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# The Oxford Register

75¢

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE CITY OF OXFORD

USPS 459-620

OXFORD, KANSAS

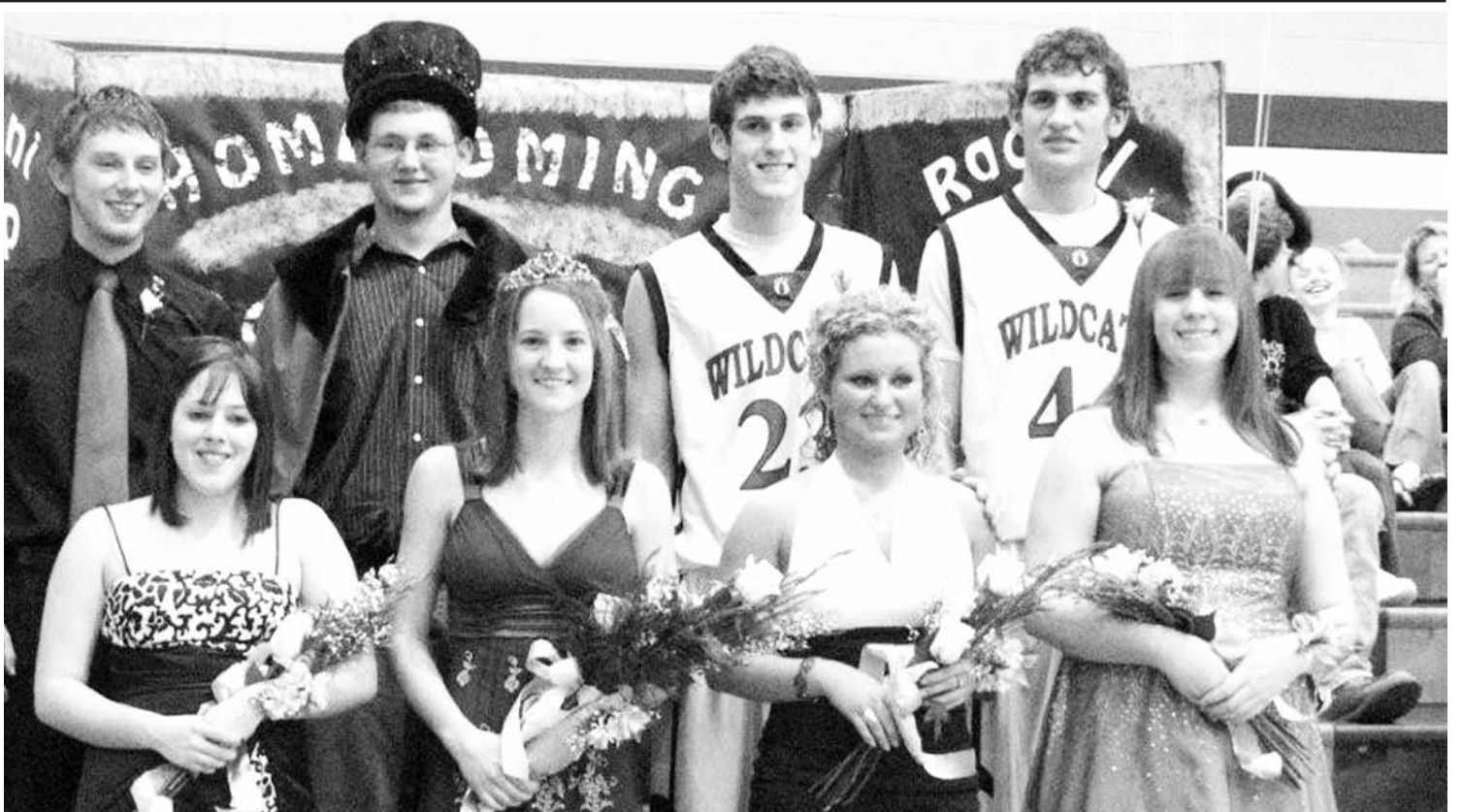
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2009

8 PAGES

VOL. 121 NO. 07

It appears that Oxford hit a great stroke of luck during city leaders' search for ways to protect their sewer lagoons. A fallen railroad bridge initiated the search and after the city contacted Senator Pat Roberts, William Jeffries of the Army Corps of Engineers, introduced Oxford to the Watershed Institute, a not-for-profit organization very intersted in protecting Oxford's sewer lagoons while improving the natural habitat of the river. In fact, they're offering to do it pretty much free of charge. The project would stabilize those banks of the river, protect the sewer lagoons (as well as several pieces of private property), make the river more accessible, restore the river to a native habitat and improve the fish populations. A meeting was held thrusday to open communication between the landowners, the city and the institute.

Below, from left, city employee Patrick Kopfer, mayor Chad Bartelson, William Jeffries and geomorphologist Brock Emmert discussed various aspects of the river from the fallen bridge's old footing.



**QUEEN AUBRIE RULES.** Aubrie Neises and Kevin White were crowned Winter Sports Homecoming Queen and King. Other candidates were Brittani Walters, Rachel Patterson, Macy Weber, Phillip Zimmerman, Bryce Mayes and Baye Burke. Back row, from left, Phillip, Kevin, Bryce and Baye; front row, Brittani, Aubrie, Rachel and Macy, with junior attendants in front, Briona Woods and Randy Rhodd.

## New riverbank project to solve Oxford's fallen bridge and sewer lagoon dilemma

### ■ Watershed Institute foots the bill

By JOSHUA DELAUGHDER

A meeting between landowners, the city of Oxford and state officials was held Thursday to discuss a possible, permanent solution to the erosion and flood dangers posed on Oxford's sewer lagoons by the Arkansas River. The plan could include the use of several pieces of private property and landowners were invited to the meeting to express concerns surrounding the history and future of that portion of the river and discuss the details the plan for a bendway weir program that the Watershed Institute, a not-for-profit organization, hopes to construct along the banks of the River at no cost to the landowners or the city.

When an abandoned railroad bridge, constructed in the late 1800's, collapsed into the Arkansas River last September, residents and the city became concerned with changes in the river's flow.

The fallen section of the bridge formed a sandbar upstream, in the center of the

river and moved the river's channel to the west side of the river, encroaching on the city's sewer lagoons. According to residents and local officials, though sandbars had moved from place to place along the east side of the river, there had never been a sandbar in the middle of the river. That's where the channel usually was.

Fearing that river's new flow could tear open their sewer lagoons, the city began to seek out information on ways to reinforce their side of the river and asked around about ownership and removal of the bridge. Watco companies, a company of several shortline railroads, was contacted and, after researching both ownership and cleanup of the bridge, Watco contracted R.J. Corman Derailment Services to remove the bridge. In less than two weeks, R.J. Corman removed the standing portion of the bridge and the protruding portion of the section that had fallen, leaving what was already beneath water.

But the river channel didn't move back to center of the river

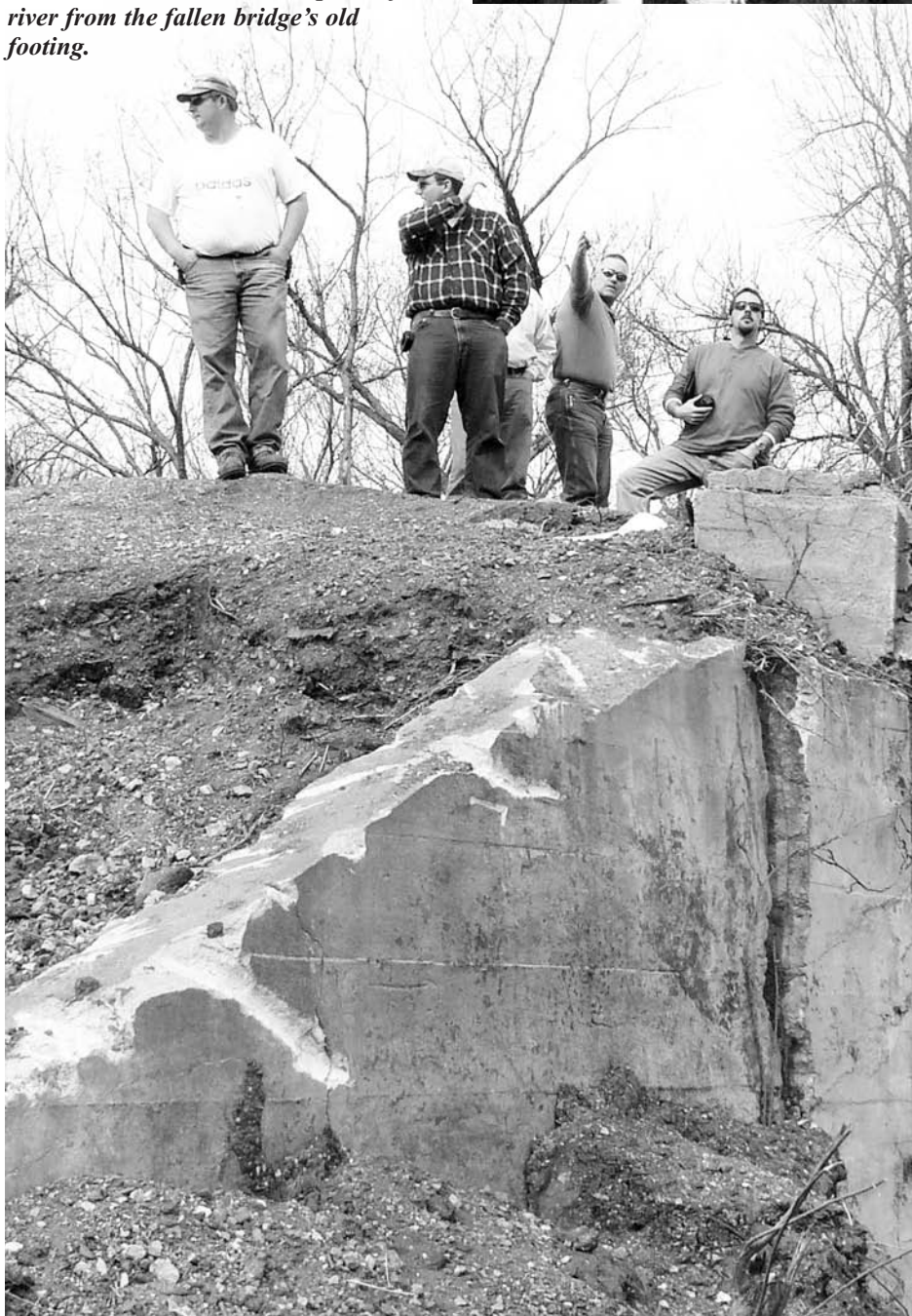
and the city was still left to find a way to protect their infrastructure. They sought out funding information from state and US officials but, when they contacted Sen. Pat Roberts office, state resources were pooled and a possible solution was found.

The solution? The Watershed Institute, a not-for-profit organization, would used funds collected from Steam Mitigation fees to construct bendway weirs along the west bank of the river and stabilize that bank. The Institute through the Watershed Land Trust would forever be in charge of the banks' protection through stewardship.

Due to the 1985 Clean Water act, when a landowner disrupts a stream or wetland, they are required to follow certain state and federal laws. If the landowner wants to completely remove a piece of wetland or stream they must replace the wetland or stream elsewhere but, if they decline to do so, they can pay into a fund. The Watershed Institute manages that fund and uses it to complete projects like



See Watershed, page 7







# OXFORD • POLICE • REPORT

**Feb. 1**  
Assisted a motorist with a flat tire in the 200 block of East Main.

**Feb. 2**  
Travis Main of Belle Plaine was arrested on an outstanding warrant.

**Feb. 3**  
Responded to a dog at large complaint on East College. Investigated a report of theft.

**Feb. 4**  
Investigated a report of vehicles racing within the city limits.

**Feb. 5**  
Responded to a complaint of a pit bull running at large on East Myrtle. Spoke with citizen referencing paper service on West Myrtle.

**Feb. 6**  
Spoke with citizen referencing juveniles in the 500 block of North Water.

Assisted a motorist in the 400 block of North Michigan.

**Feb. 7**  
April Schielke of Derby was cited for disobeying a stop sign at Kansas and Main.

**Feb. 8**  
Officers performed routine patrol today.

**Feb. 9**  
Found a dog running at large in the 200 block of College. Spoke with citizen referencing civil dispute. Investigated a report of a burglary and theft.

**Feb. 10**  
Investigated a report of a theft. Conducted a welfare check in the 300 block of South Illinois. Responded to a report of a drunk driver within the city limits. Guy Levy of Mission Viejo, Calif. was cited for speeding in the 400 block of West Main. Responded to a suspicious person report in the 200 block of South Illinois. Found and returned to owner two dogs running loose in the 100 block of South Ohio.

**Feb. 11**  
Dyan Thornton was cited for speeding in the 300 block of West Main. Received a report of lost property at the police department. Responded to a non-injury accident in the 100 block of West Clark.

**Feb. 2**  
Officers conducted routine patrol.

**Feb. 13**  
Brian Boor of Wellington was cited for defective turn signal and no seatbelt in the 300 block of West Main. Investigated a report of theft in the 500 block of North Water.

**Feb. 14**  
Happy Valentine’s Day!

**Feb. 15**  
Assisted a motorist with a locked vehicle in the 100 block of South Illinois. Assisted a motorist with a dead battery in the 300 block of West Main.

## N.A.P. deadline nears for certain crops

Jack A. Salava, Acting State Executive Director for the Kansas Farm Service Agency, reminds producers that March 15, 2009 is the application closing date for certain crops under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program . Crops eligible for N.A.P. benefits are limited to those not insurable in the county and are produced for food or fiber.

March 15 is the final date to pay the applicable service fee and obtain N.A.P. coverage for coarse grains, vegetable and melon crops, Amaranth, Chestnuts, Cotton, Pecans, Pumpkins, Safflower, Sesame, Squash, and Walnuts. The administrative service fee is \$250 per crop per administrative county not to exceed \$750 per producer per administrative county and a

\$1875 maximum fee for multi-county producers. Interested producers must pay the fee and file form CCC-471, Application for Coverage, by the application closing deadline.

This coverage entitles eligible producers to a payment of 55 percent of an average market price for the commodity if a natural disaster caused a 50 percent production loss or greater of an eligible crop. In the unfortunate event that a producer does suffer a loss on their particular crop, a form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, must be filed with F.S.A. within 15 calendar days after the disaster occurrence, or the date the loss becomes apparent to the producer.

Producers are limited to \$100,000 in benefits per person per crop year, they must certify crop acres by applicable deadlines, maintain production evidence for three years, have less than \$500,000 Non-farm Adjusted Gross Income, and must comply with conservation compliance provisions in order to be eligible. Interested producers shall contact their local Farm Service Agency at the U.S.D.A. Service Center prior to the March 15 application closing date to obtain N.A.P. coverage.



## DEATHS AND SERVICES

### JOAN KRAPES

Joan Krapes, 70, of Belle Plaine, died Feb. 13, 2009 at the Riverview Manor and Village in Oxford.

She was born on Nov. 11, 1938 to Albert and Dorothy (Smith) Larkin in Wichita.

She married King Krapes on Feb. 24, 1955.

She worked for Beechcraft, owned and operated restaurants in Clearwater and in Moline, worked for Cessna and Theurer’s Auction House.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

She is survived by her husband King of Belle Plaine, sons Kevin and Bruce, both of Wichita; daughters Lori Anderson of Wellington, Gayla Lacey of Udall, Rhonda Gellespie of Tucson, Ariz. and Joan Van Dyke of Wichita; brother Albert Larkin of Haysville, sisters Wanda Corder of Haysville and Norma Matsick of Wichita, 14 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Services will be held at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 20 at the Oxford Funeral Service Chapel. Interment will be in the Oxford Cemetery.

## Gardening with Rosalie



Longtime resident Rosalie Hatfield is a Master Gardener through the Sumner County Extension, retired postmaster, grandmother, sun lover and substitute teacher.


The yellow color of the crocuses that are blooming is a bright spot on a cold day. The daffodils are coming on fast so I guess the soil is beginning to warm. The most color in the yard now is red and yellow balls that are out there for great granddaughter to kick.

The time to fertilize spring blooming bulbs is when the foliage emerges in the early spring. As they bloom



they are starting to die so fertilizer applied then would be wasted. As always a soil test would be good but realistically we don’t test the soil for everything all the time. Maybe we should just fertilize once in awhile rather than every year.

That is the time of year a soil test would be beneficial if you planned to get one. Finding out what nutrients are needed is good but you could find out that none need to be added. Over zealous fertilizing is not good. Amending the soil with compost and other organ-

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**FOR THE LOVE OF READING.** Oxford Junior High chose five students to read selected books to the elementary classes Feb. 10 through Feb. 13 during Language Arts time. Levi Jones, seventh grader, reads “Liar, Liar Pants on Fire” to Carolyn Sneed’s third grade class. Listening to the story were, from left, Destiny Wilson, Dakota Mitchell, Cal Shimkus and Onna Warren. Jenni Mraz reads “Horton Hatches the Egg” to Diana Smallwood kindergarten class on Feb. 10. She was asked to come read again to the class. Autumn Lerback shared pictures from “The Great Fuzz Frenzy” to Diann Dawson morning preschool class.



**OXFORD’S FRIENDSHIP CENTER** had a spirit week of their own last week when the center crowned its Valentine Royalty, Wallace Champeney and MaryAnn Parsons. (J. Delaughter photo)

## Tractor safety clinic planned for March 7

Planning on working on a farm this summer? If you are 14 or 15 years of age and plan to work for someone other than your parents, you are required by federal law to take an instruction course on tractor safety. Also, some employers require this training for those 16 years of age and older who have not had tractor operation experience.

The training will be held Saturday,

March 7, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Raymond Frye Complex, 320 North Jefferson, Wellington. This is the only Tractor Safety Training that will be held in Sumner County this year! If you do not take the course at this time, you will need to wait until next year or take it at another county.

The registration form and fee of \$10 are due to the Extension Office by Feb. 20. Sorry, no refunds. Enrollment

forms may be obtained at the Sumner County Extension Office, online at [www.sumner.ksu.edu/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=19](http://www.sumner.ksu.edu/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=19) or by calling 620-326-7477.



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104 South Sumner, Oxford  
FOR THE WEEK OF  
FEBRUARY 23

Menu subject to change.

Monday: Southwest Chicken Bake, Winter Squash, Strawberries, Chocolate Pudding, Cornbread, Milk.

Tuesday: Easy Lasagna, Combination Salad With Dressing, Garlic Bread, Pineapple, Milk.

Wednesday: Pork or Fish Sandwich on Bun, Tomato Soup, Cracker, Apricots, Milk.

Thursday: Cheeseburger Pie, Macaroni Salad, Green Beans, Peaches, Black Bottom Banana Bars, Milk.

Friday: Tuna Noodle Casserole, Broccoli and Carrots, Baked Apple Slices, Wheat Bread, Milk.



## School Menu

FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 23

Menus subject to change

### MONDAY

Breakfast: Danish, Cereal, Juice, Milk.

Lunch: Mexican Hats, Corn, Pineapple & Oranges, Rice Krispie Treats, Milk.

### TUESDAY

Breakfast: Breakfast Hot Pocket, Tater Bucks, Juice, Milk.

Lunch: Hot Dog, Macaroni & Cheese, Apple, Sherbet, Animal Cracker, Milk.

### WEDNESDAY

Breakfast: Breakfast Bites, Hash Brown, Juice, Milk.

Lunch: Beef Stroganoff, Green Beans, Pears, Hot Roll, Milk.

### THURSDAY

Breakfast: Waffle Sticks, Sausage, Juice, Milk.

Lunch: Chicken Sandwich, Tater Wedges, Fruit Bar, Snickerdoodle, Milk.

### FRIDAY

Breakfast: Fruit Pie, Cereal, Juice, Milk.

Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Salad, Peach, Banana Chocolate Chip Muffin, Milk.

## For the love of reading

By JANICE KNEISLEY USD 358

The love of reading, not only for knowledge but also for enjoyment was shared this past week at Oxford Elementary School as Shelly Spencer’s seventh grade Reading Strategies class read to students in preschool through third grade.

Five Oxford Junior High students read selected books to the elementary classes Feb. 10 - 13 during Language Arts time. According to Spencer, Language Arts teacher, the students, with the help of Renee Sanchez, school librarian, narrowed their selections to 20 books to read aloud. From there, they practiced reading the books for about three weeks, making sure they read with clarity and inflection. The lesson not only helped the students practice reading skills, but it also helped to build confidence in the students as well as bridge the age gap between the grade levels. “The goal was to help the students get excited about reading at all grade levels.” Spencer said.

Students involved in the activity included Levi Jones, who read to the third grade, Skylar Vineyard, reading “Three Little Wolves,” and “The Big Bad Pig” to the second grade, Willow Branch, reading “The Mysterious Tadpole” to the first grade classes, Jenni Mraz, who read to the kindergarten classes, and Autumn Lerback who read to the preschool classes.

## COMING EVENTS

### A Fine Old Mill February

Oxford High School’s entrepreneurship program wraps up the month of February at Oxford’s Old Mill. A soup and sandwich-or-wrap lunch will be served on Feb. 21 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. “Wake Up Oxford” will feature biscuits and gravy, pancakes, sausage patties and a fruit medley on Feb. 22 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. In the mood for “Classic Cuisine?” Beef-n-noodles, green beans and mashed potatoes, rolls and a pie dessert bar will be offered from

5 to 8 p.m. on Feb. 28.

### Birthdays

Claudine Owens, Danielle Totten, Deedra Totten, Seth Patterson, Monty Schmitz, Feb. 20; Veloris Chamberlain, Dawn Burkes, Betty Tennant (1927), Lena Reed (1920), Feb. 21; Beverly Flickinger, April Smith, Feb. 22; Drew Evans, Ray Hiltzman, Megan Phares, Feb. 23; Etta Craven, Garnie Platter, Feb. 25; Josie Morris, Feb. 26.

### Anniversaries

Carl and Ruth Dennett, Feb. 21; Matthew and Amanda Spencer, Feb. 23.

## Presidential program tonight

By JANICE KNEISLEY, U.S.D. 358

Oxford Elementary students in grades first through sixth will be on stage tonight to perform a Presidential music program in the Oxford High School gym. Set to start at 7 p.m., the program will honor United States Presidents with the performance of patriotic songs by the students. The students have been practicing patriotic songs since January, including “The Star-Spangled Banner,” “American Every Day,” and “One Nation,” according to Sharon Short, elementary music teacher. The first and second graders will be featuring “March of the Wee Americans” while the fifth grade will present “Hail to the Chief” on kazoos. In keeping with the theme, Oxford students will deliver their performance while wearing red, white and blue clothing.

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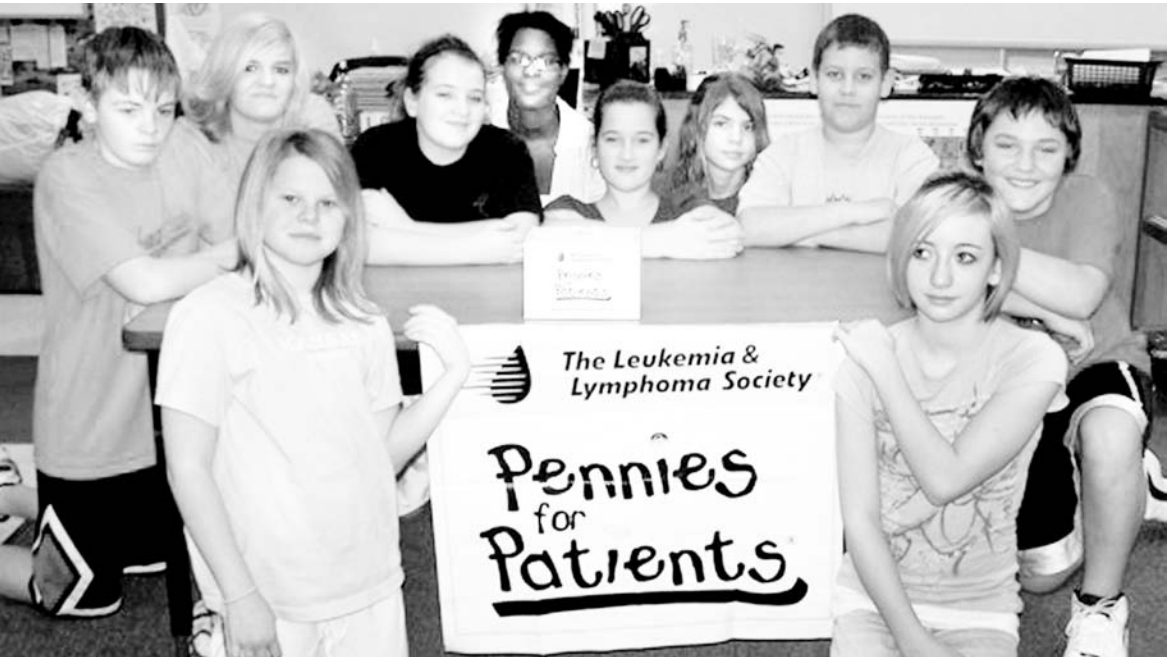


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**SPEARHEADING THE PENNIES FOR PATIENTS CAMPAIGN** at Oxford Public Schools are seventh graders, from left, Tom Lawlis, Megan Littau, Shelby Young, Jenny Mraz, Jveila Whitlock, Ellie Schlosser, Alaina Witte, Levi Jones, Piper Curless and Michael Lerback. The group hopes to raise more than \$500.

## Oxford students collect coins to find cure

By JANICE KNEISLEY

Sherry White's seventh grade health class at Oxford Junior High wants your loose change, and they don't mind if it is pennies, nickels, dimes or quarters. They are looking for spare change to save the lives of people touched by blood cancers. For their third annual "Pennies for Patients" national fundraiser, the students are hoping to raise over \$500 along with having a little fun.

The 2009 campaign benefits the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society whose mission it is to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma. Last year over 19 million was raised on the national level, including 225 schools in Kansas that raised over \$130,000. Oxford raised \$404 last year according to White, and is hoping to increase that total by involving Oxford Elementary students.

"Since Christmas, my 12 students have been planning, assigning duties and brainstorming of how to conduct this year's campaign. They started with making a pod cast to be shown during morning announcements at school, then made a power point presentation on the class Promethean Board to principal Rob Hampton," White said. "The presentation to Mr. Hampton was to show the students commitment to the project, and to teach the importance of teamwork, community involvement and helping others, on the part of the students."

Oxford junior high and high school students were asked to make a \$2 donation to help reach the \$500 goal. In turn, they would receive a half-day off on Feb. 20 to watch a movie and eat popcorn. Oxford teachers and staff were all asked to contribute \$10 so they could wear jeans to school for a week.

On Feb. 12, seventh graders Rebekah Zimmerman, Shelby Young, Michael Lerback and Piper Curless, held an assembly for the grade school students. For a 25-cent donation to the Pennies for Patients Campaign, elementary students will attend a carnival, complete with a ring toss, boat races, and other games on Feb. 20 in the commons area of the junior high school.

This year 212 Kansas schools are involved in the three-week campaign that started on Feb. 2. The highest fundraising classroom will receive a pizza party compliments of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

**"LIL' CHEER" WELL ATTENDED.** Oxford Junior High Cheerleaders held their annual fundraiser, the "Lil' Cheer Clinic" on Feb. 10, welcoming more than 30 students from grades kindergarten through seventh grade. Clinic participants learned two cheers and a dance, then enjoyed ice cream, cake and pizza. All girls received pompoms - and a special T-shirt for participating. Everyone seemed to enjoy the clinic and it was a great success. Amber Hull, Oxford Junior High cheerleader, led the pack, as Briona Woods struck a dance pose. Anyone want a special T-shirt? Call Sheryl Metz at the high school, 455-2410 before they're all gone.



**MAKING A PRESENTATION** to Oxford Elementary School students were, from left, Rebekah Zimmerman, Shelby Young, Michael Lerback and Piper Curless. Elementary students will attend a carnival on Feb. 20 for a 25-cent donation.

## Noteworthy

### Births

#### Baelee Havner

Baelee Clara Faye Havner was born to Cody and Amanda (Evans) Havner of Wellington at 7:01 p.m. on Jan. 12, 2009, weighing six pounds and 14 ounces and measuring 20 inches long. She has a brother, three-year-old Hunter Havner of Wellington. Grandparents are Jerry and Kathy Evans of Oxford and Jerry and Rhonda Havner of South Haven. Great grandparents are Etola McCutcheon of Dardanelle, Ark. and the late Omar; Virginia Koch of Winfield, Jerry and Juanita Evans of Wellington, Dona Pounds of South Haven and the late Robert Havner of Udall, Muriel Evans of Wellington and John Pounds of Portales, New Mexico. Great great grandparents are Netta Carmichael of Crockett, Texas and the late Art Carmichael, Robert and Margaret Evans of Wellington and Murel and Velma Green of Oxford.

#### Sierra Eastman

Sierra Grace Eastman was born to Heather Paxton and Justin Eastman on Feb. 9, 2009 at 4:59 p.m., weighing seven pounds and measuring 19 inches in length. She was born at Sumner Regional Medical Center in Wellington. Sierra's grandparents are Doug and Markita Paxton of Baton Rouge, La. and Jack and Mary Eastman of Oxford. Great grandparents are Helen Hamm of North East, Md., Jack and Neta Eastman and John and Louise Havens, all of Winfield.





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**VINCE • WETTA, • K.S. Rep. • 80th • District**

The Wetta-DeGraaf annexation bill was heard in committee on Tuesday. Wellington had several citizens who attended. The Local Government committee will work the bill this Tuesday, Feb. 17. If

it is voted out of committee, we will probably debate it on the House floor on Thursday or Friday. Next weekend is Turnaround so all bills have to be heard this week and ready to go to the

**AUCTIONS**

For Sale: 1961 Jaguar XK150, '31 Packard, '70 Chevelle SS, '74 TR6. "The Branson Auction" April 17-18. Consign your car today! 800-335-3063. [www.bransonauction.com](http://www.bransonauction.com).

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Senate if passed. This will be a big week for us if we are successful with getting the bill passed out of the House.

FY 2009 Budget Rescission Bill Update

As I mentioned last week, both the House and Senate passed versions of the FY 2009 Rescission Bill, which essentially cuts approximately \$300 million from the FY 2009 budget. The Senate passed the first version of the bill two weeks ago, but it was heavily amended on the House side last Wednesday. After the bill passed the House, conference committee negotiations began last Friday and continued most of this week.

There has been infighting between the leadership in the House and Senate, which drastically slowed the process. A compromise was finally reached on Wednesday evening that included a 4.2 percent cut in all state agencies except K12 education. K12 education took a \$66 base state aid per pupil reduction, for a total cut of \$27.8 million in public education more than halfway through the school year. It also reduced special education funding by \$4.5 million.

There is no question that our budget is in crisis, but I could not support a bill that drastically slashes public school budgets so late in the school year. Futures Unlimited took a hit and the budget next year will hurt them even worse. There were many places to trim the State General Fund and protect our most vulnerable citizens. The Senate approved a much more reasonable, bipartisan compromise that would have only taken \$33 base state aid per pupil and hold public education as harmless as possible.

It is also critical to remember that due to the school finance formula, a “\$66 base state aid per pupil” reduction fails to accurately reflect the actual cut many school districts will suffer. Due to weighting for At-Risk students, most districts will suffer reductions well over \$100 per pupil, with some districts even forced to cut over \$200 per pupil. Under this proposal, 48 school districts statewide (almost all rural) will be operating in the red by July 1.

Now, the bill heads to the Governor's Office for her consideration. We expect she will make a decision early next week. We must finalize the FY 2009 budget as soon as possible so we can begin the task of working through the FY 2010 budget. The session reaches its halfway point next week.

Energy:

We consolidated the Mega-Energy bill last Thursday. This put all the bills we have heard testimony on so far in this committee into one big bill. This will contain the coal issue along with all the alternative energy issues into one bill. This will be a battle when it hits the floor of the House. There are

many good things in this bill and some not so good. We tried to amend it many times in committee but were not successful.

Civics 101: Conference Committees

Because the legislative process can be a bit confusing, I thought it would be helpful to include a little more information about what happens to legislation after it passes both chambers. Once a bill has passed both the House and Senate, it goes to what we call a conference committee. The purpose of this committee is to discuss policy differences between the House and Senate versions of a bill. The committee is composed of three members from each chamber who work to reach an agreement that will be acceptable to both houses.

Conference committees are limited to considering only matters which have been included in the bill or in bills which have been passed in one or both houses. This process can sometimes be quite time consuming, especially with budget bills, and may require several rounds of negotiations.

If a conference committee is unable to reach agreement, it must report so to the house of origin. A new conference committee must be appointed or the bill is deemed “killed.” If the conference committee agrees upon the content of a bill, which may include amendments, it is presented to both houses for consideration.

At this point, only up or down votes are permitted- the bill cannot be amended further in either chamber. If the agreement is adopted, it goes to the governor for signature or veto. In budget bills, the governor retains the authority to line-item veto, meaning she can approve the bill overall but veto specific provisions.

Health and Human Services Committee considers health savings accounts

On Tuesday, the House Committee on Health and Human Services heard testimony on House Bill 2198. This bill requires insurers that offer health insurance to small businesses to also offer a high-deductible health plan. It also requires small employers to establish a health savings account in conjunction with the high-deductible health plan. For any health plan offered on or after January 1, 2010, if an employee chooses the high-deductible plan with the health savings account, the employer is required to give a contribution equal to the employer's contribution to any other health plan offered. This contribution would be deposited monthly into the employee's health savings account. The bill would not apply to larger employers with large-group health plans. It is an expansion of last year's Senate bill 81.

Transportation Committee Update

Secretary of Transportation Deb Miller visited with the House Transportation Committee this week, reviewing the challenges facing Kansas roads and discussing the Kansas T-Link program. T-Link was a task force created last summer and charged with overseeing important state objectives such as keeping roads and bridges safe and in good repair, in addition to creating new approaches for Kansas' transportation future in light of the state's fiscal limitations.

We discussed Kansas highways during Tuesday's meeting, with particular emphasis given over the projected condition of roads in the coming years. In 2008, 83% of Kansas highways were deemed in “good condition,” though that number is expect-

ed to drop to 49% by 2019. There are currently 130,000 miles of local roads and 20,500 bridges in Kansas, and while the most traveled highways have been modernized, the Department admitted it has fallen behind on capacity needs. To combat this lag, the state plans to develop a strategy worth \$200+ million for mega projects such as the I-35/I-435/K-10 interchange. Additionally, KDOT is considering various improvement projects for the highway systems that would help create 4-lane highways instead of two-lane highways. T-Link projects that it will meet 66% of its funding needs to further the objectives of preserving, modernizing, and meeting capacity impacts on Kansas roads.

Other transportation methods such as public transit, rail, and aviation were also discussed. Currently, 21 Kansas counties lack any public transit, which is particularly troublesome for the baby-boomer generation which is nearing retirement. KDOT suggested implementing a regional approach to the problem, introducing a new set of standards for each region to meet in order to receive state funding.

While Kansas currently ranks fifth in U.S. transportation systems, this ranking may drop without financial intervention from the state. KDOT estimates a gap of \$55 million per year in preservation and maintenance of Kansas transportation systems.

House committee considers dissolving Kansas Turnpike Authority

This week the Transportation Committee also held a hearing on House Bill 2178- abolishing Kansas Turnpike Authority, transferring its duties to Kansas Department of Transportation.

Currently, KDOT maintains over 10,000 miles of road and KTA maintains 236 miles of road. KTA and KDOT purchase the same materials and operate under the same structure costs. With the lack of state funding and need for significant budget cuts, the transfer of hands could create more revenue for the state. If a transfer were to take place, the roads would remain toll roads and tolls would remain low. These tolls would go toward upkeep, repair, paying off debt and other state projects. This bill would ensure that the upkeep of toll roads would not change as a means of maintaining the current level of toll road use.

Those in opposition of the bill voiced concerns about raising toll prices, expenses resulting from the transfer, how the transfer would affect the trucking industry, and how KTA debt would transfer. There were many neutral comments that supported both sides of the issue. A number of questions were raised about possible consolidation of administrative positions between KTA and KDOT, in addition to inquiries about how the additional state funds would be allocated.

In this difficult budget year, all proposals for streamlining government should be on the table. The state must consider all options and carefully weigh both the negative and positive consequences of these proposals. This bill is dead on arrival but in the future, anything will be possible.

We have been so busy that we never seem to have time to visit our friends at home and hopefully, we can schedule some town hall meetings starting in March. The weekends in February are full.

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# Watershed

➤From page 1

Oxford's.

But the Watershed Institute takes a different approach than river projects you may have seen in the past. "There are better ways of doing things," William Jeffries Regulatory Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Rather than a raw engineering approach, Brock Emmert, fluvial geomorphologist for the Watershed institute explained, geomorphology, the study of water's effect on landmass, combines several sciences, including engineering, to make slight, permanent adjustments to the river.

What's the catch? A meeting was scheduled between landowners, the city, state and US officials to find out.

At the meeting, residents expressed concerns for the stability of the proposed structures and Emmert explained that the Institute had a long history of river projects and had learned lessons about working with a river that has a mobile base. The project being considered is a bendway weir program. Ideally, the weirs, constructed from compact rock of various sizes, having a wide footprint and crest, would become more stable with time as land fills in behind the weir, the river's channel is nudged back to the center of the river and native trees and plants overtake the weirs.

Unlike past attempts to reinforce a river's bank, the Watershed Institute doesn't plan to simply deflect the river's flow but seeks to work with the river so that new problems don't occur downstream as a result of the work done. These weirs influence rather than fight the river and when the river rises it over takes the weirs while still being influenced by them.

Environmental concerns were

expressed for the bald eagle and older cottonwood trees. Emmert explained that some trees would have to be removed for construction but the idea was to keep as many trees as possible and to plant more native trees at the project's completion. While rock tends to constantly wear away, trees, and their root systems, get stronger over time. Jeffries noted that it was the possibility of the sewage lagoons spilling into the river that posed the greatest environmental threat.

Frank Austenfeld, Executive Director for the Institute and the Watershed Land Trust, noted the river's fishing would also be improved by the construction. Austenfeld pointed out that such projects create diversity in the river's bed that provides a very accommodating habitat for fish on what is otherwise a fish highway.

Austenfeld was frank when boaters expressed concern for safety considering that the weir would be occasionally submerged. He answered that the submerged weirs would not be marked and boaters would simply need to be careful as with any obstruction in the river.

The overriding concern expressed was for property rights. Land owners wanted to know how their rights would be effected by their cooperation. Austenfeld explained that a conservation easement of approximately 50 feet from the bank would need to be signed by the landowners. The stewardship for the easement could cost the Institute's program around \$10,000 per landowner and requires that the landowner not change the work done by the institute: no cutting down the trees or rearranging the dirt work and construction. Landowners would not be required to let the public onto their land like past projects but would be required to let a representa-

tive check the banks on their property once a year to see that none of the work has been altered.

An audience member asked what guarantee would be given that the project would not adversely affect property downstream and Austenfeld was frank again as he explained that there would be no guarantee given. He said the Watershed Institute, and specifically Emmert, has a lot of experience with just that issue and they use more science than usual to design each projects with that in mind but noted that, with a river, there are no guarantees.

After the general idea of the project had been discussed, the meeting made it's way to both sides of the river

and to the sewer lagoons. Property owners and the city detailed the rivers situation and history to the visiting officials and the officials explained possible solutions and layouts.

Will the remaining portion of the bridge be removed and how far will the project extend? Emmert explained that the Watershed Institute probably won't be removing the bridge and it was explained the immediate willingness of landowners will determine the scope of the project.

The remaining structures in the river may not pose a threat after the weirs are constructed. Jeffries explained that the river may take care of the bridge itself but that the Corps

main concern was for the sewer lagoons. Watco told the Register that they were finished with construction and did not plan to remove anymore of the bridge.

The long tour ended with officials noting that a conceptual design needed to be drafted and consent from the property owners would need to be garnered quickly.

Mayor Chad Bartelson explained to the Register that the city was merely a property owner in the matter and that their consent was as well as assured.

The Register will keep you updated on the developments of this ongoing story."



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## TIAHRT • UPDATE

From • the • office • of  
**TODD • TIAHRT, • U.S. REP. • Dist. 4**

U.S. Congressman Todd Tiahrt voted against the Democrat's so-called economic stimulus proposal that represents the most expensive bill in American history. The 1,073 page document was released after midnight less than nine hours before the House began debate on the plan. The bill is estimated to cost \$1,139,000,000,000 including interest.

No single member of Congress was able to read the final bill before debate began, and Democrats refused to permit the language to be read before members voted on passage.

"Americans should be upset at how Democrats and the Obama Administration have crafted an after-midnight plan not even Hollywood horror filmmakers could have dreamed up," said Tiahrt. "This bill will cost Americans more than \$1.1 trillion and creates or expands 106 federal government programs.

"I strongly support the Republican economic recovery plan that would create 6.2 million American jobs with half the cost of the Democrat's spending bill. Three weeks ago I offered an amendment that would have given all working Americans a payroll tax holiday for the year. But these common-sense solutions were rejected by the Democrat party in control of Washington so we could instead grow government programs to record-breaking levels.

"Kansas families are struggling to pay bills and small businesses are

wondering how they will pay their workers. We need economic relief that works now. We need a plan that focuses on stimulating the economy. Unfortunately, all we are getting is a massive plan to grow federal government programs.

"Democrats slashed middle class tax relief by \$29 billion to pay for special-interest pork that has nothing to do with getting people back to work in Kansas. I have been saying for years that spending billions on new government programs is not a solution to help create lasting jobs for workers or help our economy grow.

Examples of egregious special-interest pork-barrel spending included in the Democrat's spending bill include:

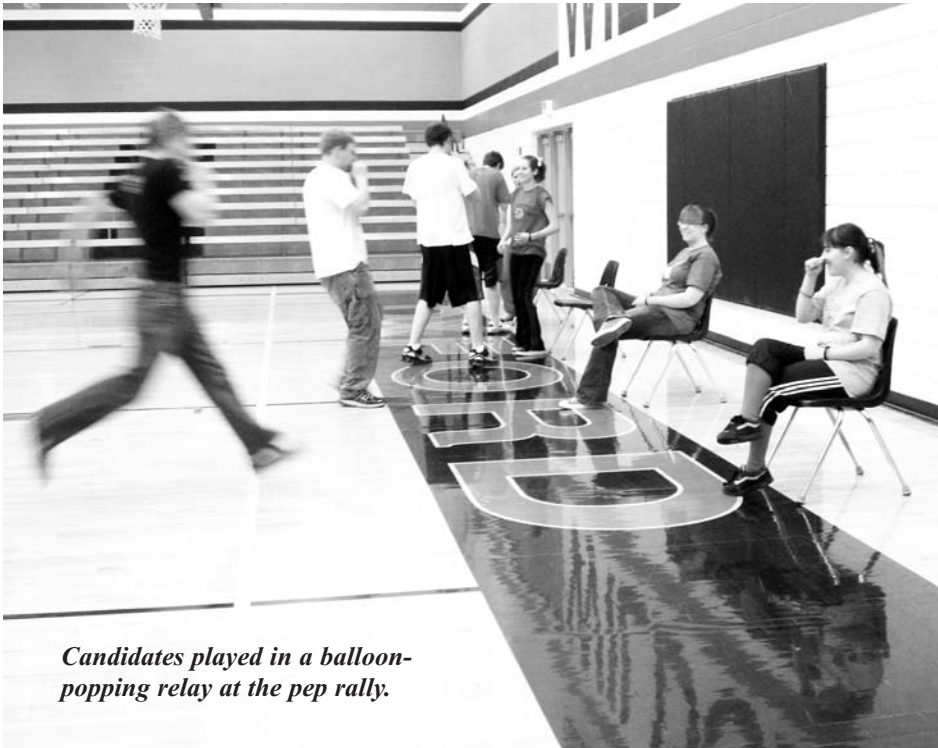
- \$30 million for mice habitat restoration in San Francisco
- \$1 billion that can be used for STD education
- \$8 billion for a railroad system from Los Angeles to Las Vegas
- \$5.5 billion for federal buildings
- \$25 million for the Smithsonian Institution
- \$2 billion for a coal fired electrical plant in Illinois
- \$650 million for television converter boxes
- \$500 million for a new computer system at the Social Security Administration.

"The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office reported that only 11 percent of the spending in the Democrat's plan will occur this year. We need more than 11 percent. We need a 100 percent effort now to create jobs and help struggling families and businesses."





Phillip Zimmerman dressed up for "Fairy Tale" day



Candidates played in a balloon-popping relay at the pep rally.



Chris Curless, gave an inspiring speech to the crowd at the pep rally; Chris was the mascot at home ball games this year.

**SPIRIT WEEK AT OXFORD JUNIOR/SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL** was spirited indeed when high school students enjoyed dressing up and participating in the spirit-building activities. Monday's theme was "PJ's Day" and Mrs. Browning's second hour English class won the staff match game. Students "Cowboyed Up" on Tuesday for Hick Day. Seniors won the orange passing contest. Wednesday was a trip back to the 1980's. Thursday took them to an enchanted land with "Fairy Tale" day. Phillip Zimmerman was the fairest of them all! Seniors won the balloon-stuffing contest. Students celebrated school spirit by wearing red and black on Friday and watched the Homecoming royal candidates participate in the candidate game at the pep rally. For the final class competition, students decorated their hallways. It was close, between the seniors and the sophomores, but the sophomores won by just a couple of points! Aubrie Neises and Kevin White were crowned Winter Sports Homecoming Royalty to cap off the week.

Enjoying "Hick Day" were Tinka Valtl, Liza Poovey and Phillip Gehring.

**JuHi Cats, runners-up at tournament**

Oxford's junior high boys basketball team competed in the South Central Border League tournament held Feb. 12 at Central of Burden, defeating Central to start, 44-33. Oxford was ahead 14-10 in the first quarter of that contest and had a 10-point lead of 27-17 by halftime. During the third quarter, Cats maintained their 10-point lead at 35-25. This put the boys into the championship game. Gage Burkes led the scoring with 20 points, followed by Garrett Kennedy's nine points, Alex Jones' eight points, Issac Batchelor's four points and Mark Sutton's three. Valentine's Day looked promising for the Cats as they entered their gym for the championship game against South Haven. The first quarter was not a sweet one for Oxford. The Cardinals had them outscored at 15-5. At the end of the first half, the Cats had made up some ground, with the score of 13-9. Oxford had clawed their way up during the third quarter to a tied game of 25-25. But it wasn't meant to be. The young team fought hard, but South Haven won the tournament, 38-29. Cats and coaches Dexter Carpenter and Terri Wiseman had a fine, fine season.

