

Briefly

Second teen arrested in beating, robbery

A second Salina teenager was arrested Monday evening, accused of beating and taking bicycles from two younger boys.

Erick O. Abrego, 14, 613 Rocket, was arrested on charges of battery and robbery. He is accused of punching a 10-year-old boy and a 9-year-old boy and stealing their bikes in the 700 block of Jupiter about 6:20 p.m. Friday. Carlos A. Contreras, 16, 2105 Tulane, was arrested previously in connection with the incident.

According to the police report, the younger boys got the bikes back, and Contreras and Abrego are accused of hitting them and attempting to take the bikes again.

Computer stolen from hospital ER

A laptop computer was stolen from the emergency room of Salina Regional Health Center over the weekend, but a hospital spokeswoman said no confidential information was stored on the computer.

The Compaq 6710B model laptop computer, valued at \$1,400, was taken between 7 a.m. Saturday and 11 p.m. Sunday, according to the police report.

Beth Vinson, director of marketing for Salina Regional, said nurses used the computer to enter personal health information from patients. However, the personal information wasn't stored on the computer; the computer was connected to the hospital's main computer system, where that information was stored.

Beamer announces write-in candidacy

Virginia Beamer on Monday announced her intention to run as a write-in candidate for the 118th District Kansas House of Representatives.

Beamer, Oakley, currently holds the seat. However, in the August primary election, she lost her bid for the Republican nomination to Don Hineman, Dighton.

"There were only 17 votes difference in the primary race," Beamer wrote in announcing her candidacy. "I know many did not vote, whether on vacation or for some other reason. This will give every registered voter, regardless of party affiliation, the opportunity to decide who should represent them for the next two years in the Kansas House.

There is no Democrat on the ballot for the November election.

The district comprises seven counties — Wallace, Logan, Gove, Trego, Wichita, Lane and Rush — and parts of Ness County.

From Staff Reports

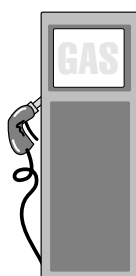
Corrections

Because of a Journal error, the size of the lap pool unveiled Monday in the concept design for the proposed aquatic center was incorrect in a story in Tuesday's paper. The six-lane lap pool is 25 yards long.

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The Journal wants to set the record straight. Advise us of errors by calling the Journal at (785) 823-6363, or toll free at 1-800-827-6363. Corrections will run in this space as soon as possible.

fuel finder



A sampling of unleaded gas prices in the region.

Prices shown may not reflect the lowest gas price in the area.

- Salina, \$3.48⁹
Green Lantern, 1100 E. Iron
- Saliina, \$3.49⁹
Roy's IV, 1103 E. Crawford
- Abilene, \$3.49⁹
West Stop West



TOM DORSEY / Salina Journal

Former presidential press secretary Marlin Fitzwater (right) reads to children Tuesday morning at the Abilene Public Library.

Fitzwater / He likes GOP ticket

FROM PAGE A1

Sitting in a space he occupied as a child, Fitzwater fondly recalled visits to the library, which then had a linoleum basement floor. It's carpeted now.

"I was a farm kid. Even at age 6, I loved coming in. It was a chance to meet other kids," Fitzwater said. "Coming to town for library reading and swim lessons was a great thrill."

Brenda Finn Bowers, the library's volunteer coordinator, who organized the anniversary celebration, found a book in the library — "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens — that Fitzwater checked out in 1957, when he was 14.

"I feel pretty good about my reading habits," he said.

At the library, Fitzwater was introduced to Lila Stout, Solomon, who worked with Fitzwater's father, Max, at the Duckwall warehouse.

"His dad had such a wonderful temperament," Stout said. "I'm so tickled that (Marlin) came here. Every time I see his picture, it brings everything back."

Talking to students

Fitzwater also spoke Tuesday at Abilene High School. He said he spoke there as a "role model" to students "to show they could come from Abilene and work anywhere in the world."

He showed a slide show of the White House.

"We're right in the middle of a presidential campaign. It's a way to tie in to what they're seeing in the news every day," he said.

Fitzwater "really connected" with the high school students, said Judy Leyerzapf, the library

"Even at age 6, I loved coming in (to the library). It was a chance to meet other kids."

Marlin Fitzwater

former presidential press secretary

director.

"He told great stories, had great pictures. I had tears in my eyes sometimes as he told stories, and the other times, we were all laughing," she said.

Fitzwater followed with a visit to Bankes Drug Store in downtown Abilene to reminisce with family and friends, Leyerzapf said. His brother and sister-in-law, Gary and Lois Fitzwater, still live here.

In his evening speech, Fitzwater planned to talk about growing up in Abilene and campaigning with Reagan and Bush, telling stories on "the buses that break down, motorcades that don't work, and all the crazy things politicians do to get elected."

Worked under Reagan, Bush

First appointed deputy press secretary to Reagan in 1983, Fitzwater was promoted to press secretary in 1985. He was with Reagan and Bush through three presidential campaigns, the first two successful. He also endured Bush's unsuccessful campaign against Bill Clinton in 1992.

Those days came back to Fitzwater after he attended the Republican National Convention Sept. 1-4 in St. Paul, Minn. He recalled visiting three to four cities a day, for 15 to 20 straight days.

"You get into a little town and go straight to the hotel. You don't

know where you are," he said. "Your bones ache, and if you lose, it's especially painful."

His allegiance this election is to the Sen. John McCain-Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin ticket. Fitzwater's wife, Melinda, is a cousin of McCain's.

"As a lifelong Republican, that's who I support. I think both candidates are good, however," Fitzwater said. "I met Sarah Palin, spent some time with her in Minnesota. She really has turned things around."

Palin bolsters the GOP ticket with her expertise in family, education and social programs, while McCain is strong in national security issues, he said. Together, they form a strong unit.

The Sen. Barack Obama-Sen. Joe Biden ticket is the opposite for the Democrats, with Obama having domestic advantages. "Biden is the foreign policy expert," Fitzwater said.

Now living in Maryland near Chesapeake Bay, Fitzwater, 65, is writing a novel. He stays busy serving on the board of trustees at Franklin Pierce University, Rindge, N.H. In 2002, the university completed the Marlin Fitzwater Center for Communication. He also is on a board that manages 15 libraries in the Washington and Baltimore areas.

It's been a long journey since enjoying "that great book smell"

in the Abilene library, Fitzwater said.

After completing a journalism degree in 1965 from Kansas State University, Fitzwater worked at newspapers in Abilene, Lindsborg, Manhattan and Topeka.

Fitzwater said he couldn't get a job as a journalist in Washington, D.C. He served at various federal agencies, including the Appalachian Regional Commission, U.S. Department of Transportation and Environmental Protection Agency. He was deputy assistant secretary for public affairs at the U.S. Treasury Department in 1982 when the White House came calling.

James Brady, Reagan's press secretary at the time, had been shot in a 1981 assassination attempt on the president. Reagan's chief of staff, James Baker, reminded Fitzwater that "we're in the midst of a recession and facing 10 percent unemployment. We need somebody to explain that to the public."

After an hour, Baker said, "Let's go see the president," Fitzwater recalled, and after a short visit with Reagan, he got the job. Fitzwater said he exited the oval office and loudly said, "Yes," startling a secretary. He then explained the exuberant display.

"I said, 'History must record that even if I get fired tomorrow, for one day at least, I was President Reagan's press secretary,'" Fitzwater said.

He was the only press secretary in history to be appointed by two presidents.

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Program reinforces positive behavior

School counselor talks about teaching positive behavior over punishment

By MICHAEL STRAND
Salina Journal

For years, teachers largely assumed students knew "the rules," including not talking during class, showing up on time, and having a pencil.

But, says Shelda Burger, counselor at Salina Central High School, "just because my mom taught me that when you go through the cookie line, you just take two, doesn't mean everyone's mom did. Students come from all kinds of different backgrounds."

A few years ago, Burger said, that realization led Central to develop a schoolwide system for explaining what exactly is expected and for rewarding positive behavior. A "school climate" committee was created, composed of both staff and students, to decide what the school's rules will be.

Tuesday afternoon, as part of the League of Women Voters of Salina's regular Lunch and Learn series, Burger, counselor Rick Johnson and senior Javon Shackleford explained how the new program has been working.

"There's a difference between punishing negative behaviors and reinforcing positive behaviors," Burger said.

Several years ago, she said, the school staff ran across what's



TOM DORSEY / Salina Journal

Shelda Burger, counselor at Salina Central High School, talks Tuesday at Lunch and Learn about Central's efforts to promote a better school environment for students, faculty and staff.

become a mantra: "If a student doesn't know how to read, we teach them; if a student doesn't know how to swim, we teach them," and so on, until, "If a student doesn't know how to behave, we ... punish them?"

What makes more sense, she said, is to make sure students understand what's expected.

"Punishment isn't good enough," she said. "If you just punish them, they haven't learned anything."

To help sell a program of positive reinforcement to teachers, Burger said, those starting the project talked about how much class time is taken up by just one or two disruptive students; it often can take 10 minutes or more for a teacher

to deal with a student, write up the paperwork and send the student to the office.

"We were losing a gazillion hours of instruction time — OK, that's an exaggeration — because of a few problems," Burger said. "But if we'd spend a little time at the beginning of the year," much of it could be headed off.

The choice, she said, is "do we be reactive or proactive?"

To help set those expectations, students, staff and administrators have been attending summer gatherings for the past several years, working together to identify problems, deciding how big those problems are and coming up with

solutions.

"They're really informal — the principal is there in jeans and a T-shirt — and it's really a diverse mix of kids, and you get a lot of different opinions," said Shackleford, who later said that as a freshman, he was surprised when he was invited to be on such a panel. It was, he said, "a very different experience."

Burger, too, said she's been surprised by what students have come up with — such as a crackdown on cussing.

"Really, the students were harder on themselves than we were as adults as we established these behaviors," she said. As for cussing, "We hear it all the time, but it turns out it bothers the majority of students, too."

The result was Cussbusters posters throughout the school, asking students to discourage others from cussing — along with a second poster defining cussing, just to make sure everyone knew.

The school built a stage in the cafeteria for performances during lunch, to encourage students to stay there instead of wandering the halls and possibly getting into trouble. Students also had a say in writing the school's policy on cell phone use.

The program is in its third year, and the number of students being sent to the office has dropped substantially, Burger said.

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