



Brent Wood and Bill Stoick (above), Flatlander Fall Festival organizers, served free hamburgers and hot dogs Sunday at the Picnic in the Park at Chambers Park. Annika Linin (right) tap danced to "Play

Time." Jordan Knitig (below, left) and Sophia Williams (below, right) sang. Knitig was named crowd favorite by the audience applause vote. Photos by Tom Betz and Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News



# Picnic in the Park, talent draws crowd

The sun was bright, the sky blue, the food delicious and the talent incredible at the Flatlander Fall Festival Picnic in the Park Sunday.

Competitors from Saturday's talent show performed, along with the Goodland High School X-Pressos and the Barbershop Connection. After all the performances, the crowd voted Jordan Knitig their favorite by vivacious applause.

The program opened with pre-teen winners Demi Mitchek and Braelyn Hoelting in black tops and slacks with hot pink feather boas, big sunglasses and plenty of glitz and glitter singing "Mama Mia" and "Dancing Queen" by Abba.

Pre-teen third-place winner Sophia Williams sounded better than third as she sang "Our Song" by Taylor Swift. Adult winner and only contestant Jacob Ries performed Christian rock songs he wrote.

Knitig, the teen second-place winner, sang "Twisted" by Carrie Underwood, that is, she sang the first half of the song twice, as the CD with her music was damaged and wouldn't play the second half.

After two tries and assurances from Darren Kannady, who provided sound for the event, that there was a hole in the CD, and there was nothing that could be done to make it play better, there was nothing to do but to call that Knitig's performance. The

audience appreciated her effort, however, and chose her as the crowd favorite for the \$50 prize.

Pre-teen second-place winner Annika Linin was too adorable for words and had an excellent use of props in her tap dance performance to "Play Time."

After an interlude, the Barbershop Connection, members Jeff Mason, Dean Graber and Mel Pfau of Goodland and Kelly Beek of Cheyenne Wells, Colo., performed a selection of tunes in four-part harmony interspersed with humor, despite trouble with the wind blowing into the microphones and some feed-back squawks.

The X-Pressos performed popular tunes,

including a 1980s montage. The X-Pressos are Courtney Sheldon, Kaitlin Fugleberg, Taylor McLemore, Chelsie Gausman, Shonna Webster, Julica Bonsall, Shelbi Hall, Kirsten Topliff, Ashley Archer, Saundra Redlin, Tanner Oharah, Bryan Gray, Brennen Clouse, Ismael Garcia, Dallas Price, Stephen Buller, Devin Mangus, Kade Sheldon, Andrew Shores and Brook Redlin.

The X-Pressos Barbershop Quartet of Tanner Oharah, Bryan Gray, Devin Mangus and Kade Sheldon performed several tunes in four-part harmony. Then they joined the Barbershop Connection for part of their second set of music.

After the Barbershop Connection, teen third-place winner Jessica Klemm sang "Hero" by Mariah Carey. The teen winners J-Factor, members Tanner and Riley Oharah and Kade Sheldon, performed their original "Temptation Man" along with "Red Letter" by D.C. Talk and "Carry On My Wayward Son" by Kansas, their songs from the contest.

They also performed "I Can Only Imagine," by MercyMe, the number they sang at the contest to break the tie with Knitig. After the audience vote, Demi and Braelyn returned for an encore, requested by friends and neighbors who had missed their first performance.

# County to look at building; auditor says they can't afford to buy it

By Pat Schiefen  
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Two of the three county commissioners were at the final meeting of the month last Friday at the Sherman County Courthouse. Commissioners Kevin Rasure and Chuck Thomas were there but Chairman Mitch Tiede was absent.

Tom Rohr Chairman of Sherman County Rural Fire Department board said the department has a chance to buy an existing building behind the county shop for \$180,000.

"Nobody on board has looked at it," said Rohr.

"There is no money in the budget to do a building," said Mark Bauer of Vonfeldt, Bauer and Vonfeldt, the county auditor who was at the meeting to help with the planning for next year's county budget. "That would completely deplete the cash

carry over." On the lease purchase the fire department has paid off one and they have two lease purchases left, one with three payments to go and one with one payment, said county clerk Janet Rumpel.

Rohr said the building has no utilities. Those would need to be added.

"It won't cost anything to look into," said Thomas.

"I just told the owner we would look," said Rohr.

The Emergency Management director Gary Rogers, had the emergency operations plan approved by the state and wanted the commissioners to sign it.

Copies of the Sherman County plan are available in the courthouse commission room, City Building, Goodland Public Library and the Emergency Man-

agement office. Rogers is the director for Sherman, Cheyenne and Rawlins Counties.

Central Dispatch Director Crissy Congers presented the same proposal for upgrading the 911 system. A change was that it would cost \$150 per month less than expected. To run new lines for the 911 system it would cost \$94,152.

She said they have \$86,000 dollars in the budget for new consoles for the office. The current ones were bought in 1995. She has written a grant proposal to the state for wireless and have a separate fund of \$20,000 set up for wireless.

"I am trying to get us up to date as possible," Congers said.

Trevor Linton from the Governmental Relations task force for Shine on Sherman County reported on the community forum concerning at-large voting for county com-

missioners.

He said, "It went pretty good at the fairgrounds. I had some people afterwards ask me about it."

He said the voting done at the fair grounds was about 2.4 percent of the possible voters. Originally there was a forum scheduled to be held in October, but Linton said that with harvest the group thought there wouldn't be a good turnout.

He thought if it was alright with the commissioners they would have a mock poll at the court house the same day, Tuesday, Nov. 4, as the general election. The law doesn't allow them to do that in the same building as the general election.

Linton said there would be a large community conversation in early December. Officials from Greeley County or Tribune have agreed to attend and answer questions on

how combining the state and city governments has worked for them. He thought they would have a meal and that \$400 to \$500 would cover the costs.

Final conferences with department heads were held before the budget is published today. The only departments that changed were the Road and Bridge and Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Head of the Road and Bridge department Curt Way said there would be a smaller carry over of \$15,000 for next year. He said his largest concern was the cost of fuel. He said he wanted to keep enough money in the special equipment for two years of payments and purchases on equipment.

Convention and Visitors Bureau ended up with more money collected from the bed tax which finances it.

Rumpel said that the county evaluation went up \$150,000 from this year \$65,716,000 to \$65,900,000.

"The county is in good shape," said accountant Bauer. "It is much improved over a year ago."

The hearing on next year's budget will be at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 14, at the assembly room at the Sherman County Courthouse.

## 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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