WCHS students attend Knowledge is Power Workshop in Manhattan

An opportunity for learning and fun was presented to White City High juniors, seniors, and others in Consumer Economics class on Friday, March 6. This group attended a “Knowledge is Power” student workshop presented by the Kansas Attorney General’s office, in recognition of National Consumer Protection Week. This event was held at Kansas State University Student Union and co-sponsored by Kansas State University, the University of Kansas (a similar seminar had been held on the KU campus earlier in the week), and Meritrust Credit Union.

Students attended sessions on Identity Theft and methods to avoid being a victim, Financial Literacy dealing with personal financial management, Landlord/Tenant Practices explaining laws that effect the living arrangements of many college students, and Financial Aid and Student Loan Practices to help inform students of the financial assistance available. Presenters included representatives from the Attorney General’s office, from the U.S. Postal Service, from several private law firms, and from Meritrust Credit Union.

Students were given royal treatment at the student workshop, being treated to an array of donuts and juice for the morning session, a Mexican food buffet for lunch, and an afternoon snack of popcorn and lemonade. Willie the Wildcat visited with students throughout the lunch break, providing autographs and photo ops for those attending. Concluding the luncheon was a prize drawing, with prizes of KSU t-shirts, an i-pod, two laptop computers, and scholarships in the amounts of $250, $500, and $1,000. White City Senior and foreign exchange student from Germany, Ben Kirsch, was fortunate to be the recipient of one of the laptops.

Much of the information provided by the workshop reinforced learning from the local Consumer Economics class. Hopefully learning such information will help prevent numerous financial woes for the White City students. Sponsors for the trip were Lela Engel, FACS teacher and Cindy Gant, school counselor.
Attacks at KU, KSU may be linked, AG says

By JOHN MILBURN
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — The attorney general's office announced Wednesday that it is investigating the link between 13 rapes that occurred over eight years in two college towns.

Attorney General Steve Six said there are enough similarities between the college-age victims, time of attack and manner of attack to suspect the rapes are connected. The attorney general's office would not provide any other details about what might connect the crimes, including whether authorities have any DNA or other forensic evidence.

Eight of the rapes were in Manhattan, which is home to Kansas State University, and five were in Lawrence, about 85 miles to the east and home to the University of Kansas. The 13 rapes happened from 2000 to 2008, and none was committed on campus.

Police in Lawrence and Manhattan have been investigating the crimes separately, but authorities only recently determined they had enough information to link the two cities' cases and share the findings with the public. Now, the attorney general is coordinating the investigation, which includes the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, said Six spokesman Ashley Anstaett.

Investigators say the attacker appears to be a white male in his mid-20s, weighing 180 to 220 pounds and is 5 feet 9 inches to 6 feet 2 inches tall.

In each Lawrence rape, the attacker has been armed, but police haven't given other details, such as how he entered the home, what he wore or how he chose his victims. In the Manhattan cases, the attacker broke into the women's homes while they slept. He covered his forearms with dark clothing, used gloves and wore boots.

Six announced the possible connections in a written statement that also advised residents to be vigilant during spring break next week. He noted that when universities are not in session, apartments and other student housing areas may be targeted by criminals.

"We're encouraging Kansans to take extra safety precautions and report any suspicious activity to local law enforcement immediately," he said.

Lawrence police spokesman Bill Cory said information about the rapes has residents paying more attention to their surroundings.

"I believe the community's concerned. Everyone's concerned when you have a crime like this," Cory said.

Information has been distributed to students at both campuses, including a Feb. 26 newsletter at Kansas State that mentioned the "so-called 'serial rapist'" and offered general information about sexual assaults.

Mary Todd, director of the Kansas State Women's Center, said the campus has conducted a number of outreach drives to get information to students.

Todd said that women on campus have expressed concern about the spate of rapes. Some are now living with roommates when they would prefer to live alone, she said.

Jill Jess, spokeswoman for the University of Kansas, said that college's students would be getting an e-mail later this week urging them to be cautious while away from school.

"There is an awareness, but I wouldn't say that anyone's in a state of panic," Jess said.
Award Given To Dr. Ward

On Saturday, February 7, the Soroptimist International Club of Derby, KS presented their Making A Difference For Women Award to Dr. Cynthia L. Ward. The Soroptimist organization specializes in helping women band themselves together to help others.

In making the award, President Kim Moses – Stevens said, “Dr. Ward sets an outstanding example for all young women. Her impact on our community is immeasurable”. Besides her work as a family practice doctor in the Derby Medical Center, Dr. Ward contributes many volunteer hours of support to the schools in her area, serves her church in many different capacities, and does endless community service projects like serving meals on Sundays at The Lord’s Diner in Wichita.

Dr. Ward is a 1977 graduate of Belleville High School and received her medical degree from the University of Kansas in 1985. After finishing her family practice residency, she has practiced medicine in Derby, KS where she resides with her husband, Jay, and children, Jenny, Clayton, and Samantha. She is the daughter of Donna Ward and the late Dr. James A. Ward of Belleville.
KU student found dead in fraternity

DENVER (AP) — A 19-year-old University of Kansas student from Colorado has been found dead in a fraternity house on campus, and his father says alcohol is to blame.

Jason Wren of Littleton, a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, was found dead at about 2:30 p.m. Sunday, according to Lawrence, Kan., police.

Police Capt. Ray Urbanek said an autopsy would be performed to determine the cause of death.

However, the teen's father said Monday that Jason Wren, a former Arapahoe High School honor student, drank heavily before he died.

"One week of fraternity living killed him," Jay Wren told The Denver Post. "He overdrank. Kids have got to understand alcohol is the worst."

Jay Wren said Lawrence police told him Jason went with friends to a restaurant Saturday evening and drank margaritas. Jason then returned to the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house and had 10 to 12 beers and some whiskey. Jay Wren said.

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Gambling becomes legislative issue

By CARL MANNING
Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Gambling finally is a legislative issue this year.

The Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee will consider a bill Wednesday that would let horse and dog tracks receive a bigger percentage of the revenue from state-owned slot machines at the tracks.

Committee Chairman Pete Brungardt said Monday he didn’t know whether there were enough votes to send the proposal to the Senate for debate.

He said there’s also concern that somebody might try to rewrite the bill to repeal the 2007 gambling law creating four state-owned casinos. Only one casino, Boot Hill Casino and Resort in Dodge City, is being built.

“We’ll have to count noses to be sure that doesn’t happen,” said Brungardt, a Salina Republican.

House and Senate leaders have said they don’t want a gambling debate this year.

“I don’t see any need to revisit this issue. If the majority want to, we’ll have something to talk about,” said Senate Majority Leader Derek Schmidt, an Independence Republican, who sets the chamber’s debate calendar.

Negotiations between track owners and the Kansas Lottery, which owns the actual gambling, broke down last year over how much the tracks would get.

The law allows the tracks to keep 25 percent of the slot revenues, and the Lottery offered to let them have an additional 15 percent set aside for expenses. Track owners said even at 40 percent, they couldn’t operate without losing money.

The bill boosts the track’s take from 25 percent to 43 percent while reducing the state’s share from 40 percent to 22 percent. It leaves the 15 percent for expenses, subject to negotiations.

The Woodlands in Kansas City closed in August and Camptown Greyhound Park in Frontenac has been closed since 2000.

The bill also would allow Sedgwick County voters to decide whether they want slots at Wichita Greyhound Park. The track closed in 2007 after voters rejected both casinos and slots at the tracks. This time, voters would only deal with slots at the track.

COAL FIGHT: Legislative negotiators planned to meet Tuesday to discuss a bill allowing two coal-fired power plants in southwest Kansas.

The six lawmakers will try to work out differences between House and Senate versions of the energy legislation. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius has promised the veto.

The bill overturns the denial of a state air-quality permit for Sunflower Electric Power Corp. The Hays-based company wants to build the two coal-fired power plants in Finney County.

The Kansas secretary of health and environment denied the permit in October 2007 because of the plants’ potential carbon dioxide emissions.

The House and Senate versions agree on those provisions.

But there are differences over other parts of the bill promoting renewable energy. Those proposals are included to attract support from lawmakers wary of new coal plants.

PAYROLL PROBLEM: House Republicans are taking a swipe at Democratic Gov. Kathleen Sebelius over a recent budget dispute.

They introduced a bill Monday requiring the governor to pay employees first when faced with a budget problems.

The state faced a cash crunch last month, and Sebelius proposed moving $225 million into the state’s main bank account from other funds. At first, GOP legislative leaders blocked the internal borrowing, questioning its legality.

Sebelius and her top aides then said the state wouldn’t have enough cash to make the Feb. 20 payroll for 42,000 government workers.

GOP leaders relented after Sebelius signed a bill balancing the state’s current budget.

Sebelius spokeswoman Beth Martino said it was premature to comment on the bill because it could be changed.

INTERIM PROVOST: The University of Kansas has chosen the dean of the college of liberal arts and sciences to serve as interim provost.

Chancellor Robert Hemenway on Monday announced his appointment of Joseph Steinmetz to replace departing provost
Richard Lariviere. Lariviere is the finalist for president of the University of Oregon. Hemenway is also expected to leave his post on June 30 and a national search is under way to replace him. Steinmetz has led the college of liberal arts and sciences, with 17,000 students and 53 departments, since 2006.
KU Honors EHS Seniors

Four Ellinwood Seniors were honored Wednesday, February 18th, at the Club at Stoneridge in Great Bend, by the University of Kansas for scholastic achievement. Pictured from the left are Principal Brian Rowley, Counselor Carol Near and Seniors Adam Unruh, Christopher Isern and Amy Klatt.
Degenhardt receives Phi Theta Kappa All-Kansas Academic Team honors

Barton Community College sophomore Eric Degenhardt was awarded for scholastic achievement during the Annual Phi Theta Kappa Honors Luncheon in Topeka recently. Helping to recognize those students is Barton President Dr. Carl Heilman, accompanies each of them in their respective photos.

Degenhardt, a 2007 graduate of Ellinwood High School, was among 52 community college students named to the All-Kansas Academic Team. The event, which coincided with last month’s Kansas Board of Regents meeting, was held at the Ramada Inn Hotel, Topeka.

Degenhardt is a business major at Barton. He serves as a peer tutor for Barton’s Student Support Services and is active in Barton’s pep band, jazz band, Prairie Winds Community Concert Band, and additional Student Support Services activities. He was named Traditional Age Student of the Year by Barton’s TRIO/Student Support Services program in 2008. Among his volunteer efforts, Degenhardt planted shrubs for Great Bend’s Brit Spaugh Zoo and helped build a grade school playground.

He plans to transfer to the University of Kansas to complete his education. He is the son of Mary and Daniel Degenhardt, Great Bend.

Each awarded student received a proclamation issued by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, an educational stipend and an academic medallion. The Kansas Regents universities and Washburn University will match the stipends with $1,000 scholarships for those awarded students who transfer after completing their community college studies.
KU student found dead in frat house

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Arnold receives KU research award

Sixty-nine University of Kansas students received undergraduate research awards for spring 2009.

Among them was Hillsboro High School graduate Emily Julianna Arnold, a senior in aerospace engineering. Her research project is "Investigation of Electrical Performance and Structural Efficiency of the Meridian UAV Through Research and Analysis of the Engine Cowling." Rick Hale is the associate professor of aerospace engineering.

The awards support original, independent research by undergraduates enrolled on the Lawrence campus. The University Honors Program administers the awards with funds. Criteria used for selection included overall quality of the proposal, student's academic record and ability to complete the proposed research project, project's potential contribution to knowledge, and educational value of the research to the student.

Arnold is the daughter of Don and Gayla Ratzlaff of Hillsboro.
Blackburn to show work on electro-acoustic music

Justin Blackburn, a senior in music composition at the University of Kansas, will present his work ‘Intelligent Design’ at the annual meeting of the Society of Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States, to be held April 16-18 in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Blackburn is the son of Mike and Shelli Blackburn, South Hutchinson, and a graduate of Nickerson High School, composed and produced ‘Intelligent Design’ in 2007. The composition was created from just three short samples of a human voice.

“The work confronts certain issues of impetus and purpose, both in purely musical terms and in the broader realm of the human condition,” Blackburn said. “The sound of the human voice, wrought with the often harsh electronic manipulation of the piece, points up the unique dichotomy between an organic humanity and an increasingly synthetic, technological environment.”

Michael Rhoades is the host for this year’s conference. He said the submitted works were judged on form, originality in sound creation and quality of production. Of the 153 works submitted from students from all over the world, Rhoades said Blackburn’s work scored highly and was selected as one of 25 to be presented at the 2009 conference.

A panel of judges will pick four finalists to be awarded prizes at the conference. They then will be sent to the group’s Board of Directors, who will award the top two winners with commissions to compose a piece to present at next year’s conference, as well as a cash prize.

“Justin is an up-and-coming composer of electro-acoustic music and I expect this is only the beginning of his success within this beautiful and relatively unnoted art form,” said Rhoades. “I expect to hear much more from him in the future. We are delighted to be able to present his piece at the 2009 SEAMUS National Conference.”

The Society of Electro-Acoustic Music in the United States was founded in 1984 as a nonprofit national organization of composers, performers and teachers of electro-acoustic music, a term used to describe music that needs electronic technology to be created. The organization provides a national forum to those engaged in electro-acoustic music and communicates through a journal, newsletter, national meetings and the national archive at the University of Texas.

Blackburn has studied electronic composition and audio engineering with Bryan Kip Haasheim associate professor of music composition at KU. In addition to electronic sound design, Blackburn has written music for orchestra, concert band and jazz ensembles. In 2006, he was commissioned by composer and pianist Gabriela Lena Frank to compose his ‘Autumn Sketches’ for solo piano. In early 2008, he contributed an electronic sound design piece to KU art professor Matt Burke’s installation, ‘Passages in Time,’ for the Lawrence Arts Center. Later that year, Blackburn was selected to participate in the SoundSCAPE Contemporary Music Festival in Pavia, Italy, where he presented ‘Intelligent Design’ and oversaw the premiere of his work for violin and piano, ‘Afflictions.’