

High school gets new science rooms

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

It hasn't been the best of years for the Goodland School District, as the board and staff have struggled to save money in the face of declining enrollment and serious state budget problems, but the district has made some visible progress.

A \$900,000, eight-month remodeling project on the high school's second floor was finished in January, the high school show choir raised more than \$11,000 to attend a national competition and city, county and school officials worked together to bring in money for projects.

Teachers and administrators started new programs to help students, the board bought new technology to make parents' and teachers' lives easier and students worked to help a sick person in Sherman County.

Probably the most visible sign of progress was the high school remodeling project, which included turning five classrooms on the east side of the second floor into three high-tech science labs. Classrooms and bathrooms across the hall also were remodeled and air conditioning was installed on the second floor and in the lunchroom and kitchen downstairs.

The project took about five months longer than expected and students and teachers were displaced for awhile, but everyone agreed it was worth it in the end.

"We're just real pleased with all of it," said Superintendent Marvin Selby.

Members of the X-Pressos singing group spent about five months gathering money for their March trip to Branson, Mo., where they were the only Kansas choir to compete in a national competition.

The group didn't just ask people for money, they earned it by performing about 45 times, and got pretty creative with some of their fund raisers. In January, the X-Pressos brought the Harlem Knights, a trav-



Jason Krayca, 12, (top) checked out rocks displayed in Connie Livengood's science room on the second floor of the high school Sunday afternoon, Jan. 28, as part of an open house to show off the newly completed science rooms. Photos by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

eling basketball team, to Goodland for an exhibition game against teachers and coaches.

Director Randy Berls said the singers performed well considering it was their first big competition, placing 12th out of 15 and missing the semifinals by 1.8 points.

The school board made progress working with other government units in Sherman County.

City, county and school officials agreed in

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High School Principal Harvey Swager explained the set up of equipment in the new science rooms, which were completed in January. The eight month project cost \$900,000.

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School starts new program for Hispanic girls



Goodland High School students Melinda Benavides (far left), junior, and LouAnn Medrano, freshman, served rice and tamales on May 2, during a dinner to introduce the new club G.R.A.C.E., of which Benavides and Medrano are members.



Two members of the new G.R.A.C.E. club explained the purpose and plans to an audience at a dinner in May.

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April to pitch in \$12,000 each for a grant writer to bring in money for all three. A board was formed to run the program and Penny Nemechek was hired as the grant writer.

The three entities are now developing lists of projects they want the grant writer, who started work on July 1, to pursue.

Progress is made every day in the classroom, officials say, but it doesn't always get much attention outside school.

During the past school year, teachers have started new reading programs to improve students' reading skills and encourage them to read. A few teachers at North Elementary School told school board members about their projects at a meeting in October.

Marie Elias, North librarian, said with help from Bankwest, she is setting up "reading accounts" for students. Gail Walter, a reading teacher, said students who read sci-

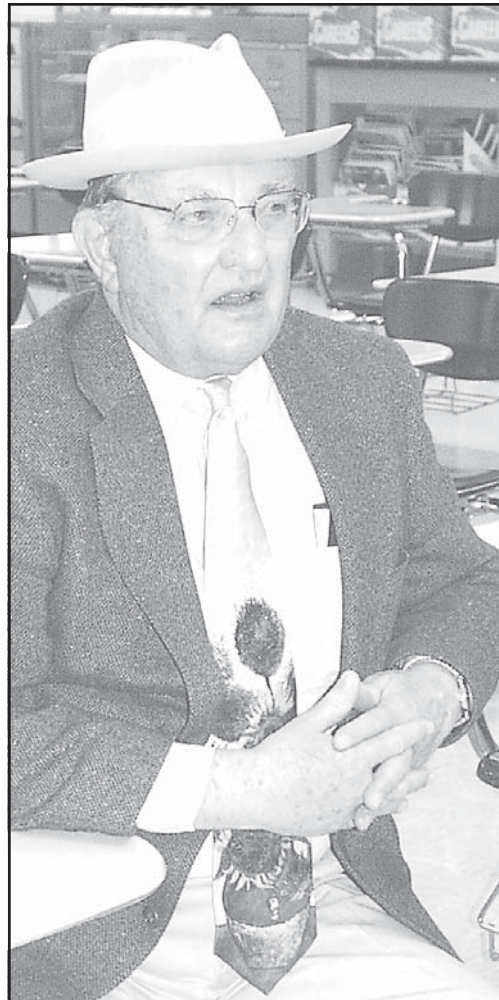
ence books are invited to a special party and Andy Scheopner, the physical education teacher, said those who read a sports book become members of "Shep's All-Star Club."

Students and teachers helped other people make progress in their lives.

Harvey Swager, high school principal, helped form a new club to get Hispanic girls more interested in school and students in the Production 1 class at the high school built an entertainment center to raise money for a Sherman County woman with cancer.

Board members tried to make other peoples' lives easier, too.

They spent about \$30,000 in June on new computer software that will allow parents to access their children's grades and assignments over the Internet, had gas tanks installed at the bus barn so employees wouldn't have to waste time driving to a station and agreed to lease land to the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center in Oakley for \$1 a year to expand HeadStart, a program that helps prepare kids for school.



John Golden (left) tested one of the science room's new desks as part of a crowd that attended an open house of the remodeled section, which features three new science classrooms. Teachers had already moved in equipment, including a cross section of a cell (above).

Photos by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

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College does well in first full year

By Rachel Miscall

The Goodland Daily News

President Ken Clouse says two successful transitions top his long list of signs of progress at the Northwest Kansas Technical College this year.

First, he said, students, teachers and administrators adapted to having new leadership for only the second time in 37 years. Clouse, formerly president of the technical college in Atchison, took over here last July after long-time director Larry Keirns retired.

The new president said members of the board that runs the college told him the transition has been easier than they expected.

"They told me it's been almost a seamless change," he said.

Second, Clouse said, this was the first full year the institution has been a college, and many students took advantage of the benefits the new status offers.

The school became a college last spring after the Legislature approved the change. That allows the institution to award two-year Associate of Applied Science degrees.

More than 100 students earned degrees this year, Clouse said, which is about 20 percent of the graduating class. He said the college hopes to increase that to half.

Smaller signs of progress came every month, Clouse said.



The administration building got a name change on the wall to reflect the new status of the Northwest Kansas Technical College which completed the first year as a college in May.

Photo by Rachel Miscall / The Goodland Daily News

In August, he said, administrators made a presentation to the Northwest Education Research Center in Olympia, Wash., for a study on how to improve higher education in Kansas.

In September, the college's curriculum committee developed a five-year plan to implement new programs that could attract a more diverse student body, including more

women. The board approved the plan in October.

Clouse said the Kansas Board of Regents, which oversees all of the state's colleges, has approved starting a graphic design program this year. But, he added, the college won't be able to afford it unless the budget-troubled state provides some money.

Other programs the board wants to phase

in over five years, he said, include heating ventilation and air conditioning, respiratory therapy, paralegal and cellular technology.

In November, Clouse said, the college received two state grants totaling \$70,000 to buy new electronic equipment.

In February, he said, the board approved lengthening the diesel automotive program from one to two years. Clouse said the change was made because diesel engines are becoming more sophisticated and complicated.

In March, he said, the board approved lifting a restriction on the amount of time college credits were good for. Before, Clouse said, credits students had earned would only count towards a degree if the class had been taken within five years.

In June, he said, stricter admission requirements were passed, requiring students to have higher scores on tests in reading, math and other subjects. Clouse said the board also developed a program to help teachers earn associate's degrees.

Also during the past year, Clouse said, the college's first two newsletters were distributed and school districts in Norton, Lakin and WaKeeney joined the college's board by sending representatives. Clouse said that

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Progress is happening at the Buffalo Inn

Now under new ownership and management, improvements are underway at Goodland's Best Western Buffalo Inn Restaurant. Trinity Properties/Don and Pat Comstock, Kansas City, Mo., are the new owners. General managers are Evelyn and George DeVol. Rosa Maruska is the restaurant manager.

In addition to adding a weekly Sunday Brunch Buffet served from 10:00 a.m. to 2 p.m., Rosa is gradually improving the menu. She plans soon to introduce a whole new, expanded menu that will keep the most popular items. Coming in a few months will be the addition of daily and nightly specials and a new pricing structure that will include more lower priced items, a children's menu and senior discounts.

DeVols have already upgraded the swimming pool. Eight different contractors are making improvements throughout the properties. Upgrades of the convention center and the addition of fully handicapped rooms are planned for the winter season.



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Technical students enjoy new college status

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will likely attract more students to the college.

All in all, Clouse said, it was a good start. "This was truly another productive year at Northwest Kansas Technical College," he said.



Joel Pfeifer, a second year electronics students, picked up books and supplies from the college bookstore in August, along with hundreds of other students who started classes. JoAnn Clouse, the new president's wife and bookstore manager, helped students get their supplies.



Students registered for classes in August when the Northwest Kansas Technical College began the first full year with the new title. Students seemed to like the new status as they moved in for the various classes.



Thomas Edwards (middle) and Ben Campbell (right), both second-year students in the Automotive Technology program at the Northwest Kansas Technical College, showed Brian Bauman, a senior at Goodland High School, the ropes. Bauman is thinking about entering the program next year. Ken Clouse, the new college president, greeted students during an assembly before classes started. Photos by Rachel Miscall/The Goodland Daily News

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