

Car wash raises money for skate park

Youth group needs less than \$3,000 for first phase, slab

A car wash for a Goodland dealer added \$1,800 to the fund for a skate park in Steever Park.

Connie Livengood, a member of the Shine On Sherman County Youth Committee, said members washed cars for Finley Motors, and co-owner Danny Archer told them he would donate \$50 for each car sold in March.

She said the group will wash the cars a second time on Saturday, April 26.

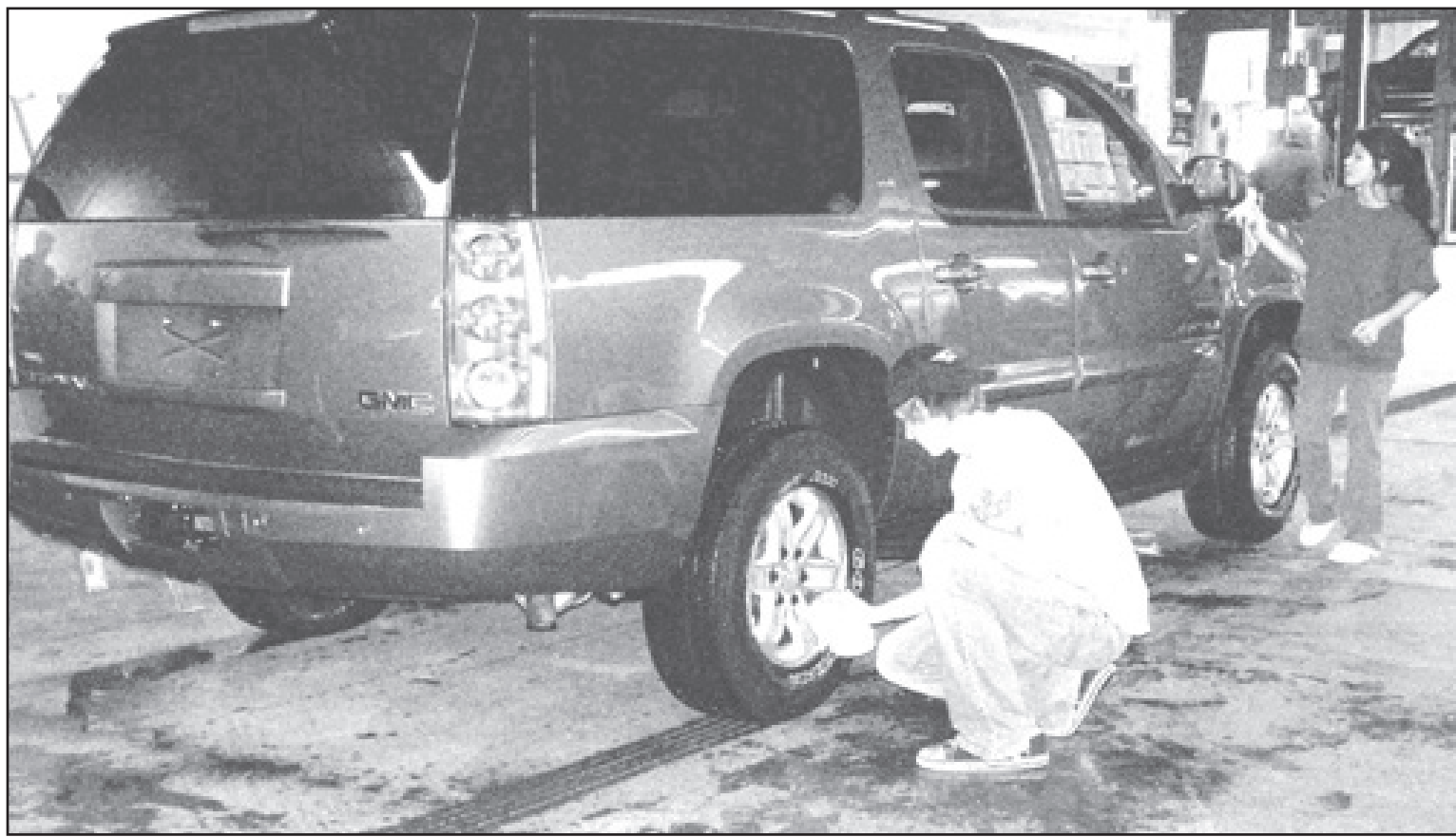
Livengood said the city has removed the sprinklers from the area around the old swimming pool near the power plant, where a concrete slab for the skate park is to be poured in the next few weeks.

She said those helping with the car wash included Kim

Bohme, Blaine Varney, Angie Medrano, Jennifer Pennington, Brittaney Medrano, Jordan Cochrane, Ashley Garza, Eric Linnell, Tyler McClelland, Kyle Malenthaler, Deanna Livengood, Ashley Archer, Danny Archer and County Treasurer Iris Scheopner.

She said the group set up a wash line to rinse, wash, dry and polish all of Finley's cars.

The committee began raising money for the park about a year ago, and so far, they have more than \$27,000, she said. The first phase, the slab, will cost about \$30,000. After it's done, Livengood said, the committee will be raising money for equipment to go on it.



Jordan Cochrane and Ashley Garza helped wipe down one of the cars at Finley Motors as part of a fund-raising effort for a skate park to be built in Steever Park.

Photo by Connie Livengood

Reminders given for abuse prevention

By Sharon Corcoran

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The Regional Prevention Center is reminding people of things they can do to help children and their parents for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, including wearing a blue ribbon to raise awareness of the issue.

The Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect project is paid for by a grant from the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund, established by the Legislature in 1999 to spend money from the state's Master Tobacco Settlement.

The project hopes to educate adults and children in the center's 11-county area about child abuse and neglect, said Wendy Wellmann, community prevention consultant, what it is, how to recognize it and how to report it.

Yearly in the United States, she said, more than 3 million children are reported as abused or neglected. On an average day, she said, three children will die from the abuse or neglect, with children under 2 having the highest rate of death.

Child abuse is a complex problem, Wellmann said, born out of other social ills, including poverty, drug and alcohol abuse and a lack of programs to support struggling parents. Its solution requires a multi-faceted approach backed by a strong public policy stance that values child well-being, she said, including a transition of spending priorities from intervention after the fact to prevention before abuse happens.

Solving the problem will require a group effort, Wellmann

said, bringing everyone together to work on solutions. This April and throughout the year, she said, the Kansas Children's Service League encourages everyone to be one of the STARS in their community to enhance children's safety and support families.

To do that:

- Support children and parents by offering to babysit and getting involved in activities to help them.

- Take a positive perspective, focusing on what families are doing right and looking for opportunities to promote positive relationships.

- Address the issue. Call or write elected officials, talk with others and encourage schools and churches to support programs for parents.

- Recognize that parenting can be challenging — help with chores and errands and help families get through the day — and their lives.

- Strengthen coping skills by being a friendly face to parents and their children, and listening.

The Blue Ribbon began as a national symbol of child abuse awareness in 1989, when a Norfolk, Va., grandmother took a stand against abuse. Bonnie Finney tied a blue ribbon to her van as a memorial for her 3-year-old grandson, who had been murdered by his mother's abusive boyfriend.

Others joined her in using blue ribbons as a reminder of the bruises of child abuse. Call the prevention center at (785) 460-8177, and they will send you a blue ribbon to wear, or pick one up at *The Goodland Star-News* office, 1205 Main.

Parents can teach children ways to protect themselves

The Regional Prevention Center recommends parents teach their children the following to keep themselves safe:

- I know my name, address, telephone number and my parents' names.

- I always check first with my parents or the person in charge. I tell them before I go anywhere or get into a car, even with someone I know.

- I always check first with my parents or a trusted adult before I accept anything from anyone, even from someone I know.

- I always take a friend with me when I go places or play outside.

- I say "No" if someone tries to touch me or treat me in a way that makes me feel scared, uncomfortable or confused.

- It's OK to say "No," and I know that there will always be someone who can help me.

- I know that I can tell my parents or a trusted adult if I feel scared, uncomfortable or confused.

- I am strong, smart and have the right to be safe.

corrections

The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

Adults can notice, report abuse

Abuse affects children of every age, race and income level, often takes place in the home and comes from a person the child knows and trusts.

Experts talk about four major types of child maltreatment, which can be found separately or occur together:

- Neglect, failure to provide for basic needs, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or proper supervision.

- Physical abuse, intentional injury, which includes shaking, beating, kicking, punching or burning that results in everything from minor marks to bruising to death.

- Sexual abuse, any sexual contact by an adult or older child. This includes fondling or rubbing the genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure and using the child for prostitution or the production of pornography.

- Emotional abuse, behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth, including constant criticism, threats

and rejection.

To report child abuse, call the West Region Protection Center at (800) 264-3798 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or (800) 922-5330 after hours, weekends and holidays. In an emergency, dial 911 or call your police.

When reporting abuse, include the child's name and address and names of parents or others responsible for the child's care, the child's location, the child's condition, whether the alleged perpetrator still has access to the child and any other information that might help show the cause of the injuries or the extent to which the child might be in danger.

Parents can search their county for a list of sexual predators from a computer with Internet access, available at most libraries. Log on to www.accesskansas.org/kbi/. At left side of screen, click on Conduct a Kansas Registration Offender Search. Click on OK in the security alert box.

At the bottom of the KBI registered offender

website disclaimer, click on "Conduct a Kansas Registered Offender Check." You can search by name, county, city or zip code.

Long-term consequences of child abuse and neglect include physical, psychological and behavioral consequences, said Wendy Wellmann, community prevention consultant at the Regional Prevention Center; the impact is far greater than its immediate, visible effects.

Physical consequences include Shaken Baby Syndrome, which can include blindness, learning disabilities, mental retardation, cerebral palsy and paralysis; impaired brain development; and lifelong poor physical health.

Psychological damage might include depression and anxiety, low self-esteem, difficulty establishing and maintaining relationships, eating disorders and suicide attempts.

Behavior problems can run to delinquency, teen pregnancy, drug use and problems in school.

News reports show child sexual abuse prevalent

As news reports reveal details about arrests at and children taken from the Yearn for Zion Ranch in Texas, Community Prevention Consultant Wendy Wellmann said she is waiting to see if the case sets a precedent for handling child abuse in the future.

She also recommends ways for parents to help prevent their children from being victims of sexual abuse and being alert to the signs and knowing what steps to take if they are victims.

Hundreds of women and children have been taken from the Fundamental Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints compound following a call last Friday from a 16-year-old girl who said her 50-

year-old "husband" was beating her and sexually abusing her.

News reports say that with a search warrant obtained after the girl's call, officials were looking for documents or other evidence that the girl, who allegedly had a baby several months ago, was married to Dale Barlow. Under Texas law, girls younger than 16 cannot marry, even with parental consent.

Barlow was sentenced to 45 days in jail last year after pleading no contest to conspiracy to commit sexual conduct with a minor. Former church leader Warren Jeffs was arrested in 2006 on charges of arranging the marriage of a 14-year-old girl to her 19-year-old cousin. He was sentenced to two consecu-

tive life terms in Utah and faces more charges in Arizona.

How the cases are handled may set a precedent for how abuse is handled in the future, Wellmann said, adding that she thinks such treatment of children is sick and should not be tolerated. Unfortunately, she said, sexual abuse is a significant threat to children today.

She recommends parents follow the seven steps from "Darkness to Light" found at [\[www.darkness2-light.org\]\(http://www.darkness2-light.org\) to prevent their children](http://www.darkness2-</p>
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from being victims of sexual abuse and to be sure they get help as soon as possible if they are. Those steps

include being aware of the risk of abuse, she said, and taking action based on that risk, rather than based on a level of trust in people. They

also recommend parents not leave one child with one adult, she said,

which alone can greatly reduce the risk of sexual abuse.

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April 17, 2008 at 7:00 PM

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