

# Bigs in School to pick up again; volunteers did good job

The month of July is rapidly coming to a close, and before long the schools will be packed with kids. We're excited about the Bigs In School option to pick up again in all the counties and pleased with the good job the high school volunteers did.

For Cheyenne County, I'm happy to welcome Meghann Kueck as the new case manager for Big Brothers Big Sisters. Meghann will have her office on the south end of the Poling Chiropractic and Family Health Center.

I want to thank Brett and Cynthia Poling for their help with the office. Meghann will be starting on Monday, July 17, and will conduct intake for all of Cheyenne County. The number there is (785) 332-8989.

Her position will be part-time, so please be patient with her as she learns the ropes with her new position. I'm confident she will do an excellent job.

There will be plenty of changes for Sherman County Big Brothers Big Sisters. I am leaving my posi-



## dennis daise

- big brothers big sisters

tion as executive director effective July 31st.

Case Manager Wendy Wellmann, who has done a great job, will also be leaving, so we wish her well. The program has come a long way since the match process was started in January of 2003.

Inez DePlata started that same month, and she has been a pleasure to work with. She does a great job of greeting the public, volunteering when needed and was a Big Sister for a time and made a huge difference in a child's life when the girl needed a friend.

Rhoads Construction has been great to the program, and I appreciate their generosity. Mark Scheopner has done great as a Big Brother

manager for Wallace County, started making matches this past year and, for a smaller community, is doing great. Cheyenne County has had a couple of Bowl for Kids Sake events and will soon see what help the mentoring can do for the kids who need a friend.

One of the most difficult aspects of the position has been the kids on the waiting list who aren't matched because a volunteer hasn't stepped up. It is a helpless feeling, and I have seen kids over these past few years that chose the wrong path when a mentor may have been able to make a positive influence.

That can be a helpless feeling, but it is part of the world that we live in today. So to finish, I want to thank

all those who have supported us and hopefully will continue to.

I also want to announce that Big Brothers Big Sisters of America awarded its highest honor to Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters. The Clifford P. Norman Service Award was presented to Bill Hanna, chairman of the Kansas organization's Board of Directors.

This special award is given to only one board member nationwide each year. Hanna has been the chair of the Kansas board of directors since its inception in 2002. He is also a member of the National Big Brothers Big Sisters Board of Directors.

Hanna has given presentations at more than 30 medium to large businesses in Wichita, including Koch Industries, Cargill Meat Solutions, Cox Communications, T-Mobile and many banks. His presentations have led to over 580 new school-based matches just this year.

The most unique element of his talent is his ability to convince businessmen to be mentors. In 2003, only 23 percent of Kansas' school-based

matches were with men. In 2006, more than 34 percent of the mentors are men. A huge contribution to this total is businessmen whom Hanna has personally recruited.

Hanna accepted the honor at the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America conference the second week of July in Indianapolis.

Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters serves more children than any other mentoring agency in the nation, having served over 5,600 children statewide last year. In large part due to Hanna's vision and passion, this is a 14 percent growth rate from the previous year.

From a column in *The Denver Post* by Amanda Cherry, she shared how as a child she was scared to swim and then on her honeymoon she had the opportunity to scuba dive.

"But when it came time for diving to fit into my life," she said, "it didn't matter that I'd chosen dance

lessons over swimming practice years ago. What mattered was that I was able to obtain the necessary knowledge at the appropriate time. Just as I couldn't have known as a young child that I should learn to swim because I would be coerced into scuba diving one day, I can't possibly know exactly which skills we'll need for whatever we may be doing at 45 or 55 or 65. We only hope that we'll be willing and able to obtain the knowledge we need when we need it."

Again, thanks to Myrt, Wendy, the board, the corporate sponsors and all the businesses and sponsors who have lent support, and the Bigs and Littles and how they enriched my life.

May God bless you all, and I pray that the communities would support the programs and to not let the mentoring stop. It does make a "Big" difference.

# Farmers are checking wheat seed germination

With the quality of this year's wheat crop, farmers are concerned about keeping seed wheat. Many are sending in samples to a certified seed lab to have the germination checked.

This year's wheat crop is averaging about 97 percent germination, said Daryl Strouts, executive director at the Kansas Crop Improvement Laboratory, adding that the figure is very good.

For the first several weeks after harvest, he said, it's important to make sure the wheat is chilled before taking a germination test. The lab always does that. Farmers testing their seed at home should chill



## jeanne falk

- agron notes

the wheat by putting it in the refrigerator at 40 degrees for five days.

Wheat has a physiological characteristic called post-harvest dormancy. If you take a germination test immediately after harvest, the germination can be quite low. This keeps the seeds from sprouting before fall. The chilling breaks the

period, said Jim Shroyer, Kansas State University wheat agronomist.

Hard white wheats with poor sprouting tolerance, for example, have almost no post-harvest dormancy. They will germinate almost as soon as the seed is harvested.

Other varieties, such as Overlay,

have a relatively long post-harvest dormancy and may not germinate well for five or six weeks after harvest unless the seed is chilled. By Labor Day, all varieties will have lost their post-harvest dormancy and should germinate unless the seed is defective.

If there is any question about the viability of the seed, it is well worth the \$15 it costs to have the seed tested for germination by a certified laboratory. This is especially true in areas where there was freeze damage, severe drought, a rain delay at harvest, or scab on the wheat last year.

# Dispute with neighbor can go to small claims court

*Dear Attorney General Kline: I am currently involved in a dispute with a neighbor over the sale of a piece of farm equipment I sold him several months ago. He has paid a portion of what he owes me, but I'm having trouble collecting the rest, which is about \$2,950. An attorney needed a \$2,500 retainer to file an action on this contract dispute and could not guarantee that I would end up out \$2,500 at the end of the process. Is there anything else I should consider in this situation?*

Dear Kansas Consumer: You should consider a filing under Article 27 of Chapter 61 of the Kansas Statutes Annotated. Do not let the citation intimidate you — I give it only so that you can ask your local librarian to help you find the law, which is called the Kansas "small claims procedure."

The Kansas Legislature established small claims court so Kansans could quickly and inexpensively settle their legal differences involving matters of \$4,000 or less without the need of attorneys. Parties present their cases directly to the judge in small claims court. Attorneys are generally barred from small claims court, and the rules of evidence and procedure are relaxed.

You can sue any person or business that owes you money or property, as long as the underlying action



## phill kline

- attorney general

took place in Kansas and the defendant can be served in Kansas. It appears that your case is one ready made for small claims court.

Small claims court procedures can vary from county to county, so make sure you get the information you need from the clerk of the district court in the county in which you intend to file suit, or by going on-line and checking [www.ks.courts.org](http://www.ks.courts.org).

Here's what you'll need to do to file a claim:

Write out the details of your claim. Get a petition for small claims court from the clerk of the district court clerk and sign it in the presence of a notary public or clerk's office employee.

On the petition, you must have the correct address of the business or person being sued so a summons can be issued to the sheriff to be served on the defendant. If the summons is not properly served, the case cannot be heard by a judge.

The court sets a hearing date and

notifies both parties of that date. Once the summons is served, the defendant is required to appear in court.

Small claims court proceedings are designed to be informal

and are driven by common sense. Both sides will have the chance to explain their perspectives on the case. It is best to bring all relevant documents, exhibits or witnesses with you when you go to trial.

The judge may make a decision on the day the case is presented or may decide to continue the case to allow more time for evidence or deliberation. If the defendant was properly served and failed to appear for the trial, the judge may find the defendant in default and award judgment to the person who filed suit.

After the judge has rendered an opinion, the winning party enters the collection phase of the lawsuit. The court may have forms for this process. The losing party may file an appeal, but that must be done within 10 days of the filing of the judgment in the case. Keep in mind that the clerk of the district court cannot serve as private counsel, render legal advice on the merits of any claim or direct any collection efforts.

Not every claim can be resolved

in small claims court, but those that can are often resolved in a much less expensive and complicated manner than most would expect. Small claims court is neither complicated nor expensive and can be a great way for you to get "your day in court" when you have a relatively simple matter requiring a judgment call.

Finally, please consider informal resolution before filing in small claims court. In many instances, merely mailing the small claims filing to the defendant before filing, with a note attached giving them a few days to consider the case before it is filed, will clear the air and result in a resolution agreeable to both parties.

*Attorney General Phill Kline offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints or questions.*

Call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, (800) 432-2310.

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# Crossword Puzzle

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## Clues Across

1. Vaulter's tool

5. Seize without right

10. Texas armadillo

14. Ethiopian town

15. Ber \_\_\_ - top Shark

16. Slang for fellow grad

17. Ear modification

19. Ravel hit

21. Licorice-flavored liqueur

22. Thick plates

23. Constellation

24. El \_\_, Texas

26. Nonstandard dialect

30. Remunerations

34. Tropical Asian palms

35. Rail support

36. Executive of operations

37. Home of the Orangemen

42. A baglike structure

43. Furrow

44. Sonja \_\_, skater

45. Forces

48. Lowest voices

49. Sparks

50. John Paul II's homeland (abbr.)

51. Outer layer of seeds

54. Slipshod

59. Drink

61. Capable of treatment by surgery

62. Throw or give off

63. The Shrew's hometown

65. Picasso's mistress

66. Indian groom

67. Standard of perfection

68. Poker stake
4. Auricles

5. Joins

6. Saintry (Span.)

7. Encourage

8. Rural delivery

9. Compartment for mail (abbr.)

10. Facial paleness

11. Ancient Greek city

12. Outside the city

13. "\_\_\_ and Andy," TV show

18. Of the abdominal cavity

20. Oregon State Sheriff's Association

24. Extreme discomfort

25. Away from wind

26. Old-hat

27. Caucasian

28. The third hour, about 9 a.m.

29. So. Am. wood sorrel

30. Annotation to retain

31. A pictorial representation

32. Affected with fright

33. Lordship's jurisdictions

38. Acid

39. Files a suit

40. Person or ship that hunts whales

41. Affirmative

46. Flightless birds having reduced wings

47. Sudden snatch

48. North wind

50. \_\_ New Guinea

51. Fastenings

52. \_\_, TV award

53. Invests in little enterprises

54. Protocol

55. Mammal genus

56. Abba \_\_, Israeli politician

57. Narrow wood strip

58. Dried and withered

60. Indicates near

64. Public promotion of a product

## Clues Down

1. Dad

2. Norse god

3. Angolan monetary unit

The crossword puzzle brought to you by:



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