

North teacher new to profession, district

By Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News
A new profession, a new job, a new town and a new life have never seemed more comfortable, says the new fifth grade teacher at North Elementary.

Jeremy Samson, 22, practically stepped off the campus at Fort Hays State University into a classroom in Goodland for his first teaching job.

Samson, or "Mr. Samson" to his team of fifth graders, is a native of Atwood, so he is right at home in northwest Kansas.

"I'm from the area, at least," he said.

On his fifth day teaching fifth graders, the new teacher said everything has been very smooth.

"You always hear the horror stories about the first day," he said, "but it went really well. The first day ran really smoothly."

This week, the kids are learning about mathematic conversions.

Samson compared a foot to the size of his actual foot, an inch to half of his thumb and a yard to the distance from his nose to his outstretched arm.

He graduated from high school in Atwood in 2001 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Fort Hays this spring.

He said he tried to get into the Northwest Kansas Technical College, but was placed on a waiting list.

He had already started classes at the university and decided to stick with it. Samson said he chose teaching partially as a way to stay in the area.

"I really like northwest Kansas," he said.

After college, he applied to jobs all over the state and Goodland was the first district to bite.

"It was a really good fit for me," he said, adding he did his student teaching in fifth grade. "I just like the age."

Along with teaching, Samson is coaching seventh-grade football. He filled an open spot at the school left by Dee Burkett, who moved to



Jeremy Samson, new fifth grade teacher at North Elementary, escorted two students, Cooper Slough (left) and Alex Nelson, back to class after physical education. Samson leaned over Blaine Luther's desk (right photo) to help him with a math exercise.

Photos by Kathryn Burke/The Goodland Star-News



Wyoming.

So far, he said, he has met many teachers and has met some people with regional ties.

He knows Matt Mecheck, technology teacher at Grant Junior High, because he is from Atwood. Samson said his grandparents, David and Jori Daily, live in Sharon Springs. His father Joe and step-

mother Kayla live in Atwood, while his stepfather Dan and his mother, Gail Lewis, live in Dresden.

Samson said his new place is the right distance from home and he likes small towns. While Goodland fits, he is still transitioning into his new life.

His wife, Bethany, still lives in Hays while she completes a nursing

program at the university. Bethany, who will graduate in December, travels here on the weekends, Samson said, but living apart has taken some adjustment.

She is from a small town, Clay Center, and will move here after college.

When he isn't putting in 12-hour days at the school, he said, he likes

to spend time with Bethany and their dog Hunter, a lab-brittany mix. He likes attending pro and local sporting events, too.

In the classroom, his focus is on math. He teaches sixth graders and is working with them to hit those things necessary for state assessment tests.

"I just want to help out the math,"

he said. "A lot of kids don't like math. I want to make it fun."

"I want to help spawn a movement to help kids enjoy math."

Samson said he wants to foster a love of learning into his students and encourage them to continue learning.

"They have to be lifelong learners to succeed," he said.

Flesh-and-bone spammers go door-to-door in Goodland

By Kathryn Burke
The Goodland Star-News

Spam – those bits of unwanted solicitations sent through e-mail – was brought to life in Goodland two weekends ago as door-to-door salesmen blanketed the town.

Do you need new siding? How about fresh fruit? Or magazines?

So what are the rules and how do we ensure the flesh-and-bone spammers are on the level if we want to buy their wares?

Goodland requires solicitors, canvassers and peddlers passing through town to be licensed. If one shows up at your door, ask to see the license.

"It shall be unlawful for any person to [solicit] within the corporate limits of the city without then having an unrevoked and unexpired license therefor in his or her possession and issued by the city clerk," according to Article III in the city code under the licenses and business regulations section.

Janiel Dilling, payroll clerk with the city, checked the computer at the clerk's office and found they issue only about 20 licenses per year. She said those on the list include regulars who sell in town almost every day.

Two weekends ago, she said, the city didn't see any increase in people seeking licenses. Dilling said they had a few people in for a license to sell combine insurance and a license to sell peaches in Au-

gust. That means many of the solicitors may have been hitting the streets illegally.

Police Chief Ray Smee said officers handed out several warnings over the weekend. He said door-to-door salesmen hit the city at all times of the year.

A license is issued only after the city collects personal and professional information from the solicitor, including name, address, photograph, Kansas sales tax number and length of time he or she plans to remain in town.

Once the applicant has filled out a form, Smee has five days to do an investigation. He makes calls to previous areas the solicitor has covered and asks if anyone has reported problems.

He said if anything on the application is untrue or if he finds the business to be "unsatisfactory," the license can be denied.

Licensing peddlers helps to cut down on fraud, he said.

When it checks out OK, he said, the license is issued and the solicitor must carry it at all times and show it to anyone who asks.

The applicant is charged \$20 to cover the cost of the investigation. The license costs \$5 for each day the solicitor will be in town, not to exceed \$100 in a year. The license is issued for the time set fourth and limited to only those days.

A state permit is not enough; each

peddler must get a city license.

Once a peddler is licensed, the chief said, he or she can go up to anyone's door. If you don't want to be bothered, Smee recommended just telling the solicitors you aren't interested and asking them to go away.

Those selling products from a farm or orchard that were actually produced by the seller, those participating in a city fair or celebration and not-for-profit or charitable organizations are exempt from the fees. A license is only necessary for out-of-town solicitors.

Licenses can be taken away, suspended or denied if the solicitor is involved in any fraud, misrepresentation, false statement, breach of the peace or a menace to health, safety or general welfare of the city in the course of carrying on the business.

Violations are a Class B misdemeanor and solicitors breaking the law face a maximum fine of \$1,000 and six months in the county jail.

Brewster soldier injured in Iraq

By Tisha Cox

Colby Free Press

A Brewster High graduate is learning to walk again after a mine went off under his truck in Iraq in July.

Spc. Sean Bryant, the grandson of Duane and Judy Headley of Brewster, had volunteered to drive that day event though he should have been off duty.

His grandmother said he was released recently from the Eisenhower Army Medical Center at Fort Gordon in Augusta, Ga.

He spent last weekend with his parents, Kelly and David Branam, in Monroe, N.C., and is now at Hunter Air Force Base in Savannah, Ga., where he will do rehab.

Headley said he has to use a walker now. "He's got a good attitude," she said. "We expect him to make a full recovery."

Bryant lived with his grandparents his last two years of high school and graduated from Brewster High in 1999.

His grandparents said he was 10 months into his second Iraqi tour.

His first was a year long. His unit is due to come home in October.

She said his recovery will take time.

He is an Army truck driver, but in Iraq he was helping crew a gun truck to guard convoys.

The day he was injured he wasn't supposed to drive but Headley said Bryant took over right before the vehicle hit the mine.

Bryant took the brunt of the explosion, she said. Other soldiers with him were also injured, but not as badly.

"We thank God he was maybe able to save another family from grief," she said.

She said they talked by phone on Sunday and are keeping in touch.

As soon as he's able to travel, she said, Bryant is planning to visit his grandparents.

He enlisted about a year out of high school. Headley said there never really was anything else he wanted to do with his life.

"He always had it in his mind he wanted to be in the Army," she said, adding that she hopes he'll want to go to college when he gets out of the service.

She said they're proud of him, and also all of the soldiers in the war, and support them all.

Headley said many people have written and called Bryant during his convalescence.

"That's really been a big help to him," Headley said. "We appreciate that support."

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