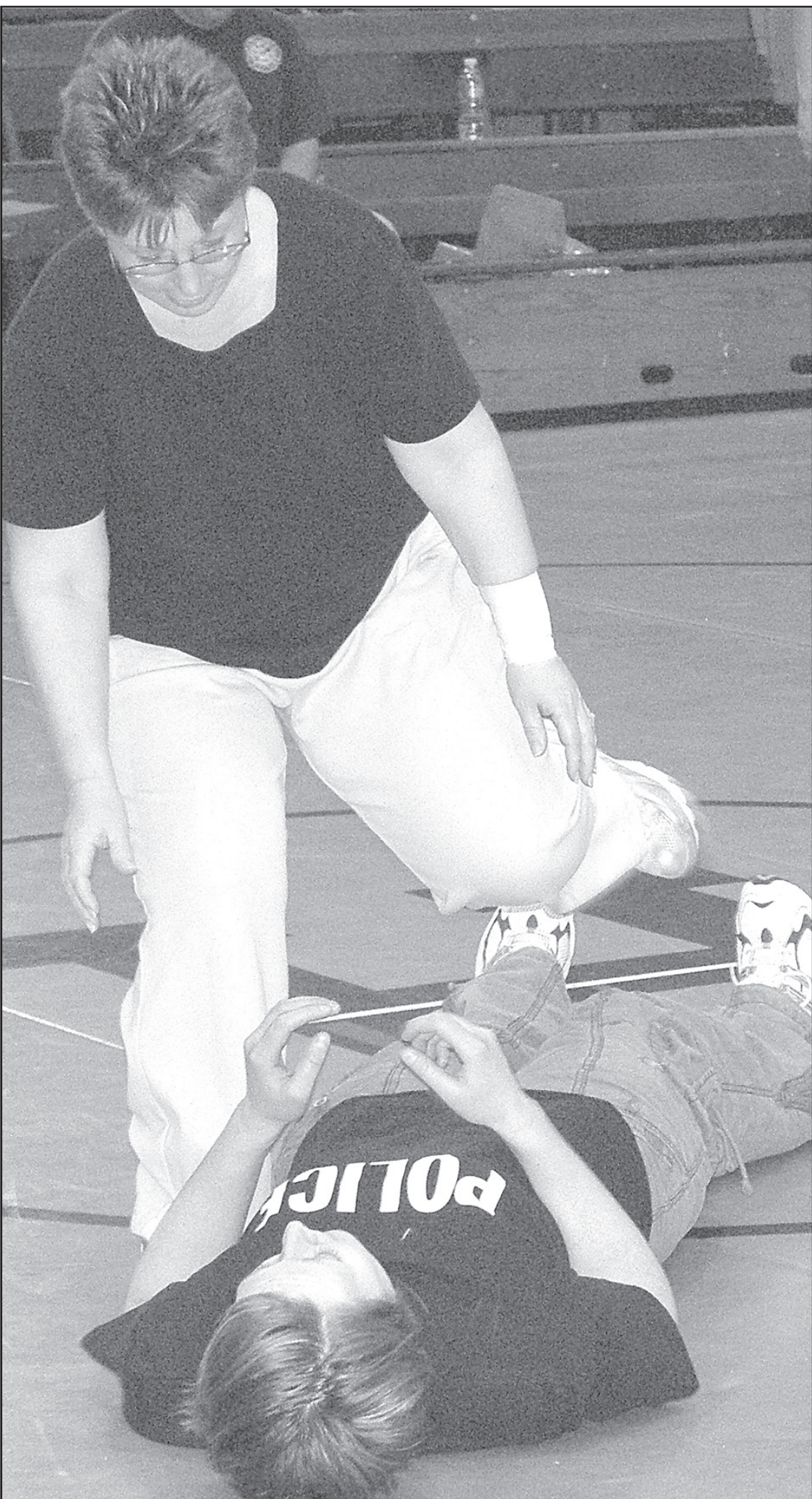


## Officer teaches self-defense course



Officer Joni Showalter of the Goodland Police showed Teresa David how to avoid being taken down in an attack and how to turn the situation around and control the attacker as part of a woman's self-defense course. The class, with 21 women, was held Saturday morning at Max Jones Fieldhouse and sponsored by the police department and the Neighborhood Watch Program of Sherman County. Photo by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

## Skunks out during day

By Sharon Corcoran  
slcorcoran@nwkans.com

Skunk sightings are proliferating in Goodland like Elvis sightings in Las Vegas, and state Wildlife Officer Mike Hopper has tips on when to report your skunk sighting, when not to and how to keep skunks out of your yard.

The last three weeks have been nuts, he said. It's springtime again. Starting in January, Hopper said, skunks are raising their young, so just because skunks are out during the day doesn't mean they are rabid.

It's common to see skunks out during the daytime at this time of year, he said, since the mothers are nursing their young and get hungry. They go out to look for insects or other food, he said.

People who feed their pets outdoors or who put out food for all the cats in their neighborhood often attract skunks, Hopper said, as well as raccoons, foxes, opossum and badgers. If you have to feed pets outside, he said, wait feed them only in the day and

only put out the amount of food they need.

If you pour dog food out all over the driveway or put out a 50-pound bag of food, he said, you are inviting all the wild creatures into your area, and they will take a free handout. People who feed all the cats in the neighborhood because they have a kind heart often cause problems, he added, by attracting a lot of wild animals to town.

People should fill in holes in foundations, Hopper said, but only about two hours after dark or a couple of hours before sunrise. You want to give skunks time to get out before you plug the holes, he said, so they won't die under your house. Help elderly and handicapped neighbors fill in holes in their foundations, too, he added.

Everyone should keep bushes trimmed, he said, and not have excessive junk or log piles in their yards. These things attract mice and bugs that serve as food for skunks, he said.

When yards green up, Hopper said, skunks will come in and dig for grubs. The best way to combat

this is to put out "Grub B Gone," he said. If you remove the food source, you get rid of the skunks.

If anyone sees an animal that is sick or injured, he said, they should call dispatch and report it.

"We want to know if there's an animal that needs attention," Hopper said, "but not every wild animal that is out in the day needs to be reported."

Hopper said people should know that he and the city animal control officer have traps they can use to capture animals, but if another person sets out the trap, whatever they catch is theirs. Neither he nor the animal control officer will come empty traps set by others.

If someone has problems with a particular animal and wants it removed, Hopper said, they can call Larry Harper at 821-8019. Harper is a licensed animal trapper, and can remove the animal for a fee, Hopper said.

"With warmer weather," Hopper said, "there will be an increase in critters in town. I would encourage people to leave them alone and teach their kids to leave them alone."

## I-70 to get asphalt overlay

The westbound lanes of the 10-mile stretch of I-70 from Edson to Goodland are to get an ultra-thin bonded asphalt overlay this summer, with the bid going to Venture Corp. of Great Bend.

The Kansas Department of Transportation awarded the contract to Venture on Feb. 20 for \$680,590.

Kristen Brands, spokesman for the department in Norton, said the overlay will be on the westbound lanes only.

Michael Terry, construction engineer in the Atwood office, said the asphalt overlay is to provide a new wearing surface and to help reduce

spray from vehicles and improve drainage and seal cracks. He said this is something done around the state to help maintain the roads.

He said the westbound lanes — the north pair — were rebuilt in 1999 and the eastbound lanes — the south pair — were rebuilt in 2000. He said it is possible the same overlay would be done on the eastbound lanes in the future.

The work will not close the Interstate, she said, but the contractor will use pilot cars to minimize disruption of traffic. She said the job will be done in the early summer.

Venture also has the contracts

to rebuild Sherman County Road 65 (Eighth Street) from K-27 west to County Road 14 and a mile of County Road 16 from old U.S. 24 north to Road 65 past the Sugar Hills Golf Course.

Other contracts in northwest Kansas the state approved in February include two projects in Decatur County, with J&J Contractors, Inc. of Iola winning both. One on County Road 2 South about 1.3 miles west of Oberlin and includes grading and a bridge for \$174,343. The second is a on the same road about a tenth of a mile farther, for grading and a bridge for \$209,974.

## St. Francis airport gets grant

St. Francis is one of 10 northwest Kansas towns to receive an airport improvement grant from the Kansas Department of Transportation's Kansas Airport Improvement Program.

A total of \$3,600 will go to the St. Francis airport for upgrading an Automated Weather Observation System for use on the Internet.

Statewide, 34 airports will receive a total of \$3.3 million through the program to address maintenance, runway, facility and equipment needs. The Division of Aviation, which manages the program, said it received a record number of applications — 104 — for projects totaling about \$18 million.

Since the program started in 1999, the state has given out \$27 million for 207 projects at public airports.

"KDOT is still seeing a big demand for this program, which has never (before) had more than 100 applications in one year," said Director of Aviation Ed Young. "The condition of runways throughout

the state has improved dramatically under this program. Now many of our projects involve enhancements to airport weather observations systems and self-sufficiency services, such as self-service fueling systems."

Sponsors are required to pay a minimum of 10 percent of the total costs, up to a maximum of 50 percent based on population, Young said.

The following are included in those approved for airport improvements:

- Northwest Kansas: Smith Center — weather system

upgrade; Trego County/WaKeeney — runway repair; Hill City — self-service fueling system; Norton — weather system upgrade, refueling ramp; Oberlin — automated weather system; Colby — replace beacon; St. Francis — weather system upgrade; Phillipsburg — seal runway, weather system upgrade.

Southwest Kansas: Scott City — communications equipment; Grant County/Ulysses — joint seal runway; Syracuse — weather system upgrade; Stanton County/Johnson City — replace beacon and tower; Morton County/Elkhart — reconstruct taxiway.

## Council names interim director

The Sherman County Economic Development Council met Tuesday evening, and following a closed-door session, agreed to name one of its members as interim executive director.

The council chose Darwin McClung for the post, said Chairman Chuck Wilkens of Wilkens Truck and Tractor.

"We felt it would be good to have someone to help (office manager) Helen Dobbs keep the office going," Wilkens said. "We will be going through the application process, and we know that McClung is one of those we would consider."

McClung worked for Rhoads Construction until the business

closed in February. Wilkens said McClung is being hired as contract labor at \$3,000 per month, effective on Wednesday.

He said McClung will take a leave of absence from the council while he holds the job.

Advertising for the position will be placed both locally and statewide to get new applicants, Wilkens said.

Wilkens said the council will add an answering service through S&T Communications to make it easier for people to contact the development office and leave messages, as there is only one phone line.

Former executive director Jeremy Jennings resigned at a council meeting March 4. He had held the post only since October, replacing former director Tiffany McMinn, who had taken a 90-day leave of absence and gone to Texas to help her mother recover from surgery.

### 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.

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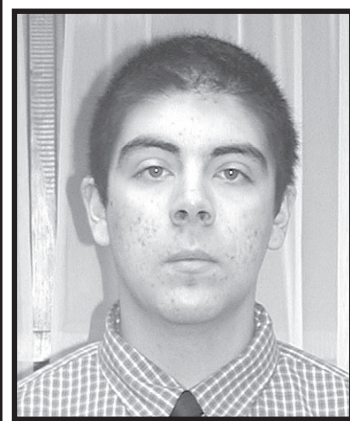
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## student of the week



Name: Matthew Espinoza  
Parents: Toni Espinoza  
Grade: 11  
Age: 16

We've nominated this student because: of Matt's dedication to excellence in the classroom and his willingness to participate in DECA activities. Matt excels in the classroom through quizzes, exams, class participation, textnotes worksheets, and terms worksheets. Matt is also a very dedicated young man when it comes to volunteering for community service projects.

Student Comment: My favorite aspect of school life

is participation in my classes. My Marketing classes are my favorite classes. After graduation from high school, I will remember my friends and my teachers.

Activities involved in at school: DECA, Scholar's Bowl, National Honor Society, FCS

My choice of movies, books, and games: I enjoy horror, Science Fiction, fantasy and action movies. I enjoy playing multiple player games.

After I leave Goodland High School I intend to ...: Attend Emporia State University to study Accounting, Business, and Marketing. (I might also study Psychology.)

And 10 years from now, I think I'll be ...:

Living comfortably with my family, out of state.

Favorite Quote: "It's not who you are that holds you back, it's who you think you're not." Author unknown

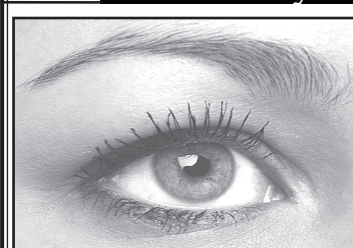
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