

Child advocacy sees County Commissioners

By Dana Paxton
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 Vicki Hubin of the Western Kansas Child Advocacy Center along with Norton County Sheriff Troy Thomson visited with the Norton County Commissioners last Monday to update them and inform them on how the center can help our county.

The Advocacy Center's mission is to heal the trauma of child abuse to children and families through prevention, support and services. They have three offices, they are based out of Scott City and also have offices in Sublette and Colby. The center serves 29 counties which covers one third of the state. Witnesses can be seen in one of these offices or at a mobile unit that goes out to each county.

The Advocacy Center is a multi-disciplinary team that supports the child and their family from the very start of the process, starting with disclosure, through the investigation and judicial phases and through recovery. Families may be referred to needed community resources like housing, medical and mental health services and victims compensation. The Advocates act as a liaison between agencies, service providers and the family. The families are informed and educated about the criminal justice process and are always updated on the status

of their case. Forensic interviews are conducted for collection and documentation of forensic evidence in a child friendly environment along with wellness examinations and medical assessments. The interviews are conducted by professionally trained and experienced staff by asking objective, neutral and non-leading questions. The use of state of the art recording equipment is used to decrease the number of interviews a child must go through so as to not re-traumatize them. It eliminates the need for a child to be shuffled through police stations, doctors' offices and possibly courtrooms, thus sparing the child fear and trauma often associated with these experiences. Not only are these services offered but also after therapy which follows the child for five years after the first initial contact.

Ms. Hubin started off by stating, "Thank you for your past support, if we can save a child it is worth it." She proceeded to inform the commissioners that six cases were seen in Norton County last year and explained the information at the start of this story. Sheriff Thomson said, "We couldn't do it without them, they run an A+ operation." He went on to explain how if the wrong question is asked or the right question is asked in the

wrong way a case can be thrown out. That is why the Child Advocacy Center is asked to come in to do the interviews, to insure no mistakes are made. This service is free to the victims and their families. As for the counties, a donation is given to the center, no bills are ever sent. In 2012 Norton County donated \$1700 to this worthy cause. The program is funded by grants, fund raisers, private donations and donations from each of the counties.

Commissioner R.A. Peterson asked Ms. Hubin if she thought that the number of these types of cases was on the rise. Ms. Hubin replied by saying that she believed that the problem of child physical and sexual abuse had always been there but it was better covered up but now with better education about what is wrong the children are more likely to speak up than they were before. Commissioner Charles Posson asked if the Advocacy program represented the children in the court proceedings and Ms. Hubin stated that yes, they are the voice for the child. She said, "Everything we do is about the kids."

Norton County is lucky to have such a resource available and the sheriff's department along with the commissioners agreed on this.

It's all a balancing act...



The Carson and Barnes Circus came to Norton on Saturday. The public was invited to see the big-top set up at 9 a.m. followed by the elephant wash at 11:30 a.m. and two shows at 2 and 5 p.m. They had everything from jugglers, to dog tricks, elephant tricks, trapeze artists and much much more.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

National EMS week recognized

As we honor National Emergency Medical Services Week, the Boston Marathon bombing is still fresh on our minds. It was a tragedy by any measure. Yet as bombs went off, the EMS Week theme, "One Mission, One Team" rang true. There were brave individuals who ran toward the danger to help those in need.

Even with pre-positioned medical providers, bystanders played a critical role in the response, proving themselves to be part of the team. These people showed the vital role the community plays during any disaster, and their bravery inspires everyone to recognize the critical role that the community plays in planning for, responding to, and recovering from a tragedy.

Take a moment to consider how many professional doctors, nurses, paramedics and EMTs were on the scene before the tragedy struck. Because of the large number of participants and spectators, Massachusetts officials consider the Boston Marathon, part of the annual Patriot's Day celebration, to be a "planned mass casualty event." The planning goes on all year and requires deployment of an impressive number of medical personnel. Considering the types of injuries caused by the blasts, these people

undoubtedly reduced injury and saved lives.

Yet there are also amazing stories about bystanders as heroes. Volunteers and spectators provided aid and comfort to the people around them. They became an impromptu part of the EMS system. A man who lost one son in Iraq and another to suicide helped stop the bleeding of a man whose leg was blown off. Runners, who only moments earlier finished the race, rushed to apply makeshift tourniquets to the injured, carried people toward first aid tents, or comforted the people around them.

How can bystanders get ready for a disaster like this? Learning first aid, CPR and risk awareness definitely can help prepare you to help others - friends, family members, and strangers. But you don't always need formal training to save someone's life or provide them with the care they desperately need at that moment. Sometimes you just need to be willing to help carry someone who is hurt to safety, provide comfort to someone who is frightened, or help someone find the medical care they need.

Prepared individuals are aware of potential risks, understand where they can turn for help, know what their personal responsibilities are, and are

willing to help their neighbors and community members.

At the core of a resilient nation are individuals who know what they can do to protect themselves and are willing and able to do it. Health, safety, and security cannot be left to the professionals but should be recognized as everybody's responsibility. We must shift our national culture to recognize the essential role of community first aid during an emergency. Community planners across the country must incorporate the bystander-as-responder into emergency management plans.

Success in preparing for and responding to any large event rests in the ability to harness the immense potential of the community. We saw this exhibited by those Boston heroes, formal first responders, and those who simply took action when faced with unimaginable tragedy and helped their fellow citizens in the moment of greatest need.

Simply put: bystanders didn't stand by. They saved lives. We should learn from their bravery and plan on ways that we, as part of our community and our nation, can be better prepared to help out in the next disaster, so we truly have one mission, one team.

Look for more photos from the circus on our Facebook page.

JENNINGS NEWS

There was a large crowd attending the Mother's Day dinner sponsored by the Jennings Lions Club Sunday at the Sunflower Senior Center. This is a great social time as well.

Saturday overnight guest of Bob and Neoma Tacha was their grandson, Dustin Tacha, Pretty Prairie. Additional Sunday guests were: Roger and Peggy Tacha, Oakley; Gayle and Royal Tacha, Hoxie; Neola Hoover, Lenora.

Jennings High School Alumni Banquet will be held Saturday, May 25 at the Senior Center with registration beginning at 6 p.m. Banquet served at 6:30 p.m. Reservations were to be mailed to Roberta McAllister, Clayton, by May 15. The museum where much of the school's history is on display will be open from 2-5 p.m., and after the banquet.

Henry Edgett, Oberlin, formerly of Jennings, will be honored on his 90th birthday May

19, at the Golden Age Center in Oberlin from 2-4 p.m.

Enjoying card playing at the Sunflower Senior Center on Wednesday were: Agnes Wahlmeier, Eleanor Morel, Diane Carter, Scott Taylor, Linda Spresser, Stan and Ramona Shaw, Wayne and Louise Cressler.

Janeil Dilling, Goodland, attended church Sunday with her mother, Imogene Keenan.

County

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 mittee met to discuss street corner improvements at State and Main streets. The City of Norton has allocated \$20,000 to \$25,000 for the improvements to these corners, the board was told. They are also working on

designs for new lighting that is used throughout the downtown area.

The Heaton Building interior design committee has met with one architect and will be seeing a couple more to go over ideas for the interior. There have already been several inquiries for

leasing space in the building.

In other business, Mr. Herman was re-elected chairman for next year. Brad Hopkins, was reelected as vice chairman and Barb Brooks as treasurer; and Gayle James was elected secretary for the group.

A Summer Full Of

Help us reach our goal of \$500 for the Norton County Relay For Life!

During the month of May, Nex-Tech is donating \$5 for every new Nex-Tech Phone, Internet, TV and Nex-Tech Wireless activation towards the Norton County Relay For Life.

Help us reach our goal of \$500 before the end of the month by signing up for Nex-Tech services!

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