

Racquetball players stop here between events

By Sharon Corcoran

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Professional racquetball players and the founder of a racquetball gear company visited racquetball courts at the Goodland Activities Center and the Northwest Kansas Technical College on their way from one championship event to another.

Alvarro Beltran of Tijuana, Mexico, now in the suburbs of San Diego, Calif., ranked third in the world in professional racquetball, Anthony Herrera of Grand Junction, Colo., ranked No. 20 in the world in his second season of professional racquetball, and Rafael Filippini of the San Diego suburbs, a racquetball player who founded the GearBox, a company that manufactures racquetball equipment and sponsors players, visited Goodland Monday, Sept. 22.

The men had come from the 2008 Motorola International Racquetball Tour World Championship, which was held Sept. 17-21 in downtown Denver and were on their way to the Ninth Annual Ghost of Georgetown/Kansas City International Racquetball Tour Pro Am Sept. 25-28 at the Athletic Club of Overland Park.

Filippini said their goal was to find every racquetball court between the sites on the tour and visit

as many as possible to encourage people to go out and play racquetball. He found the activities center and the college through an internet search. They arrived at the center at 10 a.m. and stayed until 3 p.m., even playing basketball with the outcome determining who would pay for dinner and a movie.

The activities center has nice racquetball courts, Filippini said, as well as good places to work out, table tennis and basketball. He said they may work with the center to hold a racquetball clinic and start a league.

"I would encourage people to go to the GAC," he said, "and find out what racquetball involves. You can burn 600-plus calories per hour and have a great time."

They planned to close out the day visiting the college courts and go to Garden City the next day.

Beltran had won the gold medal in the Pan American Games in 2000 in doubles and was ranked third in the world in the international tour with 37 countries participating. Herrera was listed No. 20 in the international tour in only his second season. He coaches the United State junior team and has helped Bolivia and Costa Rica teams as well.

Racquetball is growing, Beltran



Pat Schiefen, Goodland Star-News society editor, gave a tour of Nor'west Press to (left to right) Rafael Filippini, Alvarro Beltran and

Anthony Herrera after their visit to the Goodland Activities Center in September. Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

said, especially in bigger cities; there are over five million players in the United States.

It was stagnant for a while, Herrera said, but is growing professionally and recreationally.

Herrera was second in the men's singles open division in Denver and third in the event in Kansas City.

Beltran was third in men's singles professional division in both. Both men suffered their only loss at each

event at the hands of the eventual winner in their division. The tournaments are single elimination.

The Denver event was filmed and will air on ESPN Classic on Saturday, Nov. 29. A special four-

glass court was erected in the 16th Street Mall in downtown Denver, so spectators could view the event. It was the first time the glass court had been used in the United States.

Motel owner asks city for permission to put up second big sign

By Tom Betz

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At present the city zoning regulations allow a business to have one sign on their property, and the city commission was asked Monday if that could be changed to allow a second sign to be erected.

The new owner of Motel 7 on Business U.S. 24, Andy Merchant, was at the commission meeting to ask for permission to put up a new sign on the back of his property to be visible from I-70.

Mayor Rick Billinger asked Merchant if he had talked to the city manager or building inspector about the sign.

Wayne Hill, city manager, said he had been contacted by Merchant about the sign and he had directed him to talk to Steve Criswell, the city building inspector.

Merchant said he had talked to Criswell who said the city zoning ordinance allows one sign per property. Merchant said Criswell said the zoning ordinance would have to be changed to allow a second sign.

"That is why I am here," Merchant said. "I want permission to put up a second sign."

Billinger said if it is in the ordinance we would have to amend that.

Hill said he felt Criswell needs to be at a meeting to explain what needs to be done to look at the request.

Billinger welcomed Merchant to Goodland and said he would talk to Criswell and put the item on the agenda for the next meeting.

Criswell said Thursday the request would have to come from the commissioners to request the planning commission to hold a public

hearing on the question and make a recommendation back to the commission before the ordinance could be changed.

In other business the commissioners:

- Heard that a car got sprayed during the fog sealing project and the city paid to have it cleaned off.

Commissioner Josh Dechant said he felt that should have been the responsibility of the contractor.

Rich Simon, public works director, said the problem was the car was up in a driveway and they did not know it had been sprayed for several days after the project was done. He said he would talk to the company representative the next time they come about the situation.

Dechant asked about some towing costs the city paid for.

Simon said that was because the person was out of town and did not even know the city was going to be doing his street.

"We have always paid for the towing in these cases," he said. "We try to do the best we can to notify everyone."

- Tabled a proposal from Sunflower USA to plant trees around the Van Gogh painting.

Commissioner John Garcia said it was his understanding that a bank is going to donate trees to be plant around the painting, and that it was turned over to Simon to determine what might be needed.

Hill said there are a lot of logistics

to get this done, and that he felt more work needed to be on the plan.

Garcia said he would like to see it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Hill said he would like to know about the types of trees and what it will

take to get the trees taken care of.

Billinger asked if there was a water hydrant on the east side of Cherry Ave.

Simon said there was one, but it was not close to where they want to

plant the trees.

The next city commission meeting will be 5 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 20, in the commission room on the second floor of the City Administration building at 204 W. 11th.

City has old fire truck for sale

TRUCK, from Page 1a

James said he has had it for sale for more than a year.

Commissioner Josh Dechant said he was not in favor of selling the fire truck if the city can use it. He asked about giving the fairgrounds people the 1967 truck.

Billinger said the city ought to see if there is any interest in the 1967 truck.

City Manager Wayne Hill said they might be able to sell one of the trucks around the area.

"If there is no interest we can wait two months and then talk to the fairgrounds people," Hill said.

Billinger suggested putting the 1967 on eBay with a starting bid of \$50 and let the fairgrounds people bid on it/

Commissioner Dave Daniels suggested the fire chief call the people in Burnsville, Minn. where they have an annual Fire Muster and Community Celebration. He said they may be able to help find someone who might want an old fire truck.

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