



The middle aged (30 to 40 year old) male and female elephants that belonged to the Culpepper Merriweather Circus that had two afternoon performances on Saturday behind the Howard Johnson Hotel. The circus spokesman said the male had been trained to help raise tents but they used a Bobcat. A look at the tent from the outside going up (top left) and a view of how the poles were placed on the inside by workers (bottom left).
Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

Big Top thrills came to town Saturday afternoon

The Culpepper and Merriweather Circus was in town Saturday afternoon and invited people to watch the crew put up the Big Top.

At least 20 people gathered near the elephant pen behind the Howard Johnson Hotel on K-27 to watch the tent raising.

It was sponsored by the Goodland

Chamber of Commerce who sold the tickets.

The crew placed all the poles, then the big tent was laid on top of them. They first put up the smallest outside poles on one end, working their way around the tent.

They used a small loader to place the next set of poles, then moved the

two big center poles into place. The crew finished getting the poles up, then tightened the guy wires.

The show had two middle-aged elephants (30 to 40 years old), a lion and three tigers — including an insistent cub who thought it was lunchtime — and several horses and dogs.

One of the performers talked to the crowd about its history. The show was started in 1985 by three men, he said, Robert Johnson, Jim Hebert and Curtis Cainan. It headquarters out of Hugo, Okla., along with about three other circuses.

He said the circus employs more than two dozen people. It has

a chuck wagon and feeds the group two meals a day.

The show lasted about 90 minutes, thrilling kids of all ages. The younger kids got to see the elephants and big cats do their thing.

A family of jugglers did a balancing act, with their 1-year-old stealing the act by smiling and just

being cute. There was a family of unicyclists, and some aerial acts.

Of course, there were clowns, and the necessary cotton candy and peanuts at both the 2 and 4:30 p.m. performances.

Fireworks, entertainment lined up for Fourth of July event

Plans are coming together for Goodland's annual Fourth of July celebration, including two bands, a hamburger feed, carnival rides, a watermelon feed and a grand fireworks display.

Brad Schields, chairman of the Freedom Fest Committee, said the group still could use some money to help cover the costs of the fireworks.

"I think we are close to having enough to pay for the fireworks this year," Schields said, "but it would be good to have a cushion to build on for next year's celebration."

"We don't have to raise money for the entertainment this year, but we do need to raise money for the fireworks. We had to cut down some last year, and we got some checks after the July 4 program to help with this year."

"We got some complaints about how short it was (last year). It wasn't really shorter, but a lot of the fireworks went off all at once, making it seem shorter."

Schields said the Freedom Fest draws people and business to town.

"We have had people tell us how good a program it is," he said, "and that some have heard about it and have stopped while driving through."

The evening starts Friday, July 4, with the 4-H Junior Leader's \$5 barbecue feed at 5:30 p.m. Goodland Rotary Club members will hand out free slices of watermelon as long as they last.

Schields said the local band Pieces of Eight will open the entertainment at 6 p.m. at the fairgrounds,

Schedule of events

Here is the schedule for Goodland's annual Freedom Fest Fourth of July celebration:

5 p.m. 4-H Junior Leader's \$5 barbecue.

Goodland Rotary free watermelon feed.

6 p.m. Band Pieces of Eight plays in front of Agriculture Building.

6-9:30 p.m. Carnival rides

open, \$10 wristbands.

7:30-9 p.m. Blue Healers band from Hays, classic rock.

9:30 p.m. Joe Diaz fireworks show begins at dark.

Send donations for the fireworks to the Sherman County Community Foundation, Box 888, Goodland, Kan. 67735, earmarked for the Freedom Fest Fireworks Fund.

and the Blue Healers, a classic and old-time rock band from Hays, will play from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

The carnival rides will run from 6 to 9:30 p.m., Schields said, with a \$10 wristband for unlimited rides. The carnival has a couple of new rides, he said, including a centrifugal-force ride and a kids' train ride. He several rides have been rebuilt and repaired over the winter in the new storage and workshop building.

Schields said the Kiwanis Snack Shack will be open after the 4-H barbecue, and some other concession stands are expected, including sno cones and funnel cakes.

He said Joe Diaz, who has been putting on the fireworks show for more than 10 years, promises another grand display. He said the show should begin about 9:30 p.m., after it gets dark.

Schields said money is coming

in for the fireworks, and with a few additional donations, there should be enough to cover this year's show. He said more is needed to get to the \$10,000 level they had two years ago to provide a cushion to start on next year's show.

He said last year, money came in after the Freedom Fest, and they began this year with about \$2,800 in the fund. The fireworks cost \$7,000. Schields said he had talked to Diaz and signed a contract for the show a couple of months ago.

The Sherman County commissioners approved a donation of \$1,000 to the fireworks, and the City Commission gave \$500.

Aaron Duell, who has been helping the committee and maintaining

a web site for the show (www.freedomfest.shermanfairgrounds.com), said the donations have been broken into levels this year to give some recognition to those who are helping sponsor the fireworks.

Those include Flying Colors, \$500 and up; Shining Stars, \$200; Red, \$100; White, \$50; and Blue, \$25.

Duell said donations received this year include \$200 from the Goodland Elks, \$500 from Kiwanis Club, \$100 from Jim and Alvs Alcorn, \$250 from the Goodland Rotary Club, \$100 from Topsis Office Products, \$200 from Hitchcocks, \$250 from Cynthia Strnad, \$100 from Witzel and Rhea Implement, \$100 from Garrett's Laundry, \$250 from Scott and Deborah Mentzer, \$100 from Steve and Colleen Duell and \$100 from Short and Son Trucking.

A list of all who have donated will be posted on the web site.

Special funds have been set up with the Sherman County Community Foundation to allow people to make donations to the fireworks or the entertainment.

Checks can be sent to the foundation at Box 888, Goodland, Kan. 67735, and earmarked for the Freedom Fest fireworks fund, said Kin Huang, foundation director.

When fireworks money is collected by the foundation, she said, the only thing that can be paid out of that fund is the cost of the show.

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matters of record

Goodland Police

The following incidents have been reported to the Goodland Police Department:

May 19 — 9:27 p.m., 509 Caldwell Ave., Charlie Weber reported burglary and criminal damage.

May 21 — 2:59 p.m., 302 Clark Ave., Skylyne Kristine Johnson reported identity theft.

May 22 — 9:53 a.m., 1112 Main Ave., Tom Harrison reported criminal damage to property.

May 23 — 9:59 a.m., 1209 Harrison Ave., arrested Ryann Anthony Barmann, for driving under the influence, minor in possession of alcohol and failure to stop at stop sign. Case referred to city attorney.

6:47 a.m., 1101 Main Ave., El Dorado Western Wear reported criminal damage to property.

May 24 — 2:57 a.m., 1606 Center Ave., arrested Justin R. Kibel for disorderly conduct and harassment by telephone against Ryan E. Johnson. Case referred to city attorney.

10 a.m., 1312 Sherman Ave., Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church reported criminal damage to property.

5:03 p.m., 900 Center Ave., City of Goodland reported criminal damage to property.

6:44 p.m., 1819 Cherry Ave., arrested Brandy Rhiannon Jackson for theft from Dollar General. Case referred to city attorney.

7:16 p.m., 1819 Cherry Ave., arrested Jessie Jo Martinez for theft from Dollar General. case referred

to city attorney.

8:11 p.m., 222 W. Business U.S. 24, arrested Brandy Jackson for driving while suspended, illegal license tag and no liability insurance and transporting an open container. Case referred to city attorney.

May 25 — 5:52 p.m., 705 Washington Ave., arrested Dustin Blake Rumback for disorderly conduct against Kimberly Crocker and obstruction of legal process against Joni Showalter. Case referred to city attorney.

6:26 p.m., 1016 E. Eighth, arrested Dustin Blake Rumback for theft and burglary against Judy Hass.

Case referred to city attorney.

11:07 p.m., 507 1/2 Caldwell Ave., Adam Lee Ford reported burglary and theft.

May 26 — 12:11 a.m., 100 E. 10th, arrested David Kenneth Schnug, for driving while suspended and driving under the influence. Case referred to city attorney.

1:56 p.m., 1514 Kansas Ave., Anthony Johnson reported criminal damage to property.

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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IMPROVEMENT GRANTS Available

The Sherman County Economic Development Office is offering 2 separate grants for Sherman County residents for exterior improvements to housing or businesses. If you are interested in this program, please stop by the office at 104 E. 10th for an application. Applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. on June 20th. For questions, please call 785-890-3743

Classifieds work! 899-2338