Journalism students perform well in regional contest
Paige Testerman/Observer

The Caney Valley High School Journalism Program will send 14 students to the Kansas Scholastic Press Association’s state contest in May. This competition will be in Lawrence, Kansas, at the University of Kansas. Students participated in the regional competition on February 27. The competition typically takes place at Pittsburg State University, but was different this year due to inclement weather. This year’s contest was conducted through mail. Students qualified for state by either placing first, second, third, or earning honorable mention.

The following 14 students will be headed to Lawrence: Jake Price for placing third in infographics, Molly Robbins for placing second in newspaper design, Morgan Rolls for placing third in newspaper design, newspaper sports writing, and editorial writing, Christian Smith for earning honorable mention in yearbook copy writing, Amelia Timmerman for earning honorable mention in yearbook copy writing, Allie Abilez for placing first in sports photography and third in layout/double page spread, Apryl McCammon for earning honorable mention in feature photography, Samantha Hooper for earning honorable mention in feature photography and yearbook sports writing, Brooke Gaston for earning honorable mention in cutline writing, Clinton Bush for earning honorable mention in yearbook sports writing, Cassie Cunningham for earning honorable mention in news writing, Jordayne Harmon for placing second in layout/double page spread, Shari Blecha for placing first in headline writing, and Paige Testerman for placing third in headline writing and earning honorable mention in editing.

“I’m really excited about going to Lawrence. I really hope that we can all do well and bring back lots of medals. It was really weird doing regionals in our own library, but we did what we had to do and a lot of us still placed. Wish us luck at state!” commented senior Molly Robbins.
Regents call for weapons-free policy

The board decides to hire a consultant to review management plans at each campus.

By MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS
The Kansas City Star

TOPEKA | One day after the first anniversary of the Virginia Tech shootings, the Kansas Board of Regents on Thursday called for weapons-free campuses and criminal checks on all new hires.

Currently, only the University of Kansas Medical Center does criminal background checks on all hires. It costs the center $50 a check and takes 72 hours to do them, said Barbara Atkinson, executive vice chancellor.

The board also decided it would hire a security consultant to review recently revamped crisis management plans at each campus. The consultant also will help each institution decide how to implement the new background check policy and to determine the best way to create a weapons-free campus.

Much of the discussion among regents on the weapons policy was about where to post signs forbidding people from carrying concealed weapons.

Kansas law allows concealed weapons, but colleges and universities can prohibit them on campus by posting signs. Without the sufficient signage, a person licensed to carry a concealed weapon cannot be prosecuted. Missouri law prohibits carrying a concealed firearm on college or university property.

All of the Kansas institutions are supposed to have signs on entrances to every campus building and at the main entrance to campus. Some have signs in parking lots and garages.

University presidents said the same posting rules cannot apply to every campus because "each university is very different," said Michael R. Lane, president of Emporia State University.

For example, Lane said, some of the smaller universities have city streets running through campus.

The regents assured presidents they would be able to work out details on posting signs on their campus in compliance with the law after a security consultant is hired in about six months.

"We want all students on all campuses to have as much sense, no matter which campus, that it is a weapon-free campus," said Regent Jill Docking of Wichita.

Not all students agree with the no-weapons policy, however.

About 20,000 members of Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, including more than 200 in Missouri and Kansas, plan to participate in a national protest next week. The group wants colleges and universities to allow people who are licensed to carry a concealed firearm to do so on campus.

The group gained membership after 32 people were shot to death on the Virginia Tech campus last April 16.

Eric Stein, campus leader of the concealed carry group at the University of Kansas, said about 50 members plan to wear empty holsters during the weeklong protest beginning Monday. Students at three other Kansas schools and seven schools in Missouri also plan to participate.

The protest is their way of showing that students who have a concealed weapons license are left defenseless in case of school shootings like the ones at Virginia Tech last year and at Northern Illinois in February," said Stein, a 21-year-old junior from Topeka.

To reach Mará Rose Williams, call 816-234-4419 or send e-mail to mdwilliams@kcstar.com.
KU Alumni honors two NHS seniors at dinner

Tiara Johnson and David Elliott

David Elliott, the son of Richard and Catherine Elliott, Waldo, and Tiara Johnson, daughter of Alan and Sherri Beisner, Natoma, were honored at a dinner in Logan, on Thursday, April 10.

The KU Alumni Association honors students across the state who rank in the top 10% of their senior class.

After the dinner, the students were introduced and awarded a special edition of The American Heritage Dictionary in hard-cover and CD formats. The dictionaries are made possible through the Crowell Book Award fund.
Bush climate change policy gets mixed reviews

**Issue:** Critics pan plan as not doing enough.

By SARAH KESSINGER
kessinger@dailynews.net

TOPEKA (HNS) — President Bush’s first major foray into the controversy over stemming the growing flow of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere drew both kudos and criticism from Kansans Wednesday.

From the power industry there was applause and assurances they could meet the president’s announced goal of ending the growth of greenhouse gas emissions by 2025.

That year’s target falls heavily on the shoulders of energy companies, whose coal-fired power plants produce high levels of CO2.

“Westar applauds the president’s balanced approach to addressing climate change,” said Bill Eastman, Topeka-based Westar Energy’s director of environmental services.

The company’s recent agreement with Kansas regulators to begin looking for ways to cut CO2 output is in line with the Bush administration’s plan for “a strategic and cost-effective solution to this global issue,” Eastman said.

But one environmental group’s leader suggested Bush take steps now.

“We all know it is more expensive to fix something that’s broken than it is to keep it from breaking in the first place,” said Nancy Jackson, executive director of the Climate and Energy Project at Salina.

So, having acknowledged the problem, why not act decisively now to avoid it at least cost? Waiting until 2025 to halt growth in emissions is unacceptable from the climate and economic perspective.

Several of the largest corporations, and emitters, are among those calling for climate regulation, Jackson said.

“Caterpillar, Dow, GM, Shell, know that swift, decisive regulatory measures are the best way to meet this challenge.”

Sunflower Electric Power Corp. spokesman Steve Miller said the utility would meet whatever deadlines are proposed.

Hays-based Sunflower’s proposed pair of coal-fired power plants, now mired in legal and legislative battles over an emissions permit, would emit some 11 million new tons of CO2 each year.

But Miller says that the plants would be more efficient in emissions levels than any other coal plant in Kansas.

“We are confident this project will be able to comply with any law passed by Congress,” Miller said. “As Senators Obama and Clinton have both stated recently, coal will be a part of our energy future.”

Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius’ office issued a statement offering an encouraged view of the Bush plan.

“Governor Sebelius welcomes President Bush’s involvement in the critical discussion of climate change,” spokeswoman Abbie Hodgson said.

“In order to successfully address this issue, Governor Sebelius has long believed that leadership at the federal level is necessary to establish greenhouse gas emission policies.”

The president’s goal recognizes that the power sector needs to make significant efforts to meet it, Hodgson said. That includes waiting to see whether construction of the Sunflower plants, which will largely supply power to other states, is prudent.

“Since the most likely way to achieve this goal is through a cap-and-trade system, which would, in effect, tax carbon, it would be unfair to Kansans for our utilities to build coal-fired plants for other states until we can evaluate the costs of these plants for Kansas taxpayers and ratepayers.”

One Kansas researcher of climate change expressed disappointment in Bush’s proposal to continue watching emissions grow.

He said it will be years before people see the ultimate effect of rising CO2 levels.
For several hundred University of Kansas student performers in Rock Chalk Revue, it was showtime for fun, laughs, awards and philanthropy at the 59th annual production March 6 to 8 at the Lied Center.

To get ready for their moments in the spotlight, students had given up months of after class hours in required daily practice sessions. KU students run the show. They wrote, produced, acted, sang and danced in each of the five original skits to portray the “Better Left Unsaid” theme chosen by the Rock Chalk Revue student advisory board.

“Snowed Inn” by Alpha Gamma Delta sorority and Pi Kappa Phi fraternity won the United Way Audience Choice Award based on $1 votes cast for a favorite among the five skits. Thirty organizations won group volunteer awards based on four levels of donated hours per member. Alpha Gamma Delta sororities were bronze award winners for 9 to 10.9 hours per person in this category.

Jenna Bleecker, a senior majoring in theatre and film, is a member of Alpha Gamma Delta sorority and had the lead in “Snowed Inn.” Jenna is the daughter of John and Jeanne Bleecker, Mankato, and a graduate of Mankato High School.
SALINA — Bob Gress, director of the Great Plains Nature Center, Wichita, will present a Smoky Hills Audubon Society program, “Chasing Woodland Birds” at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 17, at the Carver Center, 315 N. Second, in Salina. “Chasing Woodland Birds” admission is free.

Bob has been photographing birds for publications for 30 years. A commitment to finish a new book, The Guide to Kansas Birds and Birding Hotspots, for the University Press of Kansas, initiated a quest to photograph the elusive and colorful birds of the woodland canopy. Join Bob in greeting April migrants as they cross the Gulf of Mexico to land at High Island, Texas. In May, these migrants pass through Kansas. In June, visit the Boreal forests of northern Wisconsin to chase warblers on the nesting grounds. Join us for this colorful look at warblers, buntings, vireos, tanagers, grosbeaks, orioles and more. New technologies in digital cameras, flashes and recordings have brought these birds of the shadows into focus.

Gress is a graduate of Emporia State University with an M.S. in Environmental Biology. Bob and his wife Mary Butel enjoy traveling and photographing wildlife in wild places across the continent. Over 2,000 of his photos have been published and are seen in a wide variety of magazines and in more than twenty books, including Faces of the Great Plains, Kansas Wildlife, Watching Kansas Wildlife, The Smithsonian Book of North American Mammals, and the Kaufman Focus Guide to Mammals of North America.
Garden City Regional Airport is moving closer to improving its firefighting capacity as city staff prepares to open bids on two fire-safety related projects.

Earlier this month, U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran announced a $712,500 grant for a new aircraft rescue and firefighting vehicle awarded to the airport through the Airport Improvement Program, administered through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Bids were received Wednesday for the project.

According to Grant Phillips, with the airport, the new vehicle will hold 1,500 gallons of water compared to the current vehicle’s capacity of 500 gallons. Phillips said the vehicle also could have a snozzle, which is a truck-mounted boom equipped with a piercing element capable of puncturing the “skin” of an aircraft and injecting foam or water inside the plane. The snozzle also can be equipped with an infrared camera to determine the heat or fire source.

Phillips said the chosen bidder will have a year from the time “notice to proceed” is given to construct the vehicle.

According to Moran, a senior member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee where he serves on the Subcommittee on Aviation, the airport improvement program reinvests revenues collected from the aviation industry and air travelers to improve the capacity and safety of U.S. airports.

“Access to quality air service is essential to the success of rural communities,” Moran said.

While separate in funding, the FAA and city’s project of a new fire station for the airport goes hand in hand with the aircraft rescue and firefighting vehicle.

Phillips said that, once constructed, the new vehicle won’t fit inside the airport’s current station.

“It’s going to be a huge upgrade,” Phillips said of the new station.

According to City Engineer Steve Cottrell, the estimated $1.25 million project will be more than 4,000 square feet, or at least three times the size of the current station.

Cottrell said the current station only has room for one vehicle “and not much else.” The new station, he said, will have room for both the current and new vehicles, storage space for chemicals and equipment and an administrative area with room for firefighting staff to grow if necessary.

The station will be about 800 feet south of the terminal, Cottrell said.

Bids were received for the station until today.

FAA covers 95 percent of the cost of the vehicle and station — the city covers 5 percent.

Cottrell said the estimated cost for both projects is about $2 million, with the city’s share roughly $100,000.

Grant: Airport safety to improve

Continued from Page A1
Students join forces to assist Melvern trail project

MELVERN—Saturday, the city of Melvern will be transformed. Vibrantly painted in black and gold, “power cat” purple, crimson and blue and an entire spectrum of colors, college students will proudly display their school colors. However, school pride will not be the primary objective of this day. Instead, these volunteers will unite in Melvern to help build hiking and biking trails located on the Marais des Cygnes River.

Transcending rivalry and geographic boundaries, approximately 80 college students from Kansas State University, University of Kansas, Wichita State University, Fort Hays State University, Butler County Community College, Allen Community College, Flint Hills Technical School and others will join to support Melvern’s Friends of the Trail, as part of a new statewide initiative by the Kansas Corps.

Kansas college students working together on the trail will test the concept of the Kansas Corps. Kansas Corps networks college and university programs across the state, promoting service and volunteerism. The program benefits volunteers as well as those served.

Also involved in the trail efforts are Westar Electric Green Team, Kansas Trails Council and Melvern PRIDE.

Melvern PRIDE recently received word from the Topeka-based Sunflower Foundation that it has been awarded a grant totaling $9,250. The funds will be used to widen and surface one of the loops of the new trails.

The project began after Melvern PRIDE decided to build a system of recreational trails on city property as a result of their work in the Healthy Ecosystems-Healthy Communities (HEHC) program. HEHC is funded by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment’s Watershed Management Section to help communities protect their local water quality and natural resources for a more sustainable future. Through a public process, Melvern’s citizens selected the river trails project to increase community access to a valuable natural resource and because it would provide many avenues to increase citizen health and environmental knowledge and stewardship.

Saturday’s activities start at 9 a.m., and Melvern is welcoming all citizen participation.

For more information about trail work days, call Dee Robinson at (785) 549-3376, or Joyce Lacey at (785) 418-6719.

To obtain more information about Kansas Corps, contact Dr. Curt Brungardt, Center for Civic Leadership, FHSU, at (785) 628-5592.
College News

Stone competes in National Debate Tourney

Christopher Stone of Derby was a part of the University of Kansas debate team that was selected to compete in the National Debate Tournament, which took place March 27-31 at the University of California-Fullerton. The team was among the top 16 individual teams ranked by the NDT selection committee and given automatic or at-large bids to nationals. Stone, the son of Douglas and Gloria Stone, is a sophomore in political science.

Stone, and teammate Nate Johnson from Manhattan, took second place at the Cross Examination Debate Association national tournament held March 21-24 at Wichita State University.
Cody Wamsley, a student at the University of Kansas School of Law, recently published an article in the Journal of Internet Law. The third-year law student argues that the federal Electronic Communications Privacy Act offers scant protection to data transmitted over the Internet in his article titled "Internet Transmissions: Who Owns the Data and Who Protects It?" The paper appears in the February issue of the Journal of Internet Law.

Wamsley majored in computer engineering at the University of California-Santa Barbara and then transferred to KU where he earned a bachelor's in business administration in 2004. He is pursuing a media, law and policy certificate and is chair of the Cyberlaw Committee for the Intellectual Property Law Student Association. He is set to graduate in May.

Wamsley is the son of Dwight Wamsley of Wichita and Joan Wamsley of Derby, and is a graduate of Wichita Collegiate High School.