

# Coke has new manager

**By Doug Stephens**  
*The Goodland Daily News*  
 The new manager of the Coca Cola Bottling Co. in Goodland moved here with his family in 1970 so his dad could work at the sugar beet plant, and worked his way up through the franks at Coke.

in Goodland on Feb. 8. He was understandably excited. "I was real nervous," he said. "I mean, I was happy, because I felt I could do so much here, for the community and the area. But I was nervous."



Vasquez

Rather than move back to Texas after the season, he said, his dad decided to stay, and Richard Vasquez has lived here ever since. He graduated from Goodland High School in 1975, and graduated from the automotive technology program of the technical school, which became Northwest Kansas Technical College last year.

As the manager, he oversees service in an area from Cope, Colo., to Oberlin, from Arriba, Colo. to Grainfield, and down to Oakley and Tribune.

"It's quite a territory," he said. "I couldn't quite tell you how many miles it is, but it's big."

In the 16 years he has worked for the company, Vasquez said, he had only one boss, Byron Elliott, who recently transferred to Greeley, Colo. He said he doesn't plan on making any big changes to the way Elliott did things.

"Byron had a good working facility," he said. "I want to continue it. Being around him, I learned a lot of really neat things. I might make a few changes, but nothing drastic."

Over the years, though, there have been some changes. When he started, Vasquez said, Coke was phasing out its returnable bottles and shifting more on selling cans. Technology has made his job easier. He has gone from hand-

writing all invoices using a pen and a calculator to lap-top computers which do his figuring and writing for him. The biggest change, though, is something he said he never expected to happen.

"We're selling bottled water," he said with a laugh. "Non-carbonated beverages have turned into a much bigger commodity than I ever thought they would. It's turned out great."

His job includes watching over account managers, route drivers, service technicians, and the rest of the 11 to 12 employees at the warehouse.

One service technician, Chuck Engel, has worked at the company for about 12 years, Vasquez said, and there are other long-term employees. Route drivers can come and go pretty fast, he said, but the ones at the plant have all been around for a couple years.

"It takes about two years for them to get comfortable," he said. "After that, we know they are going to be here awhile. It makes it easier on everyone...."

Vasquez and his wife Janie have two children, daughter Sandy, 21, and a son, Keith, 18, a senior at Goodland High School. They have a 3-year-old granddaughter, Alexi.

"This has been a good job, and a good town," he said. "I look forward to being here for a long time."

## Wrestlers get honors from board

The Goodland School Board presented awards to two high school wrestlers and three veteran teachers at a meeting Monday.

Jordan Bedore, a 215-pound sophomore, was honored for taking first in his weight class in February at the state tournament in Wichita.

Bryce Bahe, a 130-pound senior, received an award for earning the title of "All-American" this month at the national wrestling tournament in

Cleveland.

Randy Bahe, head wrestling coach and Bryce's father, said their achievements are a result of extra effort during the season.

Harvey Swager, high school principal; Sarah Short, high school family and consumer science teacher; and Richard Schwasinger; high school business instructor; were honored for working in education for 25 years.

Board President Dick Short pre-

sented awards from the University of Kansas to Swager and Short, his wife, but Schwasinger was in Salt Lake City for the national distributive education contest.

Member Jane Philbrick presented 25-year awards to Swager and Sarah Short from Kansas Wesleyan University. Swager, Sarah and Dick Short and Philbrick all graduated from the Salina college.

## Five teachers taking early retirement

The Goodland School Board accepted resignations Monday from three teachers who will retire next year.

After a 30-minute closed session to discuss personnel matters, the board said good-bye to Birkley Barnes, elementary music teacher; Jan Berringer, a Central Elementary School teacher; and Joan Walker, a math teacher at Grant Junior High.

The teachers will finish the year and

will each receive a bonus of 10 percent of their total salary for retiring early.

The board decided to offer the bonus earlier this year to avoid having to lay off tenured teachers in the face of a major budget crunch due to lower state aid and declining enrollment.

Superintendent Marvin Selby suggested that the board throw a retirement party for all five teachers who are leaving this year.

Norma Staker, a "multi-age" teacher at North Elementary School, and Gail Walter, a reading teacher at North, turned in their resignations earlier this month.

In other business, the board approved paying \$71,800 in monthly bills. Selby said the district had to pay a company from Garden City to fix refrigerators at the high school and West Elementary.

## 'Slip, slidin' away'



Nolan Deeds, 3-years old and son of Jeff and Jill Deeds, got ready to go down a slide Monday at Western Child Care, which operates at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Photo by Doug Stephens/The Goodland Daily News

## District to fix fire hazards in buildings

Superintendent Marvin Selby told the Goodland School Board on Monday that a set of stairs and a row of seats will have to be removed from the high school auditorium this summer because they create a fire hazard.

At the meeting, Selby said an inspector with the state fire marshal's office checked Goodland's school buildings earlier this month, finding hazards in the high school and at Max Jones Fieldhouse.

The superintendent said the district will have to replace paneling in the teachers' lounge in the high school basement with sheet rock because it's less flammable. Last year, he said, the fire inspector required the district to

install 12 fire-resistant doors in the basement.

Selby said the inspector said there needs to be a wrench near the sprinkler system controls at the fieldhouse to properly reset the system.

Those mistakes will be easy to rectify, he said, but it will cost some money to remove the stairs and seats.

Selby said state law requires a 42-inch space between the stage and the seats so students have enough room to get out if there is a fire. He said the stairs are an obstacle and the seats on the north side of the auditorium are not 42 inches from the stage. Selby said the first row of seats on the right side are back farther because there is a piano on

that side.

The superintendent said none of the inspector's findings was serious.

"Other than that," he said, "we're in good shape."

During his report, the superintendent pointed to a display of books in the meeting room at the administration office and said it had been placed to commemorate National Library Month. He said schools are doing special events to celebrate.

Selby said that the schools get about \$12,000 worth of books through the national Reading Is Fundamental program each year. Those books, for which the district only has to pay a third of the cost, are given to students.

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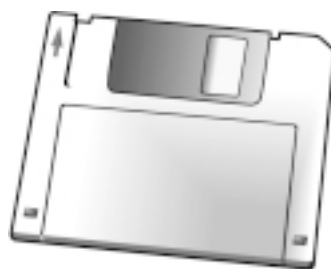
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