

Colby volunteers help thrift store



Doug Riney, manager at Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline in Colby, waited while Marvin Cloe, one of his employees, carried a box of merchandise through the door of the storeroom at the Goodland Churches Thrift Store Thursday. Riney called Jo Simmons, thrift store manager, and offered to bring a crew to volunteer in the store after reading and article in *The Colby Free Press* saying the store was looking for volunteers. Seven men from the company helped organize the storage room and warehouse on Wednesday and Thursday.

Photo by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

Youth wins essay contest

Michael Smith of Goodland won the District 9 Voice of Democracy competition last Sunday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall.

Smith, a sophomore at Goodland High, earned \$150 for his essay based on this year's theme, "Celebrating our Veterans' Service."

Elizabeth DeBusk, a senior at Hays High, earned \$100 for second place and Darei Goddard, a junior at Logan High, got \$75 for third among eight essays judged Sunday.

District 9 covers the area from the Colorado border east to Victoria and from Sharon Springs north to the Nebraska line.

The Voice of Democracy essay program is open to high school freshmen through seniors. To enter, students had to record and submit a three-to-five -minute essay based on the theme by Nov. 1.

The essays are judged on originality, content and delivery, first judged at the post level, with the winners advancing to the district level.

Smith won the Goodland competition held the first week of November, with Shannon Showalter placing second.

Showalter read her essay at the post's Veterans Day service.

The judges for Sunday's competition were Bill Selby, commander of the Goodland post; Jessica Cole,

a mother of three who has a Bachelor of Arts in journalism from the University of Wyoming; and Greg Stover, sports editor of *The Goodland Star-News* and adjutant of the Goodland American Legion Post.

The winning essays from each of the nine districts moves on to the state competition to be held in Goodland Wednesday.

The judges will be Dick Leiss, a loan officer at Western State Bank and a member of both the VFW and American Legion; Ron Vignery, a Goodland attorney and also a member of both veterans' organizations; and Susan Hall, a speech instructor at Colby Community College.

Jo Ann Wahrman, who along with her husband Joe are co-chairs for this year's state competition, said it would be nice to see more students involved in the program and encourages veterans to share their stories with them.

The state winner will be announced at the VFW/Auxiliary Mid-Winter Conference banquet on Saturday, Jan. 15, in McPherson.

All nine district winners will attend the banquet, and the state winner will recite his or her essay.

Wahrman said the theme for next year's contest will announced in April giving interested students a chance to work on their essays over the summer.

Hays teen wins battle, placed on transplant list

A Hays teen, the grandson of a Sharon Springs couple, has won the first round in a fight for his life.

Jarett Basgall, 19, grandson of Hubert and Vonna Basgall of Sharon Springs and Jack and Maxine Odom of Denison, Texas, but formerly of Goodland, has been put on the transplant list at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.



Basgall

A major fund-raising effort was launched about a month ago because he needed a new stomach, pancreas and intestine.

Donations have poured in, and help has come from the state-federal Medicaid program to give the teen a chance to live.

His parents, Steve and Sharon (Odom) Basgall of Hays, both have

medical insurance, but they said, one policy will only pay part of his expenses and the other won't pay at all.

The medical center would not put Jarett on the transplant list until another \$200,000 was raised.

In the past month, \$110,000 has been raised, and a contract has been worked out between Medicaid and the hospital, with Medicaid agreeing to pay enough to get Jarett on the list.

A pre-transplant medical evaluation was scheduled for this week. He had been diagnosed with pseudo-obstruction of the intestines.

Because of the rare disease, Jarett has never led a "normal" life. After emergency surgery to save his life

in October, his fight had only begun.

With pseudo-obstruction, the contractions of the intestines become inefficient, and the digestive tract behaves as if it is blocked. Symptoms are nausea, vomiting, abdominal bloating, pain and constipation.

His grandmother said he has endured a lot of pain, missed a lot of school and since the surgery has been on a colostomy bag. And he's living on borrowed time.

A couple of years ago, Vonna said, the doctors said he might have only two years to live.

If he hadn't had emergency surgery, she said, he wouldn't be here.

An article in the Wednesday, Nov. 24, issue of the *Hays Daily News* said the Basgalls got word the day before that Jarett was on the list.

They planned to spend Thanks-

giving at home, savoring their time together.

Steve will stay in Hays and work while Jarett and Sharon are in Pittsburgh for the transplant and follow-up care.

"I don't know when I'll get to see Steve again," Sharon said in the article, "so this is a good time for Steve and Jarett and I to spend time together."

Sharon said the news gave her much to be thankful for.

"This has been so unbelievable," she said in the article. "I can't believe this town has come together like this. This has been a month, and I am so amazed and so thankful to everybody."

Sharon's coworkers at Adams, Brown, Beran and Ball, an accounting firm, organized fund-raising efforts in Hays, and the family had help from the

Children's Organ Transplant Association, a non-profit organization, based in Bloomington, Ind., that organizes fund raisers for children who need organ transplants.

Fund raisers were held in Sharon Springs, where Missi Pletcher and Rita Smith gave their profits from selling Home Interiors candles for 10 days to the cause and the Altar Society at Holy Ghost Catholic Church held a bake sale.

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans agreed to match up to \$500.

Some planned fund raisers in Hays have been suspended, such as a benefit auction and a grill drawing.

"Both were just in the early planning stages and we've decided to suspend them now," said Dave Herl, who coordinated the fundraiser for Jarett.

Other fund-raisers that are well along in the process, such as a meat drawing, a bowling tournament, a Golden Corral breakfast, a Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas drawing and a family and friends gas-pumping event and hot dog and hamburger fed at Cerv's, will continue.

Sharon said the money in the association for the Jarett Basgall fund will remain available to the family as long as there is any possibility Jarett will need it.

After the transplant and initial follow-up care, she said, Jarett will continue to consult with the medical team at Pittsburgh for life.

The money can be used far into the future.

If it does turn out that there is any excess, Herl said, that money will go into group's endowment to help another child.

Rotary plans tipoff pancake feed

The Goodland Rotary Club will have its annual pancake feed Saturday morning for the Topside Tipoff basketball tournament.

The Rotarians will be serving from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Goodland high school cafeteria.

The menu is pancakes prepared from one of Grandma's recipes, pork sausage, orange juice and coffee.

Tickets can be purchased from any Rotary member or at the door.

Rotary uses profits from the pancake feed to help the teams in the

Topside Tipoff with their expenses. The club also raises several thousand dollars for college scholarships and helps boost youth organizations.

Each year, Rotary uses the money raised from the pancake feed to help with the local, national and international causes.

This year, Goodland Rotarians have contributed about \$4,000 to Rotary International to help eradicate polio worldwide.

Rotary and UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) and the World Health Organization hope to completely rid the world of polio in the next year or two.

corrections

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