

Goodland Elks Lodge has 150 essays to judge

By Pat Schiefen
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The Goodland Elks Lodge received 150 entries in its annual Americanism Essay Contest on the topic, "What is an American?"

Goodland's Hannah Sanderson, daughter of Kenny and Tami Sanderson and a North Elementary School fifth grader, had the third-place essay in Division I (fifth and sixth graders). Grant Junior High eighth grader Jacee Herl daughter of Jon and Judy Herl, placed third in Division II (seventh and eighth graders).

The first-place winner in Division I was Lindy Smith of Weskan and second place

went to Kelsey Hale of Weskan.

In Division II, Ross Nicklos was first and Jenna Hill was second. Both are students at St. Francis Middle School.

The first-place winners got a \$50 savings bond and went on to compete at the district contest. There, each essay was judged against the top three from other lodges in the district. Smith won another \$50 saving bond when she won at the Kanas Northwest District.

Students from Weskan, Cheylin, St. Francis and Goodland schools competed here, entering 25 essays in Division I and 125 in Division II. The essays had to be typed or printed in ink and not longer than 250

words. Former teachers Linda Knott was the local chairman and Jan Berringer was district chairman.

By HANNAH SANDERSON
North Elementary School

I think an American is someone (a citizen) who is born in the U.S.A. An American is also someone who obeys the law and is loyal to our country. Americans also have freedom because there are soldiers in Iraq fighting for our freedom.

We have a lot of rights and have freedom in the U.S.A. Anyone who is a citizen of the U.S.A. has the right to vote. Americans also have the right to choose what they want to be when they grow up.

We have freedom because there are soldiers that are fighting in Iraq for our freedom. If Iraq wins, we will not have freedom anymore. That is why we need to use our freedom wisely.

Freedom is great because we have a choice to believe in anything. We are grateful to have freedom so we don't have to be ruled by other countries. We also don't have to be in slavery.

I love being an American because I have so many choices, so many rights and freedom. I am glad that I am an American and so are many other people. So I will obey the laws and be loyal to our country.

By JACEE HERL
Grant Junior High

What is an American? Have you ever thought deeply about that question? An American is a citizen of the United States. A popular saying resounds, "Freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have the courage to defend it." Freedom! Freedom, to me, is what sets Americans apart from any other group of citizens.

When I hear American, I imagine free-

dom. Not all countries have freedom like the United States does. I love freedom because I can make choices for my own life. What is also good about our freedom is not just one state in United States has freedom, they all do.

Some citizens must obey their government exactly. Americans do not; they have the freedom to make choices for themselves.

American troops are overseas currently fighting to gain such freedom for some of those citizens. What an opportunity we have to possess this freedom already.

So be proud to live in America and have our freedom. That freedom many others can only dream of obtaining.

It is this freedom that sets us apart from any other citizen and makes all of us true Americans.

Offices to be closed for President's Day

City, county and federal offices will be closed Monday for Presidents' Day. There will be no mail, since the post office will be closed.

All banks will be closed. There will be no trash pickup, with the county transfer station closed.

State offices, including the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services, will be open, as will the Goodland City Library.

The Goodland Regional Medical Center and clinic will be open.

The Goodland Star-News office will be open and a paper will be published for delivery at the news racks on Monday and by mail on Tuesday.

Students of the Goodland School District will have the day off, but the teachers will have a professional day.

The Goodland City Commission will meet at 5 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 25, in the commission room on the second floor of the City Administration Building, 204 W. 11th.

At 7 p.m., after the regular city meeting, there will be a joint meeting of the City Commission, Sherman County Commission and the Rural Fire District Board at the city building.

The County Commission's next meeting will be at 8 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 29, at the courthouse. Commissioners will meet to open bids on Thursday, Feb. 28.

Goodland School District decides to have garage sale in April or May

By Pat Schiefen
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The Goodland School Board decided Monday to do some housecleaning and sell stored items the district no longer uses, ranging from football jerseys to pianos.

Members agreed to ask the site councils at each school to help put on a districtwide garage sale for a share of the money in either April or May, depending on the weather.

"Little kids might want the jerseys," said Superintendent Shelly Angelos.

She said they need the storage space for seasonal articles now kept on the elementary school stages. The fire marshal is always wanting them to thin things down, she said.

Angelos asked the board if it was all right for the Northwest Kansas Technical College to set up a display

in the lobby during parent-teacher conferences at Grant Junior High. She said the school wants to let the students know about options for career training.

The board thought it would be okay.

North Elementary Principal Jim Mull said the kindergarten screening will be Tuesday and Wednesday at the Emmanuel Lutheran Church. He said expects next year's kindergarten to be between 55 and 60.

"We have had a pretty good response," Mull said. "We plan to call parents of prospective students if they haven't made appointments for the screening."

Board President Dick Short said that the technical college was planning to start on its roof repairs. He said the college had been talking to a vocational school in Liberal

about a merger, but the college here decided there were too many differences between the two schools for it to work.

Dennis Friedrichs gave a report for the professional development committee, saying there was not a lot going on right now.

"There were 87 teachers and administrators out of 93 possible involved," Friedrichs said, adding that 31 teachers and administrators had gone to workshops or events outside of the district. Under a plan started this year, the committee is smaller and will only meet every quarter, not monthly, he said, and there will be no screening committee.

In the bills paid, Angelos pointed out a \$23,575 gas bill for January, which said said does not include West Elementary and Grant Junior High. In total the district, paid \$132,

592 in bills.

The board went into a closes session to discuss personnel starting at 7:45 and had five sessions ending around 10:30.

Afterward, Goodland High school math teacher Don Raymer was hired as assistant track coach to replace Dennis Stone, who died last month. Terry Tolke was hired as evening custodian at Grant Junior High.

The board also looked at the evaluations of administrators, including Principals Mull of North, Steve Raymer of Grant Junior High, Verna Milnes of West Elementary, Sharon Gregory of Goodland High School and Harvey Swager of Central Elementary, and high school Activities Director Don Smith. There was no action taken by the board on those items.

Open Records Act violated by Thomas County Commissioners

By Jan Katz Ackerman
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Thomas County commissioners violated the state Open Records Act when they discussed pay for elected officials behind closed doors late last year, the Kansas attorney general's office says.

Assistant Attorney General Michael J. Smith, in a letter dated Feb. 4, told Thomas County Attorney Andrea Wyrick the commissioners had violated the Open Meetings Act Dec. 28 by "discussing a salary plan that covered all non-elected county employees behind closed doors."

The Colby Free Press had asked the attorney general and county attorney to look into the closed meeting.

He gave Commissioners Ken Christiansen, Paul Steele and Byron Sowers 30 days, until Wednesday, March 5, to accept a settlement agreement and avoid penalties for two "Sunshine Law" violations. Smith said the second violation took place when the commissioners failed to open the meeting when they had said they would.

The agreement gives the commissioners six months to take a 1 1/2-hour training class on the provisions of the Open Meetings Act. The training must be paid for out of each commissioner's own pocket, not county money, Smith said.

In addition, the commissioners must not violation the act in the

future. Should they do so, the letter said, the agreement would be nullified and they could face prosecution. The terms do not apply to future or unknown commissioner conduct.

Under the law, any member of a public body or agency who knowingly violates any of its provisions of it or intentionally fails to furnish information as required can be liable for a civil penalty of not more than \$500 for each violation. Smith said the state is offering the commissioners a way to avoid expending "additional time and resources on this matter."

While Christiansen and Sowers appeared ready to sign off on the

agreement on Monday, Steele was not.

"I have not had time to review the letter," Steele said, saying he wanted to wait until the Feb. 19 meeting.

Free Press reporter Kevin Johnson questioned whether a formal motion to go into the closed-door session took place during the Dec. 28 meeting. The public and press were not allowed back in the meeting until 10:06 a.m., six minutes after the time allotted.

Besides the commissioners, those in the meeting were Road and Bridge Supervisor Clair Schrock, Landfill Supervisor Larry Jumper, Emergency Medical Service Direc-

tor Ken Gatlin, Undersheriff Allen Marcum, Sheriff Mike Baughn, Register of Deeds Maybelle Moore and County Clerk Shelly Harms. Baughn, Moore and Harms are elected officials and do not qualify as nonelected personnel.

Free Press Editor Patty Decker contacted the attorney general's office after Johnson reported his suspicion the commissioners had violated the act. Steele was the only one of the three commissioners who believed the closed session was inappropriate, according to Decker's

complaint filed with the state.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

student of the week



Name: Margo Detombe
Parents: Cindy and Roger Ridder

Grade: 12

Age: 18

We've nominated this

student because: Margo has a unique ability to learn languages. She enrolled in Spanish II without having studied Spanish I. She is well on her way to mastering Spanish. Margo takes advantage of opportunities to use the language with native speakers and is always seeking to learn new vocabulary and grammar points.

Student Comment: I am having a great year here! I love all the new people I've met, and I will never forget this experience!

Activities involved in at school: I was manager for cross country and I'm sort of manager for Scholar's Bowl (I guess). I'm obviously also in the most awesome club ever-AFS!

My choice of movies, books, and games: I like comedies and intelligent movies. I like to listen to pretty much every sort of music; I can even handle country music.

After I leave Goodland High School I intend to ...: go back to Belgium and continue my studies. I hope to be able to travel alot.

And 10 years from now, I think I'll be ...: a Belgian chocolate maker in the United States. I honestly don't know.

Favorite Quote: I can't help it, I'm foreign!

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CIVIL RIGHTS: This project is partially funded with CDBG funds; therefore, applicable requirements must be compiled with such as Section 3 of the 1968 Housing Act, Section 109 of the 1984 Housing and Community Development Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Executive Order 11246. More detailed information regarding these and other requirements can be found in the specification documents.

Bids will be received by The City of Kanorado at City Hall until 1:00 pm (Mountain Standard Time) Monday, March 3, 2008, and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud.

Copies for the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be obtained at the office of: EBH & Associates located at 596 Airport Road, Goodland, KS 67735, (785) 899-7019, upon payment of \$80.00 for a full size set of drawings, \$25.00 for a half size set of drawings, \$25.00 for a set of specifications, and \$15.00 for electronic copy of plans on CD.

Return of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS will not be refunded.

February 12, 2008
DATE

Original Signed
SIGNATURE

Classifieds work! Place yours today. 899-2338

The INSURANCE AGENCY Inc. PROFESSIONAL FINANCIAL AGENT

117 E. 9th ~ P.O. Box 833
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