

weather report

39° at noon

Today

Sunset, 5:56 p.m.

Tomorrow

Sunrise, 5:52 a.m.

Sunset, 5:57 p.m.

Midday Conditions

•Soil Temp. 41 degrees

•Humidity 46 percent

•Sky mostly cloudy

•Winds southeast at 12 m.p.h.

•Barometer 30.38 inches and steady.

•Record High 85° (1921)

•Record Low 1° (1923)

Yesterday's Data

High 55°

Low 29°

Precipitation none

Northwest Kansas

Tonight: Partly cloudy, low about 25, winds east at 10-15 m.p.h. Tomorrow: Partly sunny, high 50-55, winds east at 10-20 m.p.h.

Extended Forecast

Friday through Saturday:Dry, highs about 60, lows about 30. Sunday: Dry, high 65, low 35. Monday: Dry, high 55-60, low 30-35.

24-hour weather information is broadcast at 162.400 MHz.

local markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.48 bu.

Posted county price — \$2.42

Loan deficiency payment — 3¢

Corn — \$1.84 bu.

Posted county price — \$1.91

Loan deficiency payment — 8¢

Milo — \$2.78 cwt.

Soybeans — \$4.12 bu.

Posted county price — \$4.06

Loan deficiency payment — 83¢

Millet — \$4.25 cwt.

Sunflowers

oil current — \$7.95 cwt.

oil 1999 crop — \$8.60 cwt.

conf. current — \$18/\$11 cwt.

conf. new — no bid

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.

Investigation targets relative

WASHINGTON — In contacts under federal investigation, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott's brother-in-law received thousands of dollars from an associate of accused war criminal Radovan Karadzic around the time he was trying to arrange the Bosnian fugitive's surrender, say lawyers and government officials.

Talbott's brother-in-law, Cody P. Shearer, is now telling authorities he has received mail threats from Bosnian figures who claim he took the money in 1997 with promises to win leniency for Karadzic on war crimes charges, and demanded that he pay Karadzic's family \$1 million or risk "tragedy."

Shearer's says the money was reimbursement for expenses. Even before Shearer reported the threats, the FBI had begun investigating whether he misrepresented his ties to the government.

School board doubles offer for land

By Tom Betz

Goodland Daily News

All seven Goodland School Board members were present for the second special meeting of the week today, and on a 6-1 vote they decided to counter an offer for part of the school land on Kansas Avenue.

When the meeting opened, Superintendent Marvin Selby said he had received an oral offer from Tom Harrison of Homeland Realty for \$5,000 an acre for the six acres developer Joyce Mitchell wants for an assisted-living center.

Selby said there had been a question about being able to connect to the city sewer, but had learned that there is a line nearby.

Board member Ben Duell noted that the present board has determined that any future expansion will be near the existing facilities, the high school, Max Jones Fieldhouse and the track.

He suggested that the site be moved south so a through street could be established on Second Street. He said that would be a better access to the hospital than using First Street, which the county and city say would be difficult.

Board member Mike Campbell suggested the price should be about \$16,000 per acre, and that because the land is developed along Kansas Avenue, this is the most valuable part of the 39 acres.

Duell made a motion to counter-offer \$6,000 per acre, but the motion died for the lack of a second.

"I think we have established that \$6,000 is to low and that \$16,000 is to high," said Board President Dick Short.

Board members Kathy Russell and Jane Philbrick both indicated they would second a

motion that was higher than the \$6,000 level.

"I move we counter with an offer of \$10,000 per acre for the 6 acres of land between Second and Fourth Street," Russell said. The motion was quickly seconded by Duell.

When the vote was taken on the motion, the hands of Short, Duell, Russell, Schilling Philbrick and Franklin went up to indicate a yes. Campbell voted no.

The next regular board meeting will be 7 p.m., Monday, March 22, at North Elementary School, though the land sale could come up before that.

Census figures show population continues decline

County lost 52 from '97 to '98, government says

By Tom Betz

Goodland Daily News

The latest U.S. Census Bureau estimates show a continuing slow decline in population in Northwest Kansas while the same figures show a 1 percent increase for the state.

The figures released in Washington estimate Sherman County's population at 6,511 as of July 1. This compares to the estimate for 1997 which was 6,563, and would be a decrease of 52 or .8 of one percent over the year.

Figures comparing the official 1990 census to the 1998 estimate indicates a decline in Sherman County of 415 or 6 percent over the eight years. The official 1990 census figure for Sherman County was 6,926.

Local county and chamber officials have not seen the most recent figures, but do note that estimates from the state, made every five years, project the population in the year 2000 to drop to 6,293.

Based on the most recent Census Bureau estimates, the trend appears to continue on a decline, but the rate has slowed.

Wallace County is the only one in Northwest Kansas which did not show any decline, but the estimate also did not show any increase as the population there did not change in the past year. However, when the 1998 estimate of 1,802 is compared to the official 1990 census figure of 1,821, there is a decrease of 1 percent.

Cheyenne County's figures showed a 1 percent decline between 1997 and 1998, with a loss of 33. The 1990 figure was 3,243, and compared to the 1998 estimate the population has declined by 2.1 percent.

Thomas County showed a larger decline in population over the 1997-1998

comparison at 1.9 percent, but when compared to the 1990 official count, the county population is down by 2.7 percent. The one-year change had Thomas County losing 159 in the one year period, while the eight years change was a loss of 221. During the early part of the decade, though, Thomas County actually had shown some population growth.

The total Kansas population is estimated to have grown by 6.1 percent over the eight years with an increase of 151,479 statewide. Most of the increase is in the eastern part of the state.

Osborne County is the closest county with any increase in the most recent figures, and that is a plus .4 of one percent — 18 people — bringing the population to 4,712. However, when Osborne is compared to the official 1990 census figure of 4,867, there is a decline of 3.2 percent over the eight years.

Rawlins County's population estimate for 1998 showed a drop of 77 from the previous year or a 2.4 percent decline. The decline looks worse when the most recent estimate is compared to the 1990 official figures, 3,404, with a drop of 8.2 percent or a loss of 279 people.

The Census Bureau uses death rates, birth rates, and figures showing the number of people moving in and out of the county to produce the estimates.

The nation's fastest-growing counties were in or near metropolitan areas of the South and West, according to the 1998 population estimates for all 3,142 counties as released by the Census Bureau.

The top 10 fastest growing counties were in Georgia, Colorado, Texas, Nevada and Virginia.

According to the figures all of the counties are near metropolitan areas with Douglas County in Colorado, south of Denver, ranking second with a growth of 11.2 percent.

From 1990 to 1998, Douglas remains the fastest growing county in the nation, up by 133.4 percent. Elbert County, neighboring Douglas to the east, ranked eighth between 1997 and 1998.



Machine works fast

It took only about three hours Tuesday morning for the workers at the Max Jones Fieldhouse expansion to pour and level the new gym floor. The crew used a concrete pump truck which delivered the mixture to where it was needed, and then a Somero Laser Screed made fast work out of the leveling of the floor. While the floor was being poured, a crew was busy placing the concrete blocks on the perimeter of the north building so work could begin on the outside walls of the weight room and dressing rooms.

Photos by Tom Betz / Goodland Daily

Farm income averaged only \$28,000 in '97

By Roxana Hegeman

Associated Press Writer

WICHITA (AP) — For Kansas farmers, 1997 was a year of bounty. Record wheat crops overfilled grain elevators. Cattle and hog prices were relatively good. And government subsidies, while going down, still played an important role in the farm budget.

Things were going so well, in fact,

that farm marketings — a hefty \$9 billion that year — were up 20 percent from a year earlier. Livestock receipts were up 10 percent, and crop receipts were up 34 percent.

The average Kansas farm that year raked in a respectable \$159,872 in gross income. But production costs — for such things as seed, feed, taxes and interest, among others — soared.

By the time the farm record books had been put away — and the government statisticians had their say — that same average Kansas farm in 1997 netted just \$27,956, down from the previous year in a decade marked by rollercoaster farm income.

In its annual cash receipt report released Tuesday, Kansas Agricultural Statistics outlined its balance sheet for

Kansas agriculture in 1997.

Almost across the board, marketings of farm commodities were well above receipts from a year earlier. Cattle marketings were up 10 percent, while hogs were up 25 percent. Wheat marketings were up 42 percent, corn up 18 percent and soybeans up a hefty 74 percent.

Down on the farm, the extra income

was especially welcomed as government subsidies continued to plummet and production costs continued to rise.

Of the \$9.9 billion made by Kansas farmers in 1997, \$529.8 million came from government payments. That compares with 1990, when government farm programs paid Kansas farmers

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House passes 'concealed carry' bill despite Graves' promise to veto it

TOPEKA (AP) — The House gave tentative approval to a bill that would allow Kansans to carry concealed handguns, but the measure has little chance of becoming law while Gov. Bill Graves is in office.

Also Wednesday, the Senate Education Committee endorsed a plan to restructure higher education governance and Senate Republicans continued to push a \$13.2 billion transportation program.

The House endorsed the gun bill on

a 75-45 vote — a good indication that it will pass when the House takes a final vote.

If the gun bill gets to the Senate, it will face mixed reviews. And even it wins legislative approval, Graves likely will veto it. He vetoed a similar measure two years ago, and there is little chance that supporters could muster enough votes to override a veto this year.

Supporters pitched the proposal as a personal safety issue, particularly for women, while critics said the bill would

result in more injuries and deaths.

Under the bill, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation would issue licenses allowing people to carry concealed handguns starting Jan. 1, 2000.

Applicants would have to be at least 21, complete a firearms training course and have no history of mental illness or drug or alcohol abuse in the previous five years.

Also, applicants couldn't have any felony convictions or be subject to a court restraining order.

House leaders unhappy with Senate transport plan

TOPEKA (AP) — Republican legislative leaders expect the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee to endorse a proposed transportation program that is getting a chilly reception in the House.

The Senate plan would increase taxes on gasoline and diesel fuels, boost vehicle registration fees and allow the state to issue \$990 million in bonds. The money would help finance \$13.2 billion in highway, air-

port, railroad and bus system improvements over 10 years.

The Senate tax committee finished two days of hearings Wednesday with more testimony from supporters of the plan.

Senate GOP leaders are so confident the committee will endorse the plan or something close to it that Majority Leader Tim Emert, R-Independence, has scheduled debate in the Senate for Tuesday.