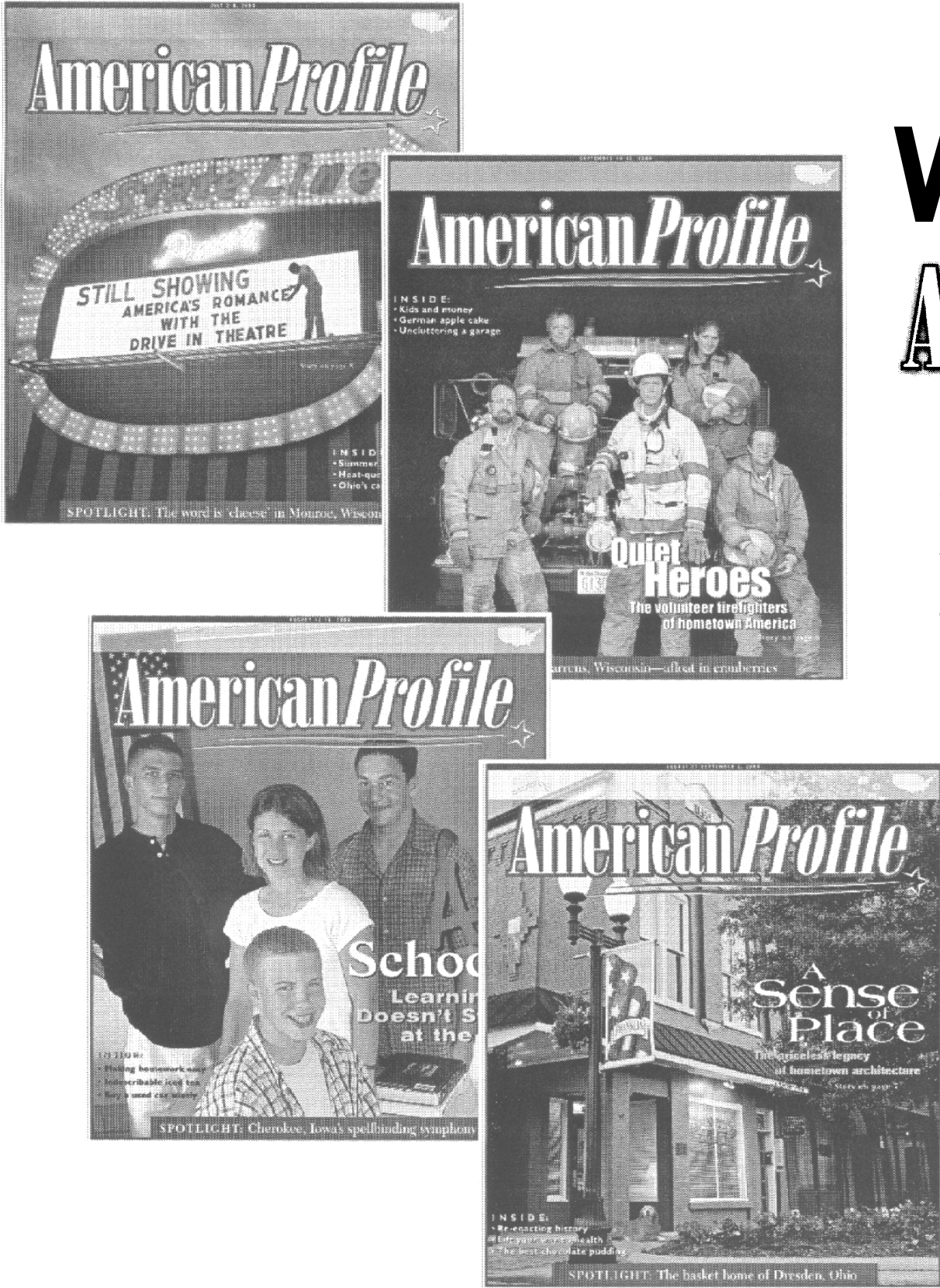
That's not an uncommon tactic. Another tobacco company, R.J. Reynolds, does the same thing and spent nearly \$4,900 in March on communications. Lobbyist Ron Hein said it also was lobbying against an increase in tobacco taxes.

The company's efforts pushed communications spending through April to nearly \$35,000. Lobbyists reported spending about \$37,000 in all of 2000. Legislators did not approve any tobacco or alcohol tax increases.

Lobbyists report spending on newspaper, radio or television advertising under mass media and, thanks in part to the horse group's campaign, this year's spending on mass media is about \$17,000, compared to only \$1,800 in all of 2000.

Jonathan Small, a lobbyist for the group, said it bought two ads in newspapers across the state in April to promote its views. However, legislators didn't approve any proposals to expand gambling.

Lobbyists reported spending nearly \$311,000 through April on food and beverages.



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