

Watch puts up signs

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News
“Ask anyone whose home has been burglarized,” said Neighborhood Watch Coordinator Judy McKee. “The shock and helplessness ... are not easily forgotten.”

Vanquishing that feeling, along with the chances of burglars getting away with their crimes, motivated McKee to organize a Neighborhood Watch program for Sherman County.

The group has been meeting monthly and has kept busy getting the word out about how to keep your home as safe as possible and about what to report to the police when you see something going on.

Now the group is putting up signs to warn bad folks that the neighborhood is watching them. Tuesday, McKee, along with Sherman County Sheriff’s Deputy Roger Studer and Undersheriff Kevin Butts, put up three signs at the main entrances to Edson, two at Kanorado and two at Ruleton. They also visited the Kanorado City Council.

McKee said she wanted to be sure people understand the watch is for the whole county, not just Goodland. There will soon be signs put up at Goodland, she said, but the smaller towns are important, too.

“Looking out for each other, providing a united front against crime and to put the spirit of community back in our neighborhoods is the primary focus,” McKee said. “This community-based program of citizens working together without law enforcement is the best defense in preventing burglary and other crimes.”

The fact is, she said, the impact on crime prevention by the sheriff’s office and police department alone is minimal when compared with the power of private citizens and law enforcement working together.

“We are the extensions of their eyes and ears,” she said. “Every piece of information we report as suspicious activity may lead to an arrest.”

It’s difficult to prosecute home burglaries, McKee said, due to insufficient evidence; this is where you can help.

McKee recommends steps to ensure that stolen possessions are easy to identify:

- Take photographs of your personal possessions.
- Use an identification tool to engrave your belongings.
- Save purchase receipts and document serial numbers.

Citizens can choose to ignore crime, McKee said, but that doesn’t

stop crime. During September, she said, there were 28 arrests from the Goodland Police Department and 25 from the sheriff’s department and state Highway Patrol.

These crimes, she said, include driving under the influence, involuntary manslaughter, battery, indecent liberties with a child, theft, trespassing, disorderly conduct, unlawful use of weapons, warrant arrests, minor in consumption, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of drugs with intent to sell, driving while suspended and reckless driving.

That’s a total of 53 arrests in 30 days, she said, with 12 involving drugs, and both departments said September was a slow month, McKee said.

The U.S. Department of Justice and the National Sheriffs Association, McKee said, says communities that have active Neighborhood Watch programs see a decline in the crime rate and an increase in arrests and prosecutions.

Interest is increasing for the watch program here, she said; neighborhoods are requesting signs showing they are watching. Sherman County is now a nationally registered Neighborhood Watch community, McKee added.



Sherman County Sheriff’s Deputy Roger Studer and Neighborhood Watch Coordinator Judy McKee held a warning sign in place Tuesday at Edson while Undersheriff Kevin Butts attached it to a pole. The signs are up at Kanorado and Ruleton as well and will soon be put up around Goodland.
Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

Fireworks at Freedom Fest faces uncertain future

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News
Plans to ask the city and county to help share the cost of the annual July 4 Freedom Fest hit a bump Monday when the city commission said they had put just \$500 for fireworks in the city budget for next year.

Commissioners said they saw no way to increase that to the \$2,500 the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce was requesting.

Chamber board member Ken Clouse, president of Northwest Kansas Technical College, said the group had been discussing the event, which has been financed by the Chamber and its members for years.

The Chamber board has tried to make the event self-sufficient over the last couple of years, but rains wiped out fund-raising events which would have paid for the fire-

works this summer. In prior years, the fireworks fund has depended mostly on donations from Chamber members.

“We believe this is an important event in our community,” Clouse said, “and the celebration of our country’s beginning.

“As we found out this year, the Chamber can no longer afford to do it solely by the Chamber. In a good year, it is possible the events can be closer to self funding, but the rains this year made that impossible.

“We don’t want to scare off any rain, and the problem with pyrotechnics is that once you buy them you have to use them.”

Clouse said the Chamber is in the hole about \$3,500 on this year’s celebration, out of a total cost of about \$8,500.

He said the Chamber has discussed three options for the Freedom Fest: attempt to find more

sponsors, reduce it to a smaller level, or discontinue it totally.

In a handout to the commission, Clouse listed information about how surrounding communities handle their July 4 celebrations. He said some do it the same way Goodland has been, with the Chamber handling it all. There are some that depend on civic groups, and some get city and county help.

“We are asking you to consider this for the July 2005 Freedom Fest,” Clouse said. “Hopefully, that could be considered in the upcoming budget. We are asking the city to fund one-third of \$7,500 for the event, one-third from the county, and one-third from the Chamber and others.

“We believe it is something people look forward to and is an important part of our community.

“We understand you may not be able to make a decision at this time,

but wanted you to have the information and we would be interested in a decision before March.”

“Our city budget was done in July,” Mayor Rick Billinger replied.

“The budget for next year has \$500 for this project,” added City Manager Ron Pickman.

Commissioner Dean Blume asked how the Chamber had funded the program in the past, and how it was doing this year.

Chamber President Donna Swager said the contributions were lower this year, and the board had decided not to bill the members for the project as had been done in the past.

“I believe the lower contributions are a reflection of our economy,” Swager said. “We want these projects to be self funded as much as possible, and this is one way to move it in that direction.”

“We have been working to get the Chamber back on its feet,” Clouse said. “Over the last 18 months, we have restructured, and it will take some continuity to get the changes all in place.

“I am new on the board and most of us are new. We need to develop our leadership, and right now the basic membership fees fund the basic office operation.

“Freedom Fest could pay for itself, but this was a tough year, and it may be that way in the future.”

“We like to make sure we have funding on an annual basis,” Swager said. “We have to commit to fireworks in March.. We don’t have to have that level of an event, but it depends on what the people in the community expect.”

“I want to uphold this Chamber board,” said Commissioner John Garcia. “I believe you are doing things right. Your image has gone from a zero to a 10. You are to be commended for your efforts.”

Blume asked if the Chamber has approached any civic organizations.

“You are the first,” Clouse said. “There are others that can be asked, but you are the first. We will probably ask the county next. We would

ask that you consider this if you amend your budget. Please keep it in mind, and we will get back to you next spring for the 2006 budget.”

“As far as this next year goes, is there any way to increase the city amount?” Chamber board member Brian Linin said.

“Not unless the commission moved money from somewhere else,” Pickman said. “The budget was approved and published in August.”

“There is no way to increase this unless we find money from another area to do this,” Garcia said.

“That is the only way,” Pickman said, “but as I told the commission when we were doing the budget, there would be a good chance we would find ourselves in a tighter budget because of lower revenues in the water and sewer department. That is happening, and it looks like we will end the year in the hole. I don’t know where the money would come from, especially when we have trouble buying new equipment because of the tight budget.”

Other Chamber board members at the meeting were Tremon Kizer from Goodland High School and Courtney Warden, the executive director.

Music booster club holding pancake feed

By Kathryn Gurfinkel

The Goodland Star-News
Pancakes smothered in syrup with thick sausages, cool orange juice and a hot cup of coffee — the Goodland Music Boosters hope that menu will bring people in for their pancake feed fund raiser.

The group’s second Pancake Extravaganza is set for 5 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 13, at the Knights of Columbus Hall at Seventh and Caldwell.

“We’re really hoping it’s a big success,” said Connie Grieve, music boosters president.

He said the feed was a success last year, as they went through 90 pounds of batter and 80 pounds of sausage.

“We really had a blast last year,” he said.

Tickets for the all-you-can-eat event will cost \$4 for adults and \$3 for children. This year, Grieve said, he printed up 500 tickets and students are already out selling them.

Music students will help serve

and parents will cook the pancakes.

The 103-member booster club is made up of parents and other adults to support the students in band and vocal music in all Goodland schools. They meet once every month.

Although only in its second year, the music boosters do three major fund raisers per year, including the pancake feed, concessions at the Topside Tipoff basketball tournament and Basketball Madness Night, a face-off of business representatives and Goodland school faculty. Booster members help run the Kiwanis food stand at the Northwest Kansas District Free Fair each year.

For more fund raising, the club is selling T-shirts. The shirts have an “earth, wind and fire” theme to go along with the marching band’s theme this season. The \$10 shirts are available through any booster club member or band or vocal students.

High school band and vocal stu-

dents are recording a CD to raise money through the boosters, featuring Christmas music. It should come out near Thanksgiving.

The money raised by the boosters goes back to help out music students.

“We sponsor the music arts in USD 352,” said Connie Grieve.

The group hopes to offer its first scholarship to a music student this year, she said. Funds go to pay for hotel stays, projects and equipment purchases. The boosters have donated money to help bring musical groups to Goodland.

The Grieves say they are involved in the music boosters not only because their daughter Andrea is in the band and choir, but because they believe the students are a good bunch.

“We’ve really got a bunch of tal-

ented kids in this community,” he said.

The music boosters are receiving assistance with the pancake feed from area businesses including Wal-Mart, S&T Communications and the Knights of Columbus, which allows them to use their building.

For tickets, contact any member of the music boosters, band or vocal student, or call Grieve at 899-5957.

corrections

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student of the week



Name: Richard Bauman
Parents: Jerry and Reva Bauman
Grade: Senior
Age: 18

We’ve nominated this student because: Richard does a great job of keeping up in his classes and often goes beyond his teachers expectations.

Student Comment: My favorite aspect of school life is being around all the students, math and computer classes have always been my best liked subjects. I will remem-

ber all of the life lessons that Goodland High School has given me.

Activities involved in at school: Band, FCCLA, golf, Student Council, musical stage crew.

My choice of movies, books, and games: I like movies that are full of action. My favorite type of music is alternative rock.

After I leave Goodland High School I intend to: Attend Kansas State University and major in computer science and computer networking.

And 10 years from now, I think I’ll be: working on my Doctorate in computer science, while working at a secure job.

Favorite Quote: Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6

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