

Free books encourage reading for fun

BOOKS, from Page 1

What'd Ya Say? Read a Book Every Day." The students are concluding the week by wearing farmer duds like Grandfather wore in "Stone Fox."

Books were given to students in the library at Central school Thursday afternoon and Friday morning as part of the Reading is FUNdamental program.

Third graders picked up books on Thursday and fourth graders on Friday. The program includes students from first grade through seniors and each student picks out one free book from a selection each time the distribution is held. There are three distributions per year.

Through a national network of teachers, parents and community volunteers, the program provides free books to children, with two-thirds of those benefiting being students with economic or learning needs that put them at risk of failing to achieve basic educational goals.

The program was founded in 1966 and now serves more than 4 million children a year through programs in 17,000 schools, childcare centers, libraries, hospitals, clinics, migrant worker camps, Head Start and Even Start programs, homeless shelters and detention centers.

By the end of 2000, the program had placed 200 million books in the hands of children and had 240,000 volunteers operating the program.

The program is supported by the school district, the federal government and by corporations, Librarian Marcia Smith said, with the bulk of the money coming from charities such as the Metropolitan Life Foundation, supported by MetLife Insurance, that has supported the program for the last 16 years.



Chase Sawatzky, J.W. Edelman and Cappi Thomas (left to right) had a tough time to choose just one book Thursday when they each got a free book as part of the Reading is FUNdamental program.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Daily News

The development of National Children's Book Week began at the 1912 American Booksellers Association Convention, where E.W. Mumford, a representative of Penn Publishing Co., delivered an address on the harm of trashy books to children.

The address was summarized in *The New York Times*, where it caught the

attention of James West, director of the Boy Scouts of America. West asked the Scouts' librarian to consider having the Scouts get behind reading programs.

World War I delayed the development of Book Week, but it was finally established in 1919 by Frederic Melcher, the secretary of the American Booksellers Association.

"Book Week brings us together to talk about books and reading," Melcher said, "and out of our knowledge and love of books, to put the cause of children's reading squarely before the whole community and, community by community, across the whole nation. For a great nation is a reading nation."

Congress makes airport security a federal function

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate approved a far-reaching bill today aimed at permanently strengthening airport and airline security and giving a holiday lift to an aviation industry devastated by the Sept. 11 attacks.

A House vote later in the day sends the bill, the product of weeks of negotiations, to President Bush for his promised signature. If all goes as planned, Bush will sign the bill at the White House on Monday, his advisers said.

The legislation, said Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., would have a "major, major impact on the American people" who are reluctant to board an airliner because of fears that air travel is not safe.

"We are going to see immediate changes" in aviation security, said Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, R-Texas, a chief sponsor of the legislation that passed by a voice vote.

Bush lauded the compromise plan forged after weeks of difficult negotiations, saying that by putting the federal government in charge of aviation security Congress was "making airline travel safer for the American people."

In addition to putting airport screening under federal control with a federal work force, the legislation moves toward inspection of all checked bags, requires fortified cockpit doors, increases the use of air marshals on flights and law enforcement in all areas of airports, and increases coordina-

tion between the Transportation Department and law enforcement agencies to cross-check passengers.

A new agency is created in the Transportation Department to oversee all transportation security matters. A \$2.50 passenger fee per flight, with a maximum of \$5 per trip, is levied to pay for the added security.

Some of the provisions, such as required use of explosives detection machines, could take months or years to put in place, but lawmakers said the psychological effects of enacting the legislation could be instant.

"From a confidence-building point of view I think it will have a very important impact," said McCain, a key sponsor of the legislation along with Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., who chairs the Senate Commerce Committee. "That ends hijackings," Hollings said of the requirement that cockpit doors be fortified and locked during flights.

With the peak holiday travel season approaching, the airline industry desperately needs such assurances that it is safe to fly. Passenger loads have decreased significantly since the Sept. 11 suicide hijackings of four jetliners, pushing some airlines to the edge of bankruptcy. The crash of the American Airlines jetliner in New York City on Monday, while apparently not linked to terrorism, was another blow to the industry's image.

The Senate passed its bill by 100-0 on Oct. 11, but action in the House was delayed because some Republicans objected to provisions in the Senate bill that put all 28,000 airport screeners, now the employees of private security firms contracted by airlines, on the federal payroll. The House eventually passed legislation to put the federal government in control of screening operations but let the administration decide whether they should be private or public employees.

The compromise on the screening issue, crafted by Senate Republican leader Trent Lott of Mississippi, requires that within a year all airport screening be under the supervision of the government with federal-U.S. citizen workers and that this system will be in effect for three years.

However, during that period five airports of differing sizes will be allowed to participate in pilot programs to test various screening approaches. After three years airports that abide by strict federal standards will be able to opt out of the federal worker program.

David Beaton, chief executive of Argenbright Security, which handles 40 percent of domestic airport security, said "this is clearly not the outcome we had hoped for, because we believed the real solution to aviation security is a strong public-private partnership."

But he said Argenbright, which has been hit with more than \$1 million in fines for security lapses in recent years, would work with the Transportation Department during the transition period to ensure that security remained high.

Santa arrives Saturday afternoon

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sponsoring a reception with entertainment at the Schneider Building from 3-5 p.m. Saturday.

The Goodland high school cheerleaders and drill team will ride in red convertibles in the parade, Jo Simmons, office manager at the Chamber of Commerce, said, and the high school vocal department will be on a float.

Members of the high school and junior high band will be on a float, she said, and Santa and Mrs. Claus will make their entrance during the parade.

Santa will be at the Schneider Building at 4:30 giving candy canes to children and to visit with them, Simmons said, and parents are invited to take pictures. Santa will visit the stores on Main between 1 and 4 p.m. Sunday.

The theater will hold free matinees of "Spy Kids" at 1:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday and Santa will be at the theater before and after the movie Sunday.

The free matinees will continue on weekends through Sunday, Dec. 23, and Santa will be at the theater before and after the movies on Saturday as well as Sunday starting with Nov. 24.

The free movie will be "Air Bud 2: Golden Retriever," Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 24 and 25, "Paulie" on Dec. 1 and 2, "Galaxy Quest" Dec. 8 and 9, "Shrek" on Dec. 15 and 16 and "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" on Dec. 22 and 23.

Santa will be in the stores on Main from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and

1-4 p.m. on Sundays and evenings from 5-7 p.m. Monday through Friday, Dec. 17-21.

The Chamber of Commerce plans to have groups to play or sing holiday music outside during the afternoon shopping hours, Simmons said, at least when the weather is good.



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Water plan places success on irrigators' shoulders

WATER, from Page 1

them to," he said, "but they won't do much of what you tell them to."

Bossert said farmers and other water users will have plenty of chances to comment on the plan in the next year, but if it doesn't work, the state will start over.

"If we haven't seized the opportunity," he said, "we will be under the microscope again. We will lose the right to locally manage. We need to show we are working towards making improvements."

Bossert said the plan is similar to one the District No. 4 board proposed, but it is less specific. The board's idea was to focus on areas where water levels are declining the most and find ways to reduce the depletion by 25 percent.

The committee's plan proposes having each groundwater district break up the aquifer into subunits according to water levels, declines and other factors and prioritize each unit. Bossert said the districts will develop plans for the highest priority units, considering issues water users in the area are facing.

The committee spelled out incentives districts can offer farmers to help them conserve water, he said, but didn't set any rules or specify when or how much water level declines had to be reduced.

McCants said the plan is more flexible than other ideas the committee pushed aside. One of those was called "two-pools," because it would divide the aquifer into two sections — one for use and one for conservation.

Farmers would have to reduce the amount of water they pump as the use pool dried up and the other water would be reserved for cities and households. Bossert said farmers thought the plan was unfair and took away local control.

He said the new plan allows groundwater district boards to decide what's best for the area they cover.

"The Water Office isn't going to tell us how to do anything," he said.

Bossert said some critics believe irrigators don't have enough will power to conserve water, but he said he thinks they can make more informed decisions about water use in western Kansas than people living elsewhere in the state.

"It's akin to having the state of Missouri set property taxes in Kansas," he said. "They could make disastrous decisions."

Bossert said farmers will conserve because they don't have any other choice.

"They would be cutting their own throats," he said.

Thanks to new irrigation technology, McCants said, farmers have already done a great job using less water. He said in the past 10 years, irrigators have gone from pumping 1,200 gallons of water a minute to using 400 to 600 gallons per minute.

"I'd estimate we're probably using 40 percent less water than 10 to 15 years ago," he said. "I think we need to give irrigators a pat on the back."

McCants said it is more of a money issue than a water issue, and the solution must go beyond farmers using less water.

"We need to change the federal farm program so it is not based on bushels, but acres," he said.

Currently, the federal government pays farmers struggling because of low commodity prices a certain amount for each bushel of wheat, corn or other product. That just encourages them to use more water, he said.

Farmers will run out of money before they ever run out of water, McCants said.

"A wasteful irrigator is wasting money," he said, "and it will take care of itself one way or another."

Bossert warned the new plan leaves it up to groundwater districts and farmers to work out the problem.

"It gives us the opportunity to do anything," he said, "or virtually nothing. Shouldn't we have a Plan B?"



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