

Wheelchairs don't stop seniors from swinging

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Star-News

Being in a wheelchair doesn't have to keep anyone from dancing, at least not when the Swingin' Seniors perform at the Good Samaritan Center.

The group performs the first Tuesday of each month at the center, and residents gather to enjoy the music. Some of them come to dance.

Edie Reed, Siebert, Colo., a member of the group, danced with residents Tuesday, as did Sherry Helton, activities director at the center. Helton danced with some of the residents on wheels.

From "The Yellow Rose of Texas" to Christmas carols, the group played a variety of lively music to energize the dancers and those clapping along.

Other members of the group are Carroll Reed, Seibert, who played lead guitar and sang; Bob and Gertie Zweygardt of St. Francis, who played guitar and piano, respectively; Vern and Nancy Werner of Flagler, Colo., guitar and wash tub; Larry Miller of Genoa, Colo., violin; and Bert and Vonna Basgall of Sharon Springs. Bert played bass.

The group has spent over 30 years lifting the spirits and rekindling memories at nursing homes, hospitals and senior centers in Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska. Ironically, one of the group's former members needs someone like them to lift her spirits.

Monette Keller of St. Francis, who was the group's drummer, has moved to a nurs-



ing home, Edie Reed said.
"It's sad," Reed said. "She isn't on medication or anything, just has trouble remembering things. But she doesn't have family nearby to take care of her."
But she isn't without anyone to care.
"We miss her dearly," Reed said.



Nancy Werner of Flagler, Colo., (left) played the wash tub while her husband Vern played guitar for the Swingin' Seniors when they performed last Tuesday at the Sherman County Good Samaritan Center. Larry Miller (middle) of Genoa,



Colo., played the violin, and center activities director Sherry Helton danced with Lela Walters, who waved happily from her wheelchair.

Photos by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News

Agritourism promises visitors, economic growth

By Greg Stover

The Goodland Star-News

Agritourism is one of the initiatives the Sherman County Convention and Visitors Bureau is working on to bring more visitors — and economic growth — to the county.

The Kansas Department of Commerce says people want to experience something completely different from their daily lives. When they visit a working farm, ranch or other agricultural operation, for recreation, shopping, dining, lodging, education or simple enjoyment — that is agritourism.

Donna Price, the bureau's director, is a member of Agritourism

Advisory Council for Kansas. Last month, she attended the state's first statewide agritourism conference in Great Bend, where the theme was "Fields of Green: Building Agritourism so They Will Come."

Price said she spent two days attending workshops and meetings on how to finance, start and develop an agritourism business, meeting people who have been successful in the field.

One speaker was Jane Eckert of Eckert AgriMarketing of St. Louis, which has helped farmers and ranchers across the country create successful businesses.

"Kansas has significant potential in agritourism, since its roots are deep in agriculture," said Eckert. "People connect farming and ranching with Kansas. Agritourism destinations in this state can offer tourists unique experiences, which is what drives their travel decisions."

At a bureau board meeting on Nov. 18 at the Goodland Regional Medical Center, Price told the members the excitement created at the conference was "absolutely phenomenal." People had to be turned away, she said.

Drew Rohlman of Goodland's Howard Johnson Hotel said for

Sherman County to take advantage of agritourism, two or three area farms or ranches need to get involved and, once started, have their stories told.

Price said anyone interested in getting started in agritourism should call her at (785) 890-3515.

At the meeting, the board listened to a marketing proposal by Claudia Larkin, president of Free Bird Business Solutions of Topeka. During her presentation, Larkin said emphasis on hunting and agritourism could bring visitors to Goodland. She said group tours and "drive through" visitors could be part of the target audience of Goodland's

marketing plan.

Larkin said having a marketing plan would help use the board's money in the best way possible, and free the director for tasks such as developing partnerships.

Price said the bureau has \$54,000 of its budget earmarked for marketing, of which \$14,000 is obligated for the yearly rental of the billboards it leases along I-70. Under the proposal, \$30,000 would be used to execute the plan with the other \$10,000 to pay Free Bird's fee.

The board will vote on the proposal at its meeting next week.

In October, the board established

a committee to organize a contest to find a new logo and tag line that captures the spirit of Sherman County. The committee presented a draft of the rules and procedures for the contest. The contest will begin soon after a new Kansas slogan and logo are announced in the next three to five weeks.

The next board meeting will be at 2 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 16, at the medical center. Among the items on the agenda are the bureau's budget for next year and further discussion of the marketing proposal by Free Bird.

The three county commissioners have been invited to attend.

Fireworks, not firearms

A gunfire scare Sunday turned out to be just some fireworks, but the homeowner got a ticket anyway.

With recent shooting and stabbings in town, police said, neighbors got jumpy after seeing bright lights and hearing "gunfire" around

9 p.m. Sunday at 1609 Clark.

The neighbors dialed 911 for help and officers from the Goodland Police Department and the Sherman County Sheriff's Office rushed to the area.

Police showed up at the home of Matthew Rivera and discovered

the "shots" were actually fireworks.

Police Chief Ray Smee said Rivera was issued a citation for lighting the fireworks in city limits.

"That's all it was," he said. "Just fireworks."

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story.

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We believe that news should be fair and factual.

We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce

Business After Hours

December 15, 2004

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

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707 Wheat Ridge Circle

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includes cover charge, party favors, snacks, plus one Double Occupancy Room, Champagne Toast at Midnight, Breadfast Buffet for Two and \$2 Bloody Marys on New Year's Day.

\$80 Advanced Reservation

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Includes all of the above PLUS Additional Buffet Dinner for Two on New Year's Eve

2218 Commerce Road, Goodland, Kan. 67735

Call 890-3644 or 890-8400 (after 5 p.m.) for more information

matters of record

Goodland Police

The following crimes have been reported to the Goodland Police Department:

Dec. 10 — Theft or lost property valued at \$6 was reported at 1520 Hwy. 27.

Lyle Chatfield reported criminal damage to his property estimated at \$1,500 at 1300 Walnut.

Mary E. Felver reported a broken back window of her 1995 Lincoln Towncar damage estimated at \$277.60 at 700 W. 12th.

Accidents

The following accidents were reported to the Goodland Police Department:

Dec. 10 — Lucille Fenner was driving a 1974 Chevrolet pickup

east when Sonia Sigala backed a 1992 Mercury Sable into her at 2160 Commerce.

District Traffic

The following fines were paid in the Sherman County District Court:

Nov. 24 — Lori Lanham-Macomber, 25, Denver, \$159 for speeding.

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