

Animals In Need Warm the Hearts of S.P.E.A.K. Members

Alana Utterback
Staff Writer

When the club, Students Promoting and Encouraging Animal Kindness, first began, many students treated the new organization as an extension of the liberal animal rights group, PETA. While the members do try to stop animal cruelty and neglect, they direct their club toward teaching the community about animal welfare. Through active volunteer work, the hosting of benefit concerts, and acting almost as an animal adoption agency for the local school district, S.P.E.A.K. genuinely lives up to its name.

Every Monday after school, the club meets to review the pets that have been adopted during the past week, plan future events, talk of news and information relating

to animal welfare and sometimes even have guest speakers come in to talk about their careers. Just last year, they had three guest speakers visit, including a vet student and a professor from K-State Veterinary School and an Animal Control Officer. They also did volunteer work at the City of Independence Animal Shelter, donated to shelters in Texas in the aftermath of the hurricane crises, and throughout the whole year, had close to 15 animals adopted by different homes, ranging from rescued puppies to the guinea pigs adopted by Prairie View science teacher Larry Hurst.

"I think S.P.E.A.K. will do really well this year," stated the club's President, Shiela Bailey. "There's a lot of new faces and

they listen well and participate."

Already this year S.P.E.A.K. has adopted six animals out, and also has had a visit from guest speaker Sally Orth, the owner of a black Labrador named Draco, who works as a therapy dog at Jayhawk-Linn Elementary School. Acting almost as a counselor for the children, the school has Orth bring Draco to visit classrooms, comforting students and giving them someone to talk to if they don't want to speak to an adult. Members of S.P.E.A.K. learned about the career and what you have to do to work in animal-assisted therapy, about the training both owner and dog have to go through, and the bond they must have before becoming a team.

Freshman Lindsay Claytor's

outburst, "It was awesome!" in review of the recent volunteer visit to Wayside Waifs, easily sums up the enthusiasm the new members of S.P.E.A.K. have this year. Having visited Wayside Waifs Humane Society's animal shelter in Kansas City, Missouri, on November 4. Members first met with Ashley Cunningham who is in charge of the volunteer program. Cunningham then gave them a short history about the shelter, telling the group that Wayside Waifs was established in 1944 and is one of the few no-kill shelters in the United States. The shelter is also one of the largest with the capacity to hold over 800 animals, having taken in and adopted out around 4,000 animals just in the past year. Cunningham informed them about the on-site

veterinary clinic set up exclusively for Wayside Waifs, that treats for diseases, installs microchips, and spay/neuters each animal that the shelter takes in.

Members were then given a tour of the facility and taken to the dog and cat play rooms to help socialize a few puppies and kittens. If you're interested in more information about the shelter, check out <http://www.waysidewaifs.org>, or perhaps sign up with S.P.E.A.K. to volunteer with them on their next visit on December 18.

"It's stellar," responded freshman Bailey Moore when asked how well she liked being a member of S.P.E.A.K. "You get to do things for the animals and it makes you feel all warm and cuddly inside."

National French Week Brings Some Culture To Prairie View

Sydney Barber
Co-Editor

Prairie View's French Club brought culture to the students through National French Week. On November 17-21, a variety of French culture, from fashion to food, was shared with students.

On Monday, everyone was invited to try a variety of cheese and non-alcoholic wine. Many people enjoyed getting to try some out-of-the-ordinary flavors. French teacher Christy Nickelson supplied students with Brie, Allouette (which had garlic and herb, vegetable, and Spinach artichoke flavors), Fromage du Chevre (also known as goat cheese), and Boursin (another garlic and herb flavored cheese). As for the "wines", Nickelson brought in sparkling red and white grape juice.

Sophomore Dalton Gainer simply says, "I liked it...a lot."

Tuesday gave the halls a somewhat cat-walk like look as a few students participated in wearing something

French. Although some kept their apparel toned down, others weren't afraid to go all out by wearing something bold,

such as junior John Mayhew in his almost medieval black laced-up shirt.

According to Nickelson, who happened to be sporting a Paris,



Students line up for the Tour de France.
Photo by Jama Hambleton

France t-shirt that day, her favorite part of French fashion is the "chic" look.

The Tour de France came

to Prairie View on Wednesday when around 15 students raced on tricycles in-front of the school. In the student race, senior Stephanie Waln and junior Jen Clark won. Next, a few of the teachers went head to head. Art teacher Joe Summers took home the gold in that race.

After students and teachers got their exercise, they headed inside to play in the Milles Bourne tournament.

On Thursday, many students were baffled by some of their classmates. Many participated in "Super Francais" Day, meaning they could only speak in French. While some fluently participated, others were left tongue-tied and confused.

Friday closed up the week with a dessert cook-off. Senior Russell Cornelius won for taste with his creme brulee, while junior Kyle Dilley won for appearance with his creme caramel.

Students who participated in the week won many prizes. French candy bars called Toblerone were offered in a variety of sizes while others won jars of Nutella (a French chocolate spread), or buttons, certificates, pens, and pencils that sported something in French.



S.P.E.A.K. members play with cute cuddly animals.
Photo courtesy of Christy Nickelson

Drop in Gas Prices Permanent or Temporary?

Ralph Farley
Staff Writer

It seems like today that the one single thing that is on everybody's mind is how to save money, especially when it comes to the pump. It seems like when it comes to gas, you almost have to think of a roller-coaster because of the dramatic price changes that have went all over the last five years. Just two months ago, it seemed like the average Joe was getting an unfair deal at the pump, but it looks like a new dawn on the horizon is coming with gas prices hitting serious lows.

The price of gas has dropped for a straight 63 days. It is 97.9 cents less than at this time last month, and to top it all off, it is \$2.271 less than the gas peak set in June 19 according to The San Diego News services.

One may want to jump up and down for joy, but remember one thing: Good things like low gas prices won't last forever, especially with the government having to go through OPEC for most of its supply of oil.

OPEC is the organization of the Petroleum exporting countries, which controls the majority of the world's oil. OPEC is comprised of Algeria, Iraq, Angola, Ecuador, Indonesia, Iran, Kuwait, Libyan, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela. These countries set their price for oil, and buyers

usually have pay it.

But as of right now it seems like the government has finally stepped in on this raise of gas prices and did something about it. Ever since last summer got so ridiculous and out of hand, it seems like gas prices keep on going down without any signs of it stopping. On Wednesday, November 12, gas settled at \$56.16 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, but even with affordable gas prices, it seems like most Americans are still cautious about spending their money.

A spokesman from the AAA said, "I don't think anyone who's been paying attention for the last eight years would think it's now time to go out and buy a Hummer." Some Americans are still practicing gas saving habits, by walking, carpooling, or taking the bus. So even with gas prices so low and getting even lower, it seems like it hasn't changed speeding habits at all.

According to the New York Times, one of the possible reasons the government had stepped in was to find a way for Americans to save money and to pump it back to our crippling economy. Americans are scared to do anything with the extra money. They just save their money and do nothing else with it. So this idea had good intentions, but right now low gas prices are providing individual gains, but are not providing economic stimulus.

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