

# Team has fun raising money for high school choir

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and the concession stand, Berls said, the choir may have raised about \$2,400, which will cover the trip in March.

The school board, which is facing budget problems this year, recently decided not to pay for out-of-town trips, leaving the singers to raise the money. The board did agree to provide transportation.

Smith said the Goodland team would do all they could to make it an enjoyable evening. Other "All-Stars" said they'll probably be hearing about their performance for a few days.

Livengood, head coach of the Cowgirls basketball team, said her athletes will take advantage of the opportunity to turn the tables.

"Oh, are you kidding?" she asked, predicting that she'll hear about it at practice today. "Why did you miss that shot coach? Why weren't you rebounding? You need to get up and down the court coach."

She said the All-Stars didn't practice beforehand.

"With all of our talent," Livengood said, "we don't need to."

The All-Stars lost the game 60-42, but gave the Nights a challenge and were even up by 5 points in the third quarter. Coach Berls said the team got too comfortable.

"We thought we were able to win," he said, "but then we let our guard down. We put our bench players in and that didn't help."



Members of the X-Pressos, the high school show choir, performed at the Harlem Night's basketball game Sunday night. Part of the ticket sales will help send the choir to a competition in Branson, Mo.

Photo by Doug Stephens/The Goodland Daily News

Fred Adams, Nights manager, said the team always wins.

"There is no 'I' in losing," he said, "but there's always an 'I' in win."

He said the team, which is based in Colorado Springs, travels six months out of the year and holds a camp each year to prepare for the season. He said

the members are between 25 and 33-years-old and all played basketball in college.

But, he noted, ball-handling skills aren't as important as demeanor.

"Having a good attitude is the No. 1 requirement," he said. "This is not for everybody."

Adams said the team, which will perform in Colby tonight, gives away a portion of the ticket sales to a local organization at every stop.

Rollie Fincher, otherwise known as "Too Quick," said that's one reason why he has stayed with the team for five years.

"We get to travel, raise money for charities and entertain you," he said. "And hopefully get a hot dog after the game."

Carlo Williams, the tallest and most vocal member of the Nights, called "Mr. Clean," said he joined the team after college because he didn't want a 9-to-5 job.

"You get paid to act like a big kid," he said.

That's the team's specialty.

During the game, Mr. Clean let a referee shoot a free throw, threatening to pull down his pants if he didn't make it. He threw the refs out of the game and took the job, repeatedly giving the ball to the All-Stars and calling a technical foul on his team for "having no rhythm."

Adams said the game is scripted, but the routine can change night to night.

"It will open itself up as the game goes on," he said.

# Landfill problem precipitated by environmental laws

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tamination; and that there is no other practical alternative, such as an approved regional landfill within 150 miles."

Hardin felt the county could meet the airport requirement since there was no bird problem, and could meet the rainfall requirement.

However, the biggest problem was going to be the groundwater contamination because there was some showing in one well.

The county commissioners considered the alternatives: applying for the exemption; building a class D landfill; having a regional landfill; or hauling to an approved landfill outside the region and the cost to build a transfer station and trucks to haul the trash.

The commissioners appointed a solid waste committee, and there was a presentation from Browning Ferris Incorporated about hauling the trash to Denver.

The state notified the county that small landfills would have to close in Oct. 1993, but that was extended to Oct. 1995. In June 1993, the county raised the solid waste fee to \$100 in anticipation of the extra costs expected with the new changes.

In Sept. 1993, the City of Goodland

asked the county to sign an interlocal agreement to allow the city to pickup trash in the county. The county solid waste committee voiced concerns to the commissioners. The commissioners did not sign the agreement and asked County Attorney Scott Showalter to amend the agreement to remove the mandatory pickup in the county. The idea being that for anyone outside the city limits who wanted pickup, it would be on a voluntary basis.

A revised agreement was reviewed in October, but was not signed. At the same time, Hardin completed an application for an exemption to the state Department of Health and Environment. On Jan. 21, 1994, the commissioners agreed to close the landfill on April 9, and discussed building the transfer station.

In Feb. 1994, the state denied the exemption, but said it could be appealed. The county decided to appeal because it was felt the contamination at the landfill was coming from a source other than the landfill.

In April, the county approved a bid of \$23,500 for design of a transfer station. At the same time, Hardin was working with the state on the question of the water contamination. The solid waste fee was kept at \$100 a home.

In Feb. 1995, the commissioners accepted a bid from Rhoads Construction for \$228,000 to build a transfer station. The county considered delaying the building in June, but since the building had been ordered they proceeded with the construction.

The county was granted a small landfill exemption, and was allowed to continue to use the landfill as long as there was no further groundwater contamination. The noxious weed department used the transfer station building until 1997.

With the exemption the commissioners decided to lower the solid waste fee by 50 percent because they did not feel they would need the additional money. The solid waste fee was continued at the \$50 per home level in 1996, and set at that level in June 1997.

In August 1997, the county was notified they would have to install an approved groundwater monitoring system by Oct. 9. The existing wells were tested in September and when a second well showed contamination, the county was forced to close the landfill on Oct. 9.

The commissioners were faced with the closing of the landfill, additional costs of engineers, buying land for a new landfill site, new equipment for hauling trash and transportation ex-

penses and tipping fee charges to haul the trash to Thomas County and Finney County. The county was in a financial bind with the 1997 budget, and would not have enough funds to get through 1998. The county filed an application with the State Board of Tax Appeals applying for no fund warrants to cover the unanticipated costs.

The state approved \$310,000 in warrants to cover the cost of purchasing two Wilkens trailers and a compactor for the landfill in the amount of \$85,000. The remaining \$225,000 was to be used to cover the shortage in the Solid Waste Fund.

Sherman County also applied for \$580,000 in general obligation bonds to pay for the costs of the new landfill and courthouse improvements.

The landfill project was to have \$415,000 for buying land and the excavation and equipment for the new site. The no fund warrants and general obligations bonds were paid through a separate item in the budget and from property taxes. The money did not come from the solid waste fee. The no fund warrants will pay off in Nov. 2003, and the bonds pay off in 2008.

The county commissioners increased the solid waste fee to \$150 per home in 1998, and it remains at that level.

## Landfill costs outlined

Sherman County Public Works Director Curt Way gave the county commissioners at the work session Thursday a history of the costs for developing the new county landfill and the costs of transferring trash to Finney County and closing the old landfill.

Way said the county was transferring trash out of county for 49 months at an average cost of \$14,965 a month. Based on the average, he said the total cost of transportation and tipping fees was \$735,000.

The total cost of the new landfill has been \$919,355, but that is without the building. As to the cost of running the new landfill, Way said they do not have enough time to really know how it is doing. He said the figures they are us-

ing are based on the average brought to the landfill in the past year. He said the city brought 4,100 tons of trash to the transfer station, and an additional 1,060 tons of yard waste.

He estimated the new landfill cell will last about five years, but that will be much less if the amount of cardboard is not reduced, and if yard waste is added to the waste stream.

"We had to invest in equipment to handle the composting of the city yard waste," Way said, "and it has gotten better in the last year as we gave away 93 tons of compost. The people who have used the material have said it is much cleaner in the last year than before. At least we are not finding engine blocks."

## Citizens ask if county will sell new landfill to the city

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being told by the city to talk to you about the restrictions, and you are telling us to talk to them because they do the actual pickup. This is like being in a catch-22."

One citizen asked the commissioners if they had considered selling the landfill to the city? Rasure said the commissioners would look at all proposals, but had not specifically had one from the city.

Another citizen objected to the tipping fee because he would rather get it as a part of the property tax so it would be deductible.

Clerk Rumpel said the solid waste fee is not a tax, and should be deducted before income taxes are figured.

"It says that right on the tax form," she said.

As the commissioners attempted to determine what the restrictions needed to be, citizens asked about exceptions, and what amount of con-

tamination in a truck would cause it to be separated with a charge to the city.

The commissioners said they did not have a specific amount, but would leave that to the determination of the person operating the transfer station.

They said they want to start with a zero tolerance on construction and demolition material and yard waste specifically.

Several of the citizens said they had learned a lot from attending the work session, and hoped the county and city could work out an agreement.

Many of the citizens' concerns dealt with the yard waste issue, and they expressed hope the city was going to develop a program to handle this material.

The next county commissioner meeting will be 8 a.m., Thursday, in the commission room on the main floor of the Sherman County courthouse, 813 Broadway Avenue.

# Cheney defends refusal to release heads' names

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Dick Cheney says the Bush administration's refusal to identify business executives who met with him and his aides concerning energy policy probably will end up in court.

Amid the Enron Corp. scandal, Cheney on Sunday defended President Bush's right to withhold the information, prompting accusations by some Democrats of White House stonewalling.

The head of the General Accounting Office, Congress' investigative arm, said he will decide this week whether to sue to force the White House to turn over documents on the meetings last year with representatives of energy companies. They included the now-collapsed Enron, a Houston-based concern with deep ties to Bush.

On television interview shows, Cheney acknowledged the dispute "probably will get resolved in court." Last week, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer had left open the possibility of a compromise, but he said today Bush was determined to maintain the right of a president to seek advice without fear of the talks becoming public.

"I think it is to stop the decline of the power of the presidency that have taken place the last 35 years or so," Fleischer said. The stance cemented a standoff between Bush and the GAO.

Asked directly whether the administration is taking any steps to avert the lawsuit, Fleischer offered none. He seemed to firmly close the door on negotiations by repeating the White House stance on the issue and declaring: "Only GAO can decide if they're going to sue."

"The ball is in the White House's court," Comptroller General David Walker, who heads the GAO, said Sun-

day in a telephone interview.

The White House said recently that representatives of Enron, an energy trader that was ranked as the seventh-largest U.S. corporation, met six times on energy issues last year with Cheney or his aides.

"Who were these Enron officials? What did they discuss? And what role did they have in shaping national energy policy?," asked Scott Harshbarger, president of the private group Common Cause. "The public deserves answers to these questions. Keeping this information secret only fosters suspicion and cynicism."

In a letter, Harshbarger urged Walker to sue if necessary to persuade the administration to disclose the identities of all participants in the energy task force meetings. "Disclosure of this information has become even more crucial to the public interest in the light of the Enron scandal," he wrote.

Thousands of employees and big and small investors nationwide lost fortunes in Enron's plunging stock as the company spiraled into the biggest bankruptcy in U.S. history on Dec. 2.

The Justice Department is pursuing a criminal investigation of Enron and its longtime auditor, the accounting firm Arthur Andersen. The Securities and Exchange Commission has been investigating since Oct. 31. Eleven congressional panels also have opened inquiries.

Asked whether anything in the energy plan was included specifically for Enron or at its urging, Cheney replied: "I can't say. I'm sure they supported many parts of it. ... I can't say a particular proposal came from them."

Cheney also defended the conduct of Army Secretary Thomas White, a former vice chairman of Enron's energy services division, which report-

edly was one of the units used to conceal the company's huge losses. Enron overstated its total profits by more than \$580 million since 1997.

White has "always conducted himself in an ethically fine manner," Cheney said. "There's no evidence to indicate anybody did anything wrong in the administration."

The vice president's comments raised the prospect of a battle over presidential privilege reminiscent of the Clinton administration's bitter Whitewater disputes with Republican lawmakers.

Democratic leaders said the White House is making a serious mistake, and they predicted Enron would be a looming issue in this year's election campaigns.

"The American people have a right to know what the facts are," said Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D. "I think the administration needs to open up, to be willing to be forthcoming with all the information regarding these circumstances."

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