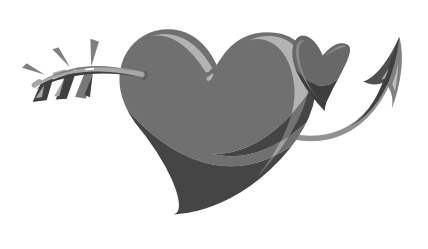


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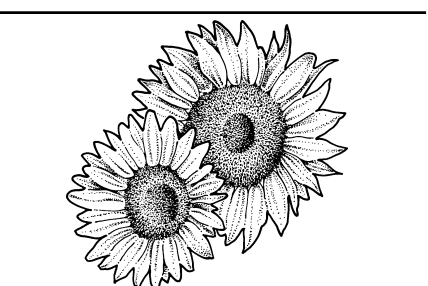
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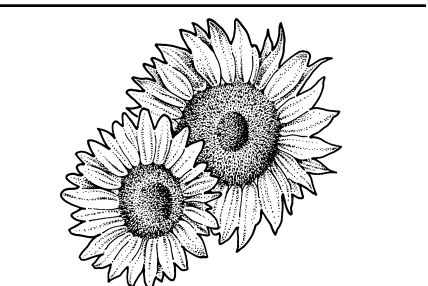


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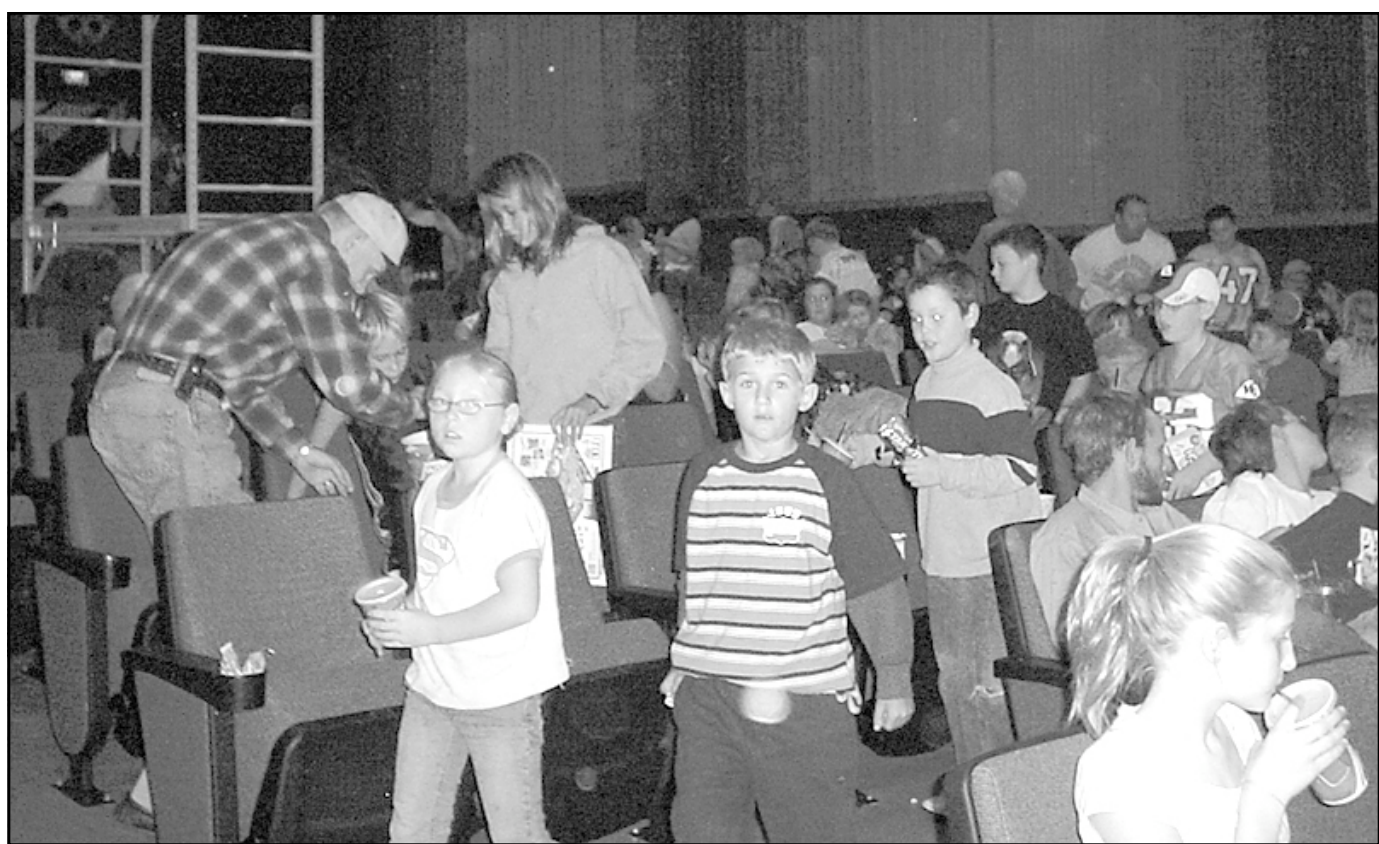
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Big Brothers, Big Sisters celebrating National Mentoring Month, looking for more volunteers



Elementary and junior high students and their parents gathered for the free "Mystery Movie" Saturday afternoon, Oct. 8. Clues were put in issues of *The Goodland Star-News*, pointing to the title of the movie, "Winn Dixie." Big Brothers, Big Sisters planned the event and had help from the Sherman Theatre, Snappy Snack, the Northwest Kansas Technical College and others.

Photo by Dennis Daise/Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sherman County

Youths benefit from 'Big Brothers' and 'Sisters'

By Sharon Corcoran
The Goodland Star-News

Forty-eight area youngsters are benefiting from having a "Big Brother" or "Big Sister," and the organization providing them is part of a national drive to help more kids.

January is National Mentoring Month, and Sherman County Big Brothers Big Sisters is part of the national campaign to recruit volunteers to mentor children.

The organization is providing mentors to 48 youngsters in Sherman and Wallace counties. The organization has made three community-based matches and two site-based matches (where the mentors go to the kids' schools) so far this month but has another 14 kids from the two counties on a waiting list for mentors.

It helps both the child and the volunteer evenly, said Dennis Daise, director of Sherman County Big Brother Big Sisters. Some form life-long friendships, he said; that's the idea.

Even if they move or the mentoring relationship stops for some reason, he said, they can remain friends.

"Mentors help children resist peer pressure, achieve results in school, stay off drugs and make the right choices" said President George W. Bush in a proclamation designating January as National Mentoring Month. "Many people become mentors because of the impact of a mentor in their own lives, creating a chain of compassion over the course of generations."

Big Brothers Big Sisters doesn't just help the kids who are matched with mentors, Daise said, but also those on the waiting list; one way is through the activities held, which gives them something fun to do.

The organization hopes to begin matching kids in Cheyenne County with mentors this year. There are people interested in

Youths tell favorite things about mentors

Several kids with mentors in Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sherman County were asked in December, "What is the best thing about your Big?" Their answers were:

Kelci and Lindsay: "She's nice to me."

Danielle and Kaylee: "She's fun to play with."

Kimber and Chelsea: "We have lots of fun."

Sheyenne and Kali: "She hangs with me and teaches me cheers!"

Chantel and Renea: "She makes me laugh."

Priscilla and Tatum: "Someone to have fun with and talk to."

Carly and Alicia: "She eats lunch with me."

Stephanie and Whitney: "She's nice to

me and spends time with me."

Ricky and Aaron: "Having someone to talk to and not be bored."

Page and Linda: "Helping me with math."

Thomas and Walter: "We get to do fun things."

Savanna and Emily: "Same interests and she likes basketball."

Elaine and Bonnie: "All the stories she tells me and sharing her hobbies with me."

Shayla and Tricia: "She's really nice to me."

Eric and Brandon: "That we do a lot of things. I really like his car!"

Tiffany and Kathy: "Going out with her to the movies and the Dairy Queen."

being on the board and some interested in the case manager position, Daise said. There have been a couple of meetings, he said, and there is interest in making matches in the Cheylin (Bird City) School District.

These types of matches have had success in Sherman and Wallace counties, he said. With the community-based matches, Daise said, the biggest emphasis is on at-risk kids, such as children of single parents. But site-based matches are for any kids who would like a big brother or sister, he said, those who lack siblings, for example.

Daise became the director of Sherman County Big Brothers Big Sisters in October 2002, and the organization began making matches in Sherman County in January 2003.

"We've always struggled to match the boys," Daise said, "because of the lack of

male volunteers. That's a struggle nationally."

The community here has really been supportive, though, he said; it's been nice. There have been many helping with Bowl for Kids Sake, he said, and Dave Branda, owner of the Sherman Theatre, helped with the "Mystery Matinee." Plus many have participated in the events.

The organization is planning Bowl for Kids Sake for Saturday, April 1, Daise said, and may plan a golf tournament. He has another fund-raiser in the works that he would like to keep a mystery for now.

It will be fun, he said, and hopefully a good activity.


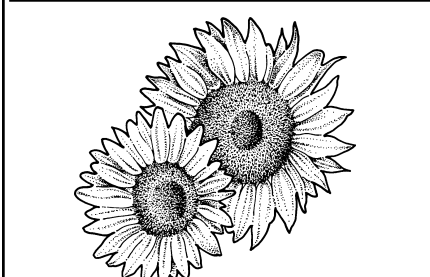
Myrt Kuhlman became the case manager for Wallace County in April, and Wendy Wellmann became the part time case manager for Sherman County in July.



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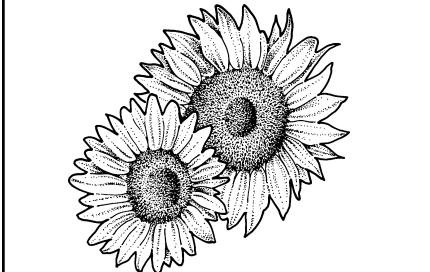
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