



Fourth graders listened to the "Heart of America" at their music program on Monday night at the Goodland High School Auditorium. Listening were Shaley Julin (above from left), Taitem Ketter, Crystal Sharon and Norbert Cano. Ella Ihrig (photo on left) was part of a group that talked about having good sleep, eating and exercise habits.
Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News



Fourth graders sing about sleep, exercise

By Pat Schiefen
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Fourth graders showed off their musical skills to parents and relatives at their music program on Monday night at the Goodland High School Auditorium.

The program started off with a mustached group singing "Lollipop" without accompaniment. They were Christopher Berls, Bryson West, Luke Hamilton and Felipe Olivas.

The rest of the program included songs about getting enough sleep, eating right and getting exercise. At one point a group of boys were lifting dumb bells made of marshmallows and pencils with stuffing in their shirts to make them look like they had muscles. They wondered if the girls were admiring their

biceps. The program directed by Char Avila ended with a song remembering American soldiers. The kids are students at Central Elementary School and Harvey Swager is their principal.

Karen Loudon's fourth grade class is Zekke Beringer, Julian Bussone, Katelynn Frazier, Austin Hahn, Tyler Horacek, Chase Johnson, Shaley Julin, Taitem Ketter, Sabrina Mendoza, Sada Mills, Talon Poulson, Desmond Purvis, Crystal Sharon, Peri Sieck, Anthony Urban and Seth Warren.

Members of Marilyn Sowers' class are Jade Artzer, Ashley Brown, Norbert Cano, Logan Cross, Kegan Dawdy, Jessi Duell, Kaylee Gil-Shaw, Mikenna Hanevik, Ella Ihrig, Duncan Kroskey, Robert Lawson,

Landon Reicks, Mark Rodriguez, Benjamin Roeder, Ryan Volk, Travis Vrbka and Dezirae Williams.

Monica Rangel's class is Leann Anderson, Christopher Berls, Emanuel Briones, Shaylena Dudley, Michael Gensheer, Luke Hamilton, Zachary Hunter, Ryan Lalicker, Felipe Olivas, Bryce Raby, Josue Renteria, Sean Sains, Teresa Schaffer, Madison Studer, Jayden Vallejo and Bryson West.

The members of Rachel Stasser's class are Dalton Belshe, Danielle Black, David Campbell, Jaquelin Diaz, Grace Greene, Hunter Helton, Garin Ihrig, Champ King, Bramallete Perryman, Jordan Raby, Rosa Sandoval, Alexander Schaffer, Kaitlin Thompson, Joseph Tompkins, Ethan Wolf and Jerrijohn Xarhis.

Legislature nearly halfway through 2011 session

It is hard to believe we will soon be at the halfway point of the 2011 Legislative session. Friday, Feb. 25, is the "Turnaround Day," which is the day bills must be passed out from their house of origin.

Following turnaround, the House and Senate will begin work on the bills passed out of the other Chamber, House or Senate.

Because of the Feb. 25 deadline, this week will be extremely long and strenuous as we will be on the House Floor all day debating dozens of bills. Among the issues that will be taken up are; Repeal of in-State tuition for illegal immigrants, proof of citizenship and photo ID requirement to vote, redefining misclassification of contract workers, increasing the speed limit on four-lane Interstates to 75 mph,

corrections

On Page 6 of Friday, Feb. 11, edition of *The Goodland Star-News* an accident was reported on Dec. 28, at the intersection of K-27 and Business U.S. 24. The report said a 1996 Chevrolet driven by Richard M. Parish ran into the back of a 1996 Chevrolet driven by Kathi Jardine stopped at the stop light. This was an error as the 1996 Chevrolet driven by Kathi Jardine ran into the back of the 1996 Chevrolet pickup of



rick billinger
state rep.

late term abortion ban, tax bills, pay check protection for workers and a number of other bills.

The House will have an opportunity to debate and vote on most of the legislation drafted in the House committee. Through this process the House is addressing each issue with an eye towards reducing the size of state government and achieving responsible solutions rather than a band-aid fix.

This week one of the committees I am on, Commerce and Eco-

nomics Development, passed house bill HB 2134, which reforms workers' compensation. The vote was 90 to 29. The legislation is the result of extensive negotiation between labor and business representatives. It is the most comprehensive workers' compensation package considered in 17 years, and the first to pass with support from both labor and business interests. The reform will improve business climate in Kansas and increase our competitiveness with surrounding states while insuring the workers receive the care and benefits they need.

The compromise protects and reinforces the intent of the Kansas workers' compensation system by making the four following changes:

- Employers must pay for workplace injuries; Employees are compensated without regard to fault; Employers do not have to pay unwarranted claims; and Benefit caps for injured workers are significantly

increased. The cap for permanent injuries is raised by \$30,000 while the death benefit will increase from \$250,000 to \$300,000.

The House has made economic growth a top priority. This reform will have a positive impact on economic growth in our state.

When the Senate passed the Governor's freeze bill this week, it included \$10 million in additional spending resulting in a potential fiscal year ending balance of \$2 million. The largest portion of the spending added by the Senate was \$25 million for special education to meet an unknown amount of federally required maintenance-of-effort.

In a meeting myself and several other freshman legislators had with Governor Brownback last Friday morning he assured us the money for special education would be covered before the end of the fiscal year.

Although there have been several estimates on the required amount, it will not be available from the US

Department of Education until late April or mid May. School districts did not plan for the \$25 million when drafting their 2011 budgets so not appropriating the funds now will not affect their current budgets. With a \$56 million short fall at the end of FY 2011, the Governor and House have made it clear the goal is a rescission bill that establishes a responsible ending balance.

Congratulations to two students from Colby Community College. Phi Theta Kappa is the International honor society for two-year colleges, symbolizing excellence in higher education and a commitment to students. Students with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher are invited to join Phi Theta Kappa. I would like to recognize Garrett Jones and

Garrett Zweygardt who achieved this honor and were in Topeka last week to receive their award.

I would like to thank the different groups and organizations who have traveled to Topeka to visit with me throughout this session. It is nice to have local people from Western Kansas share their concerns about the different issues that affect our region and the State of Kansas.

Thank you to those who came out Saturday to visit with Senator Ralph Ostmeier and myself when we toured the 121st district.

If you have any input on any issues which will come before the legislature this year please contact me at rick.billinger@house.ks.gov or call me at (785) 899-4700.

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Progressive ~ Responsible ~ Conscientious
Primary Election, March 1st
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Jeff Deeds for City Commissioner
Primary Election March 1st
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USDA NRCS Sign-up Cutoff Date for Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative Apps
Friday, March 4, 2011, is the cutoff date for Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI) applications to Renovate Shelterbelts and Restore Forested Riparian Areas in Kansas to be considered for Fiscal Year 2011 requested funding.
Go to your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center and visit with the Natural Resources Conservation Service or local conservation district staff to get more information about helping address your resource concerns.
Office address: 210 West 10th, Goodland, KS
Phone: 785-899-3070 ext 35
Web site: www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/ccpi
USDA NRCS is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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BILL FINLEY
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VOTE FOR:
 Integrity
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Bill will provide EXPERIENCE in grant and state/federal government program knowledge, in being an employee in both private and public business, as a business owner, and in his dedication to reliability and honesty.
Paid for by committee to elect Bill Finley.

Fabulous New Listing!
605 E. 5th... This spacious Spanish style is situated on a large corner lot in a wonderful Goodland location. It features 4-bedrooms, 3-bathrooms, 2-fireplaces, formal living & dining rooms. Newer hardwood flooring in kitchen, dining and hallway. Wonderful outdoor entertaining areas, lots of perennials and newer trees to add to your enjoyment. This home is very competitively priced in our market with all that it has to offer. Call Rose Koggie for your chance to see this one of a kind Goodland home. 785-899-3060, 785-821-1179 or 866-899-3060.
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