

Society plans renovation of porch, trim

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News
A Sherman County Historical Society board member has volunteers to help restore porch railings and gingerbread trim, helping to bring the Ennis/Handy House closer to its original glory.

The family of Marion and Betty Parker offered a challenge grant to help the society raise money to pay off the house's mortgage. The Parker family promised to give \$1 for every \$2 the society raised, up to \$10,000, totaling \$30,000 to pay off the mortgage.

The society, with fund raisers, including garage/bake sales and putting quilts and other items up for bid on eBay, has raised enough money to plan the mortgage burning for 2 p.m. Sunday, July 4, at the house. Paying off the mortgage will free the group to spend the money it has been paying on the loan for restoration instead, said board member Curtis Hurd.

Among those are the railings, spindles and trim on the front and back porches and balcony and the gingerbread trim on the porches, balcony and gables. The society will have help from Hurd on the restoration.

Hurd said he figured the prices for materials for the restoration and found that it will cost \$3,500 for railings, spindles and trim for both porches and the balcony. He said the labor would cost as much, but he is donating that.

He said the board will discuss the project at its July meeting, but things are looking good for starting.

"It looks favorable to go to phase 1," he said, "the front porch railing."

This project isn't the beginning of the restoration and won't be the end.

The society put a wood storm door with gingerbread details on the main entrance about a month ago, Hurd said, and plans to put matching doors on the balcony and back door.

Other plans include doing research to discover the original color of the paint and repaint the house and possibly changing the door on the east side of the front porch to a window like it was originally.

The restoration of the porch railings was part of the long-term projects, Hurd said, and it is becoming a reality sooner than society members thought it would.

The spindles can be bought, Hurd said, but the railings will have to be made. The posts on the front porch are the originals, he said; they will need to be sandblasted to the original wood and painted. The balcony will also need posts, Hurd said.

Since the house has been added to the state historical registry, Hurd said, the restorations have to be approved by the state Historical Society, but he doesn't think that will be a problem.

"My understanding," he said, "is if it's going back to the original, there's no problem."

The society raised about \$700 at its garage sale Saturday, Vice President David Branda said, and it will be matched by \$350 from the Parkers. The society has raised enough to plan the mortgage burning, Branda said, but is still taking donations and will have one more garage sale.



Mary Ennis(right) sitting on the porch of the house she had Fred Hunt (left) build for her in December 1905. Hunt's wife was Lyda who was Mary Ennis' sister. The photo shows the original railings and gingerbread trim.
Photo from Sherman County Historical Society

Big Brother has special bond

BIG, from Page 1

It took the group a few years to convince the national organization there was enough need and enough money to get a program started in a small rural county. Today they have 13 full-time matches and 13 kids on the waiting list.

Children can be referred to the program through family, friends or teachers. Scheopner said anyone refer can a kid they think could use the extra attention.

"A lot of people used to think if you got referred, it was because there was something wrong," he said. "Not anymore. A lot of the kids are great kids."

Big brothers or sisters can sign up to visit kids at a predetermined site like a school or the library. Others can do "community based" service where they take the child to the park or out to eat.

To qualify as a "big," applicants must go through several screenings set by the national program. Once they are approved, the adult will find a little brother or sister. Scheopner said the pair will then meet for at least one hour per week.

"So many (people) think it will take so much of their time," he said. "It doesn't take much."

Right now the program has children on a waiting list. Scheopner said they are looking for men to help

some of the overlooked kids.

"We have some kids who have been on waiting lists for a year," he said. "Anybody can be matched up."

To drum up support for the organization, Scheopner said, they put on several fund raising projects every year. They annually hold "Bowl for Kids Sake," a pumpkin decorating contest and a "Big for a Day" event that gives unmatched kids special attention. He said they are planning a presentation from the Goodland Fire Department on fire safety.

Becker said she has seen positive changes in Brandon since he started the program. Scheopner said the one hour per week really makes a difference. As for Brandon, he knows he has a special friend who is always looking out for him.

"He'll be a friend forever," he says.

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Educational issues

ISSUES, from Page 1

other states increased more.

Edwards said Kansas schools are have trouble maintaining an effective teacher force and the state expects a lot of retirements over the next five years. He said Kansas ranked No. 43 in the nation in teacher salary and benefits, down

from No. 41 a year ago.

Peterson said the meeting was informative and the data presented well researched.

Welsh said the information was proof that whoever ends up in Topeka after the election will have a tough task ahead in getting education on track.



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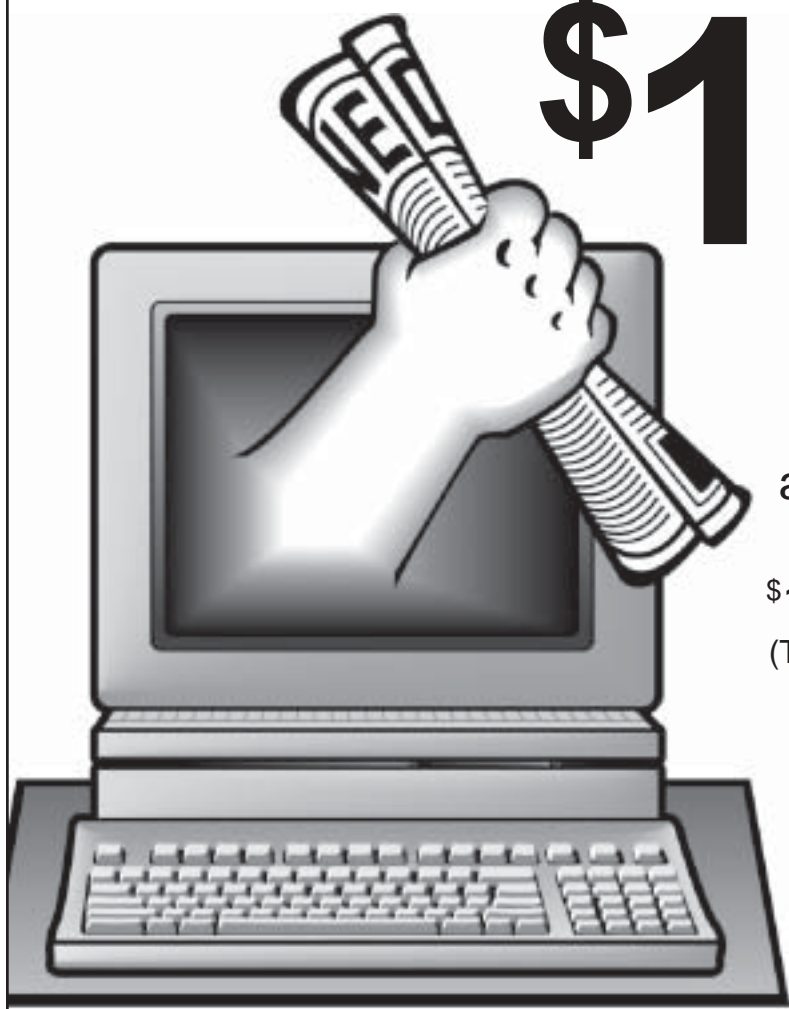
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