



Maricel Murillo spends afternoons scrapbooking memories of her stay in the U.S. She has finished one entire book that includes pictures of school dances, holidays and vacations. Along with managing the basketball team, Murillo also liked to play basketball back home and in the front yard at her host family's house. She plans to head back home to Costa Rica on Sunday.

Photos by Kathryn Gurfinkel / The Goodland Star-News

Exchange student sees wide open spaces

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

The Goodland Star News

Coming from a small densely populated country in Central America to the wide open spaces of northwestern Kansas, 19-year-old Maricel Murillo has spent the last 10 months in a new world.

"It's so different here," she says.

Murillo, a native of Cartago, Costa Rica, has been staying with Brady and Jane Philbrick, their daughter Samantha, 16, and son Andrew, 14, on a farm just south of Goodland in an exchange program through the American Field Service.

Murillo spent most of her time here attending Goodland High School and participating in area activities.

She studied English in Costa Rica, but she said total immersion was difficult on her first few days at school.

"At the beginning it was really hard," she said. "I tried to understand, but everybody was talking so fast."

Although she had finished high school before her visit, she earned an honorary degree from Goodland High. She even spoke at graduation, highlighting her time spent in the U.S.

"I didn't know I was going to graduate," she said. "I was so nervous."

High school gave Murillo a unique chance to get involved in sports, a pastime that is expensive in Costa Rica. She said teams are not affiliated with schools, and athletes have to pay to play. She was

manager for the basketball team, keeping the statistics and following the flow of the games.

"In Costa Rica, we don't have a sports period...", she said. "We're more busy studying and doing homework. If you can handle both, it's good."

Murillo said she went to all of the school dances and was even a candidate for Snow Ball Queen. She went to prom, an event she said is similar to one they hold in Costa Rica, but the music is different.

"We dance the salsa, merengue and tango," she said. "I love dancing."

Although she has made some lasting friendships here, Murillo said she misses her friends back home.

"It was hard to get involved with people here," she said.

Before coming to Kansas, Murillo said, she didn't know anything about the state.

"They just pick a state for you," she added.

Kansas is 10 times larger than Costa Rica, she said, and the town she lived in has a population of 50,000 compared to Goodland's 4,000.

Not only did she have cultural differences to deal with, Murillo also dealt with the transition between urban and rural life.

In Costa Rica, she said, her mother and father always worked, but here her parents run a farm, so her host mother stays home and her host father works nearby.

Here, she had to be driven into town, but back home she walked or

used public transportation.

"We don't need a car," she said.

Murillo noted differences between the flat terrain of northwest Kansas and the mountainous and coastal geography of her home town.

She was surprised at how dry Goodland is in contrast with the wet conditions in Costa Rica, which averages 100 inches of rain per year.

During her time in the U.S., Murillo visited other states and landmarks.

Most recently she went on a trip to Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. She has been to Wyoming, Nebraska and Colorado, and visited Wichita and Topeka.

Murillo joined AFS students when they met in Boston for a tour. She said they saw the U.S.S. Constitution and visited the Atlantic Ocean.

"It was fun," she said. "It was a pretty city. I was impressed."

She said the best part of her stay in the U.S. was her host family. Murillo said AFS tries to match families and she feels lucky to have found the Philbricks.

"They were really nice," she said. "I'm glad I came here."

Murillo leaves in two weeks, and although she says she isn't terribly homesick, she is looking forward to getting home.

"One year goes so fast," she said.

She plans to reunite with her host family in Orlando, Fla., at Christmas.

"No matter what bad moments and what good moments, it was all good," she said.

Missing 15 year old turns himself in

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News

A 15 year old turned himself into the Sherman County Sheriff Thursday morning after being missing for about nine hours.

Doug Eddleman, 1849 Road 61, was being sought by the sheriff and Goodland police after an emergency call from his sister Johanna, 18, at 11 p.m. saying her oldest brother was holding a gun on her and two other people.

The sister told the dispatcher her brother was 15 years old, and had not been drinking or on drugs. The dispatcher said the sister told her the brother was holding a 12 gauge shot gun.

Sheriff Doug Whitson said the boy turned himself in about 8 a.m. Thursday, and he was not sure what if any charges might be filed. Whitson said the boy was being taken to the juvenile detention facility at WaKeeney, and is being charged with aggravated assault.

When Deputy Roger Studer arrived, about five minutes after the first call, he asked the dispatcher, who was still talking to the sister, to have the three people leave the house.

A few minutes later Undersheriff Kevin Butts had arrived and the three had come out of the house unharmed. He asked dispatch to call the house and ask the boy to come out with his hands up so they could talk to him.

The dispatcher said she heard someone pick up the phone, but no one spoke to her but she could hear the television in the background.

At 11:20 p.m. a deputy told the dispatcher "We're going in."

It was reported by a deputy the

boy might have two guns in the room.

Sheriff Whitson was on the phone with a deputy, and arrived at the scene within a few minutes.

Another deputy said to yell to the boy that his aunt Jan Eisenbart had arrived and wanted him to come out to talk to her. There was no response from the house.

Sheriff Whitson said the boy must have gone out the back of the house about the time the deputies arrived, and was not carrying any gun when he turned himself in.

About 20 minutes after entering the house a deputy reported the house was clear.

While the deputies were searching the boys father, Paul, called from New Jersey saying there were up to three shot guns in the house (that was later revised to five and then to six when the mother, Kathy, told the dispatcher her son had one), at least one high powered rifle and a .357 magnum revolver. He said they were in a bedroom and that there was ammunition for all of the guns.

Four deputies and a dog arrived from Thomas County and Colby Police to aid in the search Whitson said.

Whitson said when he and the deputies checked the house they found the boy's shot gun in his room, and found five shot guns, three high powered rifles and three revolvers in the other bedroom.

Whitson said he had not had time to talk to the boy, but had been told the boy and the sister were having an argument when the brother pulled out a shot gun.

Tour checks wheat

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

The Goodland Star News

The Sherman County Wheat Tour took area farmers to four test plots Tuesday to see how new varieties of wheat fared this year.

"This is a school in the country," said Dana Belshe, county extension agent.

He said conditions in the plots were not as good as in previous years.

"This is a tough year," he said. "It's probably the toughest in the past 30 years."

Jim Shroyer, an agronomist and wheat specialist for Kansas State University, said the biggest hurdle facing farmers this year was the damage from a late freeze in mid May. Hail damage and drought also hit some of the plots.

The tour started west of Goodland at an irrigated plot worked by Alan Townsend, then moved northwest to survey two 4-H irrigated plots worked by Adam Duell and Megan Leonard. The tour ended 10 miles north of Goodland at a dryland county plot on Fred and Jeanie Schields' land.

Although drought affected all of

the plots, the dryland plot had extensive damage. Belshe said there wasn't much moisture at planting time, and that compromised the crops.

Schields said the rainfall on their farm was more than 40 percent below normal last year.

The tour highlighted new varieties of wheat and how each fared. Shroyer described the benefits and shortfalls of each type.

"He is the wheat specialist," Belshe said. "He's probably the most knowledgeable as far as agriculture goes."

Shroyer described the different stages of the maturity of the wheat plant and adds tips on when to quit watering.

Belshe and Shroyer handed out booklets listing available wheat varieties and an analysis of each.

The tour gave participants a chance to survey not only the specific plots, but also roughly 70 miles of the surrounding country as they drove from one farm to another.

"By going across, you see the land in between," Belshe said. "This gives them a chance to look at (other farms)."

Cub scouts organizes fund raiser for family

Cub Scout Pack 142 of Goodland has organized a fundraiser to benefit the family of Greg Williams which lost three of

its members in a traffic accident on June 11.

People can buy tickets that will be used in a drawing to win prizes do-



Local farmers Bill Cole (left) and Michael Burk examined a wheat specimen on the dryland county plot on Fred and Jeanie Schields' land during the Sherman County Wheat Tour. Cole said he thinks the Kansas State University Research and Extension should attempt to adapt more varieties of wheat to the conditions in northwest Kansas.

Photo by Kathryn Gurfinkel / The Goodland Star-News

corrections

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ANNOUNCEMENT

After 43 years of practice in Goodland, Kansas
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Thomas M. White, O.D.

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