

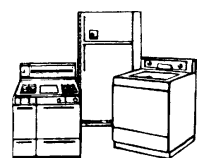
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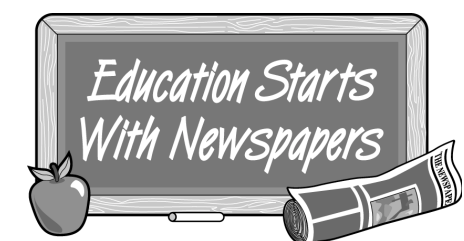
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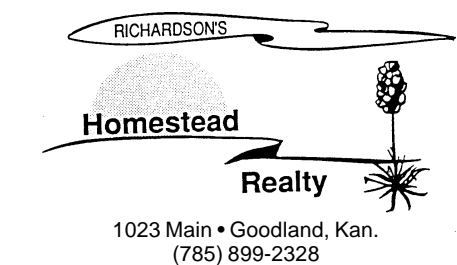
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Congrats to the state-bound Big Stix team!



The state-bound Big Stix are: Front row left to right, Lindsay Shields, Amber Cowan, May Davis, Melissa Swager, Shandel Simon, Emily Linden and Crystal Hernandez. Back row left to right, Justeen Koehler, Chelsea Gray, Whitney Archer, Nicolette Clancy, Vanessa Crotinger, Dani Bedore and Jena McCall.

Photo by Andy Scheopner

Girls softball team a success

By Sharon Corcoran

The Goodland Daily News

After defeating the Hays Storm in two of three games at the regional tournament at Hill City July 7 and 8, the Goodland Big Stix softball team will go on to compete at the state tournament in Salina beginning on Friday.

The girls 12-and-under fast pitch softball team began traveling to games the first week of June and have a season record of 24 wins and nine losses.

In Hill City, the Big Stix dominated in their first two games of the tournament defeating Phillipsburg 10-2 and Norton 13-4, then went on to play three games against Hays.

In the third game of the tournament and the first against Hays, the team won 9-6 despite pitcher Dani Bedore allowing as many runs as she had in the first two games combined.

In the second game against Hays, the fourth of the tournament, Goodland only managed to score 6 runs as Bedore suffered her first loss of the day. Hays racked up 15 runs, making the score 15-9.

Hays and Goodland faced off again in the championship game, with the winner moving on to state.

Although starting pitcher Lindsay Shields and Bedore, in relief, allowed the Storm to score 12 runs, the Big Stix still managed to defeat Hays with the offense bringing in 20 runs and living up to the team's name. Shields picked up the win, and Bedore earned the save.

"We played our best softball of the year at Hill City," Big Stix coach Andy Scheopner said. "We hit the ball really well, got excellent fielding, and our pitching was as strong as it ever has been. When you combine those three things, you are going to be tough to beat."

Chelsea Gray led the Big Stix offense for the tournament with 12 hits, seven runs, and seven RBIs. With four doubles and one triple, she also led the team in extra base hits.

Bedore finished the tournament with a 3-1 record and one save. She also had 10 hits, seven runs, and seven RBIs, including a triple and a home run.

Melissa Swager had nine hits including a

double, a triple, and a home run. She also scored five runs and had six RBIs.

Nicolette Clancy had two doubles and two triples. She led the team with nine runs and had three RBIs. Shandel Simon was second with eight runs to go with her three RBIs and one triple. Whitney Archer had a home run and five RBIs.

The Big Stix's next competition will be at the state tournament in Salina July 20-22.

Scheopner said there will be 25-30 teams participating, and the competition will be tough.

Only five of those teams will place in the double elimination tournament, he said. A team will be out of the competition after their second loss, Scheopner said, but will need to win between five and ten games in order to place.

"State will be tough," he said, "but we are going down there expecting to place."

He said the team will find out within the next couple of days who their opponents will be.

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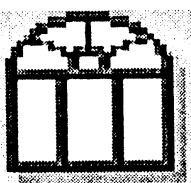
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