

weather  
report

74°

at noon



Today

Sunset, 5:54 p.m.

Tomorrow

Sunrise, 5:55 a.m.

Sunset, 5:55 p.m.

Midday Conditions

•Soil Temp. 38 degrees

•Humidity 15 percent

•Sky Partly cloudy

•Winds E 7

•Barometer 29.96

inches and falling

•Record High 80° (1966)

•Record Low 7° (1928)

Yesterday's Data

High 69°

Low 35°

Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas

Tonight: Mostly clear; low 35;  
winds SW 10-20. Tomorrow: Mostly  
Cloudy; high 45-50; winds NE 10-  
20.

Extended Forecast

Thursday through Saturday:  
Chance of rain Thursday and Fri-  
day; highs 60; lows 30. Saturday  
dry; high 60; low 35.

24-hour weather information is broadcast at  
162.400 MHz.

local  
markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.51 bu.

Posted county price — \$2.35

Loan deficiency payment — 10¢

Corn — \$1.83 bu.

Posted county price — \$1.83

Loan deficiency payment — 16¢

Milo — \$2.79 cwt.

Soybeans — \$3.90 bu.

Posted county price — \$3.98

Loan deficiency payment — 91¢

Millet — \$4.25 cwt.

Sunflowers

oil current — \$7.85 cwt.

loan deficiency payment — \$2.19

oil 1999 crop — \$8.60 cwt.

conf. current — \$18/\$11 cwt.

Pintos - \$13

Local markets courtesy of Mueller Grain, Sigco

Sun and Collingwood Grain

Local bean market courtesy of Prairie Pea and

Bean

afternoon  
wire

Late news  
from the  
Associated  
Press

1 p.m.

European chiefs  
quit in scandal

BRUSSELS — Stunned by al-  
legations of cronyism and fraud in  
their ranks, the European Union's  
chief executive and 19 other senior  
officials resigned early today,  
throwing the powerful trading  
bloc into turmoil.

Jacques Santer, president of the  
European Commission, and his  
fellow commissioners took the  
unprecedented action after an in-  
vestigative panel issued a report  
accusing some of them of main-  
taining lax control over aid pro-  
grams and putting friends and re-  
latives on the payroll.

The Commission runs the day-  
to-day affairs of the 15-nation  
union, proposes EU law, enforces  
its implementation across Europe,  
represents EU governments in in-  
ternational trade talks and attends  
gatherings such as summits of the  
G-7 group of nations. The 20 po-  
litical appointees earn \$17,280 a  
month and up.

# Death toll at 13 in train-truck wreck

BOURBONNAIS, Ill. (AP) — Res-  
cue crews combed through a twisted,  
charred rail car today, with hopes fad-  
ing of finding survivors after Amtrak's  
City of New Orleans struck a truck and  
derailed. At least 13 people were killed,  
more than 100 were injured and a half-  
dozen others were unaccounted-for.

"To find survivors in the wreckage  
would be pretty unlikely," Bourbonnais  
Fire Chief Mike Harshbarger said.

The train, bound from Chicago to  
New Orleans, careened off the tracks  
shortly after 9:30 p.m. Monday when

it slammed into a semitrailer loaded  
with heavy steel bars at a crossing 50  
miles south of Chicago.

All of the dead were aboard one  
sleeper car near the front of the train. As  
the impact sent engines and cars flying,  
it was pierced by one of the engines and  
then set afire by leaking diesel fuel.

Rescue workers were digging by  
hand through debris in that car this  
morning, Harshbarger said. The  
double-deck sleeper car was broken in  
the middle and had burned.

All the other cars had been searched.

Amtrak said in a news release that the  
coroner had confirmed 13 deaths. Ear-  
lier, officials said six people were un-  
accounted-for.

"I was trying to go to sleep. Then all  
of the sudden everything just started  
crashing and catching on fire and  
people hollering and running. It was  
awful," said Blanche Jones, a passen-  
ger from Memphis, Tenn.

"We was trying to get out. We  
couldn't get out, couldn't find a way  
out. That was the most devastating  
thing of all," Jones said as she limped

out of a school that served as a tempo-  
rary shelter.

"By the grace of God, I just went  
down a stairway and found a way to get  
out and let everybody know how to get  
out," she said.

The truck was leaving a nearby Bir-  
mingham Steel Co. facility.

Cy Gura, a safety engineer with the  
National Transportation Safety Board  
team at the scene, said today that the  
driver told authorities he didn't see the  
train or flashing warning lights until he  
had already started driving across the

tracks. The man, whose name was not  
released, was unable to get entirely  
across in time, Gura said.

"He's very sad and upset. He felt he  
did whatever he thought he could do to  
clear the train track but he didn't do it,"  
Gura said.

The speed limit on that section of  
track is 79 m.p.h., but the precise speed  
of the train at the time was unknown.

Gura said a twisted pile of metal  
wreckage at the crash site contained  
two locomotives and six train cars. One  
engine was split in half.

## Schools willing to sell lot

*Board agrees center  
would boost town,  
asks for appraisals*

The Goodland School Board is will-  
ing to sell all or part of the 39 acres the  
district owns west of Kansas Avenue at  
Second Street, members decided dur-  
ing a special meeting Monday at the  
district office.

"Yes, yes, yes," said Ben Duell when  
he seconded the motion by Gerald  
Franklin to entertain offers for the land.

"I think this will open the door to  
development, and this board has an  
opportunity to get this project moving,"  
Duell said. He was referring to a request  
from Joyce Mitchell, through real es-  
tate agent Tom Harrison of Homeland  
Realty, to buy six acres of the school  
land to build an assisted-living center.

The special meeting was held at the  
request of Mitchell, who is anxious to  
get her project underway, and wanted  
a firm decision from the board on  
whether they were ready to sell.

"According to Harrison, if we set the  
price today, she would be here with a  
check tomorrow," Superintendent  
Marvin Selby said.

Board members Ron Schilling and  
Mike Campbell were unable to attend  
the special meeting, but both had in-  
dicated they were willing to sell the land.

The motion by Franklin does not set  
a price, and leaves it open to allow the  
board to entertain offers from potential  
developers including Mitchell.

Duell suggested the board had a start-  
ing place of at least what the previous  
board paid in 1983, which was \$4,800  
per acre (total of \$192,000). He also  
suggested that with interest and com-  
pounding for the 16 years, the price per  
acre should be around \$9,600 per acre.

Franklin and Board President Dick  
Short were concerned that setting a  
price now would short-cut the appraisal  
process, which the board has been wait-  
ing on. Selby said he did not know when  
they would receive the appraisals on the  
land, but had not received any of the  
three he had requested so far.

"Are we going to sell? I think that is  
the question we need to address today?"  
Short asked.

"I think we can begin the search for  
a value, but we need to let her (Mitchell)  
know we are willing to sell," Franklin  
responded.

When Short asked for a motion,  
Franklin said he would move that the  
district consider offers on all of the 39  
acres or any portion of the land.

The vote was unanimous.



## Cleaning up big snowpiles

Goodland city crews were out to pile  
up the snow on Saturday morning,  
and then Monday they went down  
the major roads picking up the piles  
of snow and dumping them on fields  
around town. They had picked up  
most of the major routes by mid-af-  
ternoon, using a big snow blower, a  
front-end loader and several dump  
trucks. According to Roberta Bretz  
of the Goodland Chapter of the  
American Red Cross, a shelter was  
opened Friday evening for 17  
people who were on a Greyhound  
bus, and later three more people  
were given shelter from the storm.

Photos by Tom Betz/Goodland Daily News

## City water project moves to second phase

By Tom Betz

Goodland Daily News

Work on Phase 2 of the water im-  
provement project will begin in April  
with the approval of the Goodland City  
Commission at Monday's meeting.

The project will install or replace  
about eight and one-half miles of wa-  
ter line, and complete the major water-  
system renovation project the city  
started over a year ago.

Darin Neufeld of Evans, Bierly,  
Hutchison and Associates reviewed the  
plans with the commission. The total  
cost of phase two is \$1,328,452, and

Neufeld said the contractor, Allied Inc.,  
is planning to begin work on April 12.

The project includes 1.2 miles of 10-  
inch PVC, 1.6 miles of eight-inch, 3.6  
miles of six-inch, 23 fire hydrants and  
replacement of 358 water meters and  
service lines.

Improvements are to be made on  
13th Street (Montana to Cattle Trail),  
Texas Ave. (13th to 11th), 15th Street  
(Cattle Trail to Kansas), 14th Street  
(Kansas to Center), Grand Ave. (14th  
to 17th), 13th Street (Kansas to Cherry),  
Cherry (13th to 12th), 13th Street  
(Cherry to Eustis), Cherry (12th to 6th),

Cherry (13th to 17th), Center (1st to  
17th), Texas (15th to 18th) and Syra-  
cuse (16th to 18th).

In addition, there are three areas  
where work will complete the city loop  
system and improve the main lines.  
These are Eighth Street from Grand-  
view Lane to Kansas Ave.; Eustis Av-  
enue from 11th Street to 13th and 15th  
to Business U.S. 24 route; and Business  
U.S. 24 from Kansas Avenue to Cald-  
well Avenue.

The plans also call for the work near  
the schools to be done in the summer,  
and to be completed before classes start

in August according to Neufeld.

"When this is completed we will  
have accomplished the greater major-  
ity of the work we planned in the \$2.5  
million project," City Manager Ron  
Pickman said. "This does not mean we  
are done, but the biggest portion will  
have been completed."

On the water tower project, Pickman  
said the contractor tells him the mate-  
rial is expected to be on site by the end  
of March. Mayor Rick Billinger ask-  
ed about the completion date, and Pick-  
man said the contractor has until July  
17 to finish the work.

## House advances bill to save "Hard 40" sentencing for murder

By Lew Ferguson

Associated Press Writer

TOPEKA — Moving to offset a Su-  
preme Court decision, the Kansas  
House advanced a bill that spells out  
what constitutes a heinous crime and  
therefore warrants a "Hard 40" prison  
sentence.

In other developments as the Legis-  
lature opened the 10th week of its 13-  
week session on Monday, a Social and  
Rehabilitation Services official came  
under fire in a budget committee, and  
the House passed a bill that would ban  
lawsuits filed by cities and counties  
against gun manufacturers.

The Hard 40 bill was approved ten-  
tatively on a voice vote. Final approval  
would send it to the Senate.

Currently, a person convicted of first-  
degree murder can be ordered to serve  
at least 40 years before being consid-  
ered for parole. Without that sentence,  
a murderer faces life in prison but can  
become eligible for parole after 15 or  
25 years, depending on the circum-  
stances.

To receive the Hard 40 sentence, the  
murderer must have violated one of  
several specific circumstances listed in  
the law, including committing the  
crime in "an especially heinous, atro-  
cious or cruel manner."

In January, the Supreme Court ruled  
a Wichita man who killed his former  
girlfriend by hitting her with an ax  
seven times couldn't receive the Hard  
40 sentence. The court concluded the

woman died from the first blow, and  
that removed it from the realm of "an  
especially heinous, atrocious or cruel  
crime."

A bill sponsored by House Majority  
Leader Kent Glasscock, R-Manhattan,  
lists specific acts that would qualify a  
criminal for the Hard 40 sentence. They  
include prior stalking, evidence the  
person intended to commit the crime in  
a heinous manner, or the torture or  
mutilation of the victim.

It also says the court should consider  
the entire violent act — as long as it was  
continuous — in determining whether  
it warrants the Hard 40 sentence. And  
it adds that victims don't have to be  
aware of their fate or feel the physical  
trauma.

Also Monday, the House Appropria-  
tions Committee heard from a Marys-  
ville couple who lost custody of young  
twin daughters for more than a year and  
want compensation from the state.

Committee members strongly criti-  
cized the state Department of Social  
and Rehabilitation Services for its han-  
dling of a case involving Roger and  
Emily LaBarge.

The LaBarges lost custody of their  
daughters in December 1995 when the  
department and local law enforcement  
officials investigated them for possible  
abuse.

Rep. Melvin Neufeld, R-Ingalls, said  
the agency committed "very egre-  
gious" errors in handling the case. Rep.  
Doug Spanger, D-Kansas City, sug-

gested the LaBarges' problems were  
caused by an "antagonistic relation-  
ship" with a social worker.

The department is standing by its  
actions. Asked whether the agency had  
made a mistake in taking the girls from  
the LaBarges' custody, spokesman  
John Garlinger said, "Absolutely not."

The LaBarges sought \$1 million  
from the agency in damages. The Joint  
Committee on Claims Against the  
State, which makes recommendations  
to the House and Senate budget com-  
mittees, recommended \$42,600 to  
cover their expenses associated with  
the case. The Senate removed the  
money from the bill, but the House  
committee could restore it or change  
the amount.