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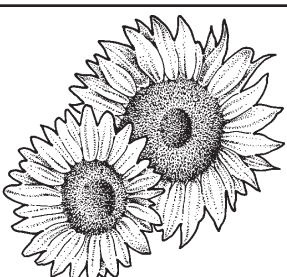
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Michael Pettibone (left) and Jed Gray play the game "Guitar Hero" at the AFS Club Annual Lock-In on Saturday, Jan. 15. Kaitlyn Topliff watches.

Students, sponsors enjoy night of fun, food and friends

By Elaine Felver

A cultural invasion occurred at Goodland High School when the AFS Lock-In made its annual appearance on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 15-16. Nearly every year for the past four decades, the event has united Goodland students with others worldwide in games, talent, cultural events, food and fun. Formerly known as American Field Service, the now global AFS Intercultural Programs is a volunteer exchange organization, recognized by the U.S. State Department as one of the premiere of such groups, and is sponsored locally by Mary Porterfield and Tanya Szanto.

Stephen Buller and Day Waugh, copresidents of the Goodland High School chapter, organized the games and assisted with food, talent show and other commitments.

Club member Michael Pettibone noted that the lock-in presented an opportunity to enhance his people skills. During the talent show he and Trace Waugh utilized their Spanish proficiency to do some translating. Trace enjoyed "bonding with kids from all over and with all kinds of expertise." Jed Gray played guitar and sang, and J.J. Farris and Caleb Fugleberg also strummed their stuff, commenting that they were happy to be able to meet and interact with students from other cultures. Garrett Geist's talent, he remarked with a grin, was to lead the clapping.

Joel Linin, at five in the morning and with two hours still to go, groaned, "It's

been fun, but right now I'm just tired." His AFS brother, George (Italy), has lived in Goodland since August, 2010, with Joel and his parents, Max and Brenda Linin. Buntita "May" (Thailand), hosted by the Curt and Tina Goodwin family, also arrived in August. She said she did not like how cold winter is here. What she did like about the lock-in was "the opportunity for us exchange students from all over Kansas to share with each other and get to hear each others' experiences."

Significant for LeRoy Prine, was "what AFS brings to our small community. Through it we get contact with and can learn from many other cultures and languages." Cortney Cowan added that such contact "lets us think about going into some areas we might ordinarily not."

Other Goodland students participating were Jesse Cooper, Sierra Estes, Tim Fugleberg, Jacquelynn Gulley and Jessica Klemm. Carly McCracken contributed, "It's a great thing to get to mix not just with our own students, but to meet others from all over and learn about their worlds." Elizabeth Wellmann also considered that "really important" adding, "and we get to have lots of fun." It helped Chantel Coates to "learn about the cultures of different countries and bring those experiences back home." Kaitlyn Topliff, referring to Elsbet from Faro Islands (near Iceland) found it unique to "meet people from parts of the world we know nothing about."

Eight students from Thailand, Japan,

Italy, Austria, Chile, Germany, Finland and the Faro Islands, were present at the lock-in as well as 27 AFS Club members from the Kansas towns of Beloit, Downs, Cawker City, Satanta, Sublette, Plains, Elkhart and Goodland.

Octavio Arredondo, Sublette, indicated he valued the opportunity to come to Goodland and hang out with people from other cultures and religions and hear how they live.

From Germany, Marvin, enjoyed playing virtual American football with Octavio and also real football for the first time at his host town of Beloit. Haruyasu, Japan/Satanta, enjoyed being with his friend Zack Freeman (Satanta) and also speaking Japanese again for a short while.

Scott and Traci Waugh; Gordon, Caroline, and Chandler Pettibone; Jackie Buller; Elaine Felver; Porterfield; Tanya and Rick Szanto; and out-of-town sponsors Carol Ann Zimmerman, Anita Mason and Dianna Meyer interrupted their normal schedules and sleep routines to sponsor the event, and, according to Porterfield, "all have done so for many years in the past."

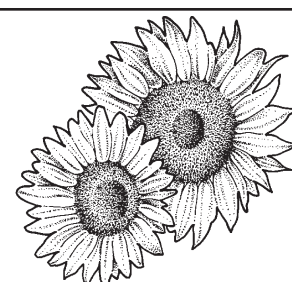
Porterfield observed, "We are currently looking for host families for students arriving in August for the 2011-2012 school year. Since AFS offers full-year, half-year and other hosting opportunities, we feel that we can find just the right student for any family, and I'd be happy to talk to anyone interested in this rewarding activity."



One of the other games the group played was a clapping and counting game. Playing were Michael Pettibone (from left), Day Waugh, LeRoy Prine and Tim Fugleberg.



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