

SWOSU Student Surprised with Car

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University student Lisa Grossenbacher (center) of Weatherford is enjoying a “new” car. At a special ceremony held March 16 on the SWOSU campus, she was presented the keys to a 2000 Plymouth Neon thanks to the efforts of the SWOSU Social Work Association and soldiers at Ft. Sill in Lawton. Pictured with her are (from left): Captain Thomas Caldwell, who donated the car; Sergeant Tony King; SWOSU Social Work Association faculty sponsor Chris Gregston; and SWOSU Social Work Program Director Debbi McFarlin.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University student Lisa Grossenbacher of Weatherford has some new wheels.

Thanks to the efforts of the SWOSU Social Work Association, the junior special needs student now has a car that will get her around the Weatherford area. The presentation of a 2000 silver Plymouth Neon was made at a heart-touching ceremony March 16 on the SWOSU campus.

The story started two months ago when members of the Social Work Association learned that Grossenbacher had been experiencing difficult times without any mode of transportation. A lady in Weatherford had an older vehicle that she no longer needed and was willing to give the car to the association. But, the car needed several repairs.

So, the SWA decided to have bake sales and other projects to raise money for the repairs, so they could give the car to Grossenbacher. The Western Technology Center agreed to help make the repairs. The organization raised over \$1,000 and everything looked on schedule.

Then, the SWOSU students learned the car actually needed even more repairs. Chris Gregston, faculty sponsor of the SWA, said the group was definitely disappointed and felt like they had to come up with a solution.

One of the students then came in contact with a couple of soldiers at Ft. Sill in Lawton. Fort Sill's 2nd of the 5th field artillery and 609th forward support company of the 214th fires brigade did a fund raiser and raised \$535. Captain Thomas Caldwell approached the association members with a donation of the 2000 Plymouth Neon, which was in very good shape. He had been trying to decide what to do with the car, and he decided this would be his opportunity to do something for a deserving student.

The association members decided to keep the newer car a secret. They have been working over the last two weeks to get the new car ready to give to Grossenbacher. Because of the new car, the association had money left over from the fundraiser to purchase a six month insurance premium, tag, title and tax, new hubcaps, oil change and other small things for the car.

Both the old and new cars were on hand Friday afternoon at SWOSU. Grossenbacher was first presented the old car, but it would not start. While several onlookers were trying to help get the car started, the newer Neon was escorted by campus police to the site of the presentation. Grossenbacher was then presented the keys to her new car.

The scene brought tears to the eyes of many in the crowd. Both Caldwell and Sergeant Tony King were in attendance.

Other businesses that helped in some way with the project were C.J.'s Southwest Tire in Weatherford that provided front brake pads at no cost; Mike's Auto Repair of Weatherford that replaced a belt, fixed a blower motor and fixed an oil leak at no cost; BG's, tank of gas at no charge; and Creative Colors in Clinton that fixed the sun roof at no expense.

Gregston said the SWA members enjoyed working on this project and was pleased to help a fellow student.