

# New class to help parents help their teens

BY WENDY NUGENT  
NEWTON NOW STAFF

There are times when teens get into drugs, sometimes becoming prostitutes to support their habits or selling it, themselves. When parents learn about that, they usually don't know what to do.

Decades ago, in California, police started a parent project after parents approached them, concerned about their kids using drugs.

Officers were surprised by the number of parents, who approached the Community Police Unit, regarding this matter.

"Officers decided to build a parent component into their youth drug education program," according to Randy Fry, president of The Parent Project. "The class would help parents identify, prevent and intervene in teen drug use. Officers invited 20 high-risk families and 19 parents attended that first class. In the middle of the second session, parents began opening up, asking for help with issues that went far beyond just drug use."

The project started in the 1990s.

"While we started as a Community Police Program in 1987, we have grown to work with courts and probation, schools and CBO's in some 36 states," Fry said. "The Parent Project was never developed to be a commercial program. We just wanted to help the families in our community. The company, Parent Project, Inc., was not founded until 1997, 10 years after the start of the program in Pomona, Calif."



WENDY NUGENT/NEWTON NOW  
Laurel Woodward-Breckbill, right, executive director of Offender/Victim Ministries in Newton, and Jessica Griffith, left, co-director of restorative family programming at OVM, will start a 10-week The Parent Project class in February.

Now, The Parent Project is coming to Newton. The 10-session course will be offered starting Feb. 4. The weekly sessions are from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at Cooper Early Education Center, 816 Oak, in Newton. The cost is \$35 per person or \$50 per couple and scholarships are available to qualified people. Child care is provided for children, 11 and younger.

The course is for parents and/or guardians of out-of-control or at-risk

teens, but it's not just for them, said Laurel Woodward-Breckbill, executive director of Offender/Victim Ministries Inc.

The police officers in Los Angeles wanted to empower parents to do something different, she said.

"Officers searched for a curriculum that focused on highly destructive adolescent behaviors, issues the patrol officer deals with daily, but none existed,"

Fry said. "With that, they began building their own program, based solely on parent's questions. The development team was comprised of police officers, an adolescent psychologist and curriculum writers from the local school district."

A year later, the project had expanded to 10 sessions with a parent-led support group. Officers had seven classes per year in English and Spanish, averaging 35 parents in every class.

The local initiative will start out slower. Last year, Offender/Victim Ministries noticed there was a need in the Newton area.

"There was a sense of a lack of parenting resources in Harvey County and especially resources that targeted parents with specific needs," Woodward-Breckbill said, adding they work with adults involved in the justice system. "We were looking at ways to support or provide parenting resources, especially for a specialized population."

They came across The Parent Project, this past fall, and Janet Cagle, with community corrections and Lenora Frank, from the Kansas Department of Corrections, hosted a training event at Juvenile Field Services in Sedgwick County, at which OVM attended. Frank provided the grant funding for the training, and the purpose of the funds is to keep juveniles out of the corrections system, said Jessica Smith, OVM co-director of restorative family programming.

"These goals overlap with what we do here at

Offender/Victim Ministries," Woodward-Breckbill said, adding it seemed to match the values and goals they have there and that it's helped more than 500,000 families, nationally.

The first part of the program is to establish a firm foundation of love and support for the child and then, in the later weeks, they move onto addressing specific behavior problems. The program, Griffith said, is structured to build mutual support in groups with parent participants.

"This is our pilot project, our pilot group," Woodward-Breckbill said. "Part of the intention for the program is that it is a community effort and we are seeing the community come to-

gether to support this pilot, and we're grateful for that support."

Griffith said registration still is open. They're looking for a volunteer child-care worker, although Cooper school is providing the space. In addition, any groups or businesses interested in sponsoring or donating a meal, one of the 10 weeks, can contact Woodward-Breckbill at laurel@offendervictimministries.org. Meals should be able to feed 25 people and if sponsoring, the suggested donation is \$250.

Class dates are Feb. 4, 11, 18 and 25, March 4, 18 and 25, as well as April 1, 8 and 15.

For more information or to register, contact OVM at 316-283-2038 or at: parentprojectnewton@gmail.com.

## Flea market will occupy Alco parking lot in Newton

BY ADAM STRUNK  
NEWTON NOW STAFF

Come Spring time, a flea market will sprout up at the north end of Newton.

Three area residents, Stephanie Griffith, Mike Smurr and Gary Jones will open up a monthly open-air swap meet at 2406 N. Anderson Ave, where Alco once stood. "It's free to the public, kid friendly and will be handicapped accessible," Griffith said. "We'll have food trucks, restrooms and Porta-Potties."

Griffith said the Newton Flea Market will operate from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., once a month, starting April 13, through October.

"We're not allowing any firearms, no mattresses and no drop side cribs," she said. "Outside of that, you can sell what you



want," she added, as long as people were courteous to their neighbors.

Griffith said organizers received permission and had come to terms with the property's owner to use the lot. The property is owned by Three-Ply, LLC., according to county tax records, with resident agent Kevin G. Wray, as listed on the Kansas Secretary of State's website.

The property is zoned as C-2, meaning a general commercial district. "It's a good location," she said. "It's really

open."

Griffith said that Wright's Food Truck will serve food during the flea markets and hungry customers can also walk to the nearby Taco Tico.

Griffith hopes to have a good number of vendors at the flea market. She said the market will be open to both dedicated and temporary vendors. Booths will cost \$30.

Griffith has past experience with outdoor markets, as she hosts Market in the Park at the Harvey County Fair, each year.

She said she thinks the flea market will fill a niche in the community. While residents meet regularly in the parking lot behind Casey's, at 1805 W. First St., to exchange online sales, Griffith wants the flea market to give vendors a dedicated place to sell their wares, while providing customers with a dedicated place to shop.

"Mike and I have done several flea markets out of the area and he decided mostly that he wanted to try to stay more local," she said. "Newton doesn't really have something like this, once a month."

The first three dates for the market are April 13, May 18 and June 15.

For those with questions, contact Griffith at 918-919-9696, or search for Newton Flea Market on Facebook.

## Kansas State University announces local, area graduates

MANHATTAN— Nearly 1,430 students completed degree requirements from Kansas State University in fall, 2018. That included a number of Harvey County residents. There names are as follows:

Burrton: Caleb Hurst, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture;

Halstead: Brooke Marshall, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Mallory Williams, Bachelor of Science, Summa

Cum Laude; Hesston: Titus Ewert, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Summa Cum Laude; Erica Hecht, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture;

Newton: Keren Duerksen, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Magna Cum Laude; Trevor Duerksen, Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, Tucker Sweely, Bachelor of Science in Business Admin-

istration.

—For Newton Now