

Sherman County Farm-City Banquet

Miss Kansas emphasizes family values

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News

Miss Kansas brought her message of strengthening the family to the Sherman County farm-city banquet audience Tuesday evening at the Goodland Elks lodge.

Miss Kansas, Michelle Walthers, was the speaker for the farm-city banquet attended by about 300 people and sponsored by the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce.

Walthers entertained the audience by playing the piano during dinner, and at the end of her speech she demonstrated the signing talent she did for the Miss Kansas pageant.

Walthers, a Barton Community College student who is from Tawanda, said she wanted to go to college, and she did everything she could do to raise money for college while in high school.

"Someone suggested I might try the Miss Kansas pageant," Walthers said, "because the top prize is a scholarship.

"I had not thought about a pageant, but decided to give it a try. The first year I came in fourth, and decided to give it one more try last year and won the Miss Kansas title."

She said one of the things each contestant has to have is a platform they would pursue as the voice of Miss Kansas.

"I researched all the hot topics," she said. "I thought most of the problems being discussed had a common thread, and that is the fam-



GOODLAND STAR-NEWS
Miss Kansas Michelle Walthers played music, spoke and sang at Goodland's Farm-City Banquet held Tuesday.

ily. "If the family doesn't work, society doesn't work."

She said if we think of society as a big tree the family is the root system, and if the roots fail the whole

society falls.

Walthers said the family needs to be a strong foundation, and she had six ways to help. She said it was easy to remember the six points because they spell out FAMILY.

Forgiveness was the first point, and she said true forgiveness had to be complete and taken care of quickly.

Appreciation was the second, and she said we need to put this into practice in our daily lives.

Make memories was third. She said this means families need to spend time together.

Initiative was fourth. She said this was like teamwork, but that it goes further and the person needs to take the initiative to help the family even if it is not directly their job.

Love was fifth, and she said this is the glue that holds the family and relationships together. She said the three words, "I love you," need to be said even if you think they know it to be true.

You was the sixth, and she said it is important to remember you have control over yourself, and to do things to support the family.

"I challenge you to go home and think of ways to make your family stronger," Walthers said. "Don't be happy with the status quo.

"Make it better."

She sang a Liza Minnelli song "Manhattan Lady," and a Nat King Cole song "Orange Colored Sky."

Master of ceremonies Dick Liess thanked Walthers for her program, and her offer to play the dinner music.

Walthers signed autographs and sold copies of her children's book after the program was over.

She said the Miss Kansas pageant this year will be in June in Pratt.

Campaign continues, despite wife's cancer

WASHINGTON (AP) — John and Elizabeth Edwards stood side-by-side in the North Carolina sunshine to announce that her cancer was back and that his run for the presidency would go forward at full speed.

It was a sympathetic tableau that drew an immediate outpouring of well wishes from people of all political persuasions.

"You can cower in the corner and hide or you can be tough and go out there and stand up for what you believe in," Edwards said.

His wife said her illness was a

hurdle they would surmount together. That sort of can-do optimism in a grim and unavoidable situation may well bring short-term benefits to a campaign trying to keep up with Democratic heavy-hitters Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama.

But the longer-term political ramifications of his pursuing the presidency during her health crisis are unknown, and could well hinge on Mrs. Edwards' health. If Mrs. Edwards is able to campaign at his side with energy and vigor, there could well be a positive reaction to

the resolute candidate and his wife, who press forward despite adversity.

Millions of Americans themselves have faced cancer or know

someone who has, and can identify with their challenge.

"It makes him real," said Democratic strategist Dane Strother. "It makes her real."



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Abortion opponents accuse judge

TOPEKA (AP) — Abortion opponents filed an ethics complaint Thursday against the Sedgwick County judge who dismissed 30 misdemeanor criminal charges against the state's best-known abortion provider.

The complaint alleges District Judge Paul W. Clark violated the rules of judicial conduct by not disclosing he had received campaign contributions in 2004 from a law firm representing Dr. George Tiller and from Sedgwick County District Attorney Nola Foulston.

The rules, imposed by the Kansas Supreme Court, require a judge to remove himself from a case "in which the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned."

State Sen. Tim Huelskamp, R-Fowler, who strongly opposes abortion, filed the complaint with the Commission on Judicial Qualifications, which reviews allegations of misconduct by judges. Officials with national anti-abortion groups, including Operation Rescue, also were listed as complaining parties.

"When you have an overt appearance of impropriety, it diminishes the public trust in the judicial system," Operation Rescue President Troy Newman said during a Statehouse news conference where Huelskamp signed his complaint.

Dan Monnat, an attorney in the firm representing Tiller, said Clark has developed a strong reputation for fairness in more than two decades on the bench. He said the ethics complaint is part of "last-gasp maneuvers" by abortion opponents against Tiller.

"I think it's preposterous in Kansas that a judge should need to disqualify himself because lawyers have contributed to his campaign," Monnat said. "It happens every day."

In December, then-Attorney General Phill Kline filed the criminal case against Tiller, accusing the doctor of performing illegal late-term abortions and failing to properly report the details to state health officials. Clark dismissed the charges the next day.

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