

weather report

54°

at noon



Today

• Sunset, 7:42 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:44 a.m.

• Sunset, 7:43 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 49 degrees

• Humidity 56 percent

• Sky Cloudy

• Winds NNW 20-30

• Barometer 29.27 inches

and rising

• Record High 91° (1965)

• Record Low 27° (1967)

Last 24 Hours*

High 76°

Low 44°

Precipitation trace

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: Mostly cloudy; 60 percent chance of thundershowers; low 40; wind NW 10-20 gusty. Tomorrow: Partly sunny; 20 percent chance of isolated thundershowers; high 55; wind NW 20-30.

Extended Forecast

Thursday through Saturday: Mostly dry through the three days with highs 60-70 and lows 40-45.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local markets



Noon

Wheat — \$2.18 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.16

Loan deficiency payment — 29¢

Corn — \$1.82 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.87

Loan deficiency pmt. — 12¢

Milo — \$2.71 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$3.85 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.07

Loan deficiency payment — 82¢

Millet — \$4 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$8.60 cwt.

Loan deficiency pmt. — \$1.10

Oil new crop — \$8.85 cwt.

Confection current — \$17/\$10 cwt.

Pinto beans — \$12 (new crop)

(Markets provided by Mueller Grain,

Sigco Sun, Frontier Equity Co-op

and Prairie Pea and Bean.)

afternoon wire

Late news from the Associated Press

1 p.m.

NATO downs Yugoslav MiG

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia — NATO downed a Yugoslav MiG-29 fighter jet in a dogfight over Serbia and struck a hydraulics factory, fuel storage depots and armored vehicles today, showing no letup in the bombings after President Clinton hinted at a pause in air raids.

Pentagon officials said a U.S. Air Force F-16 shot down a Yugoslav MiG-29 in a high-speed engagement about 2 1/2 miles over Serbian airspace. The Russian-designed plane is the best in the Yugoslav air force.

At NATO headquarters, Maj. Gen. Walter Jertz of the German air force confirmed that an allied aircraft intercepted and shot down a Yugoslav aircraft in "what pilots call an air-to-air fight."

NATO also said its planes bombed a MiG-29 parked at an airfield.

Tornadoes kill 45 in two-state spree

By the Associated Press

The death toll reached 45 today after fierce tornadoes destroyed entire neighborhoods in Oklahoma and Kansas. One monstrous twister chewed across miles of Tornado Alley for four hours.

The state medical examiner said 40 people were killed in Oklahoma alone in Monday's storms.

The combined death toll makes this the deadliest tornado outbreak since 90 people were killed on May 31, 1985, in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Ontario.

The largest twister formed about 45 miles southwest of Oklahoma City and cut a path at least a half-mile wide. While many tornadoes are short-lived, this one stayed on the ground for about four hours, said Wayne Ruff, a National Weather Service meteorologist. Television stations followed it with live broadcasts.

The damage "looks like the Murrah Building,

but instead of nine stories tall, it's spread out over a large area," Oklahoma City assistant fire chief Jon Hansen said, referring to the federal building bombing in 1995.

More severe thunderstorms with scattered twisters rippled across the Plains this morning, and tornado warnings were posted for parts of central Oklahoma. A tornado watch covered much of the rest of the state.

In Washington, President Clinton declared 11 Oklahoma counties disaster areas and promised a similar declaration for parts of Kansas.

About 150 miles north of Oklahoma City, a tornado spawned by the same storm system tossed mobile homes like tin cans, damaged houses and killed at least five people in Wichita, and its suburb of Haysville. Hospitals treated more than 100 people.

"It is worse than what you can see," said Bob

Thompson, a fire battalion chief in Sedgwick County, Kan. He said more deaths were possible, and dogs were used today to search the rubble of homes in Wichita.

Chad Harris was with seven people inside his mobile home in Haysville when it was flipped over and demolished. Two of his companions were critically injured.

"I have no trailer," Harris said. "We all rolled in it. It was the worst experience in my life."

In Oklahoma, the dead included 11 people in Bridge Creek, about 30 miles southwest of Oklahoma City, said Ben Frizzell, spokesman for the state Office of Emergency Management.

Others died in Oklahoma City and nearby Midwest City, Moore, Del City and Norman.

"We're really just getting started on the foot-by-foot search," Clayton Taylor, a Red Cross spokesman, said today in Oklahoma City.

"We have whole communities that simply aren't there anymore," Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating told NBC's "Today" show. "It certainly looks like a huge battle has taken place."

The number of houses destroyed in the Oklahoma City area approached 2,000. Cars were tossed about and crushed. Natural gas spewed from ruptured lines. Utility poles were splintered into kindling.

Hospitals in the Oklahoma City metro area treated 563 people for tornado-related injuries, police Capt. Charles Allen said.

"I've been through the war in Germany. I've had bombs fall all around me. Now I've been in a tornado," 73-year-old Anna Knerr said today in a shelter in Midwest City.

Mrs. Knerr said she and her husband hid in a closet before the storm hit. "Then there just was this creepy feeling," she said.

Pretty as a picture



Goodland High School students (from left) Amanda Gittinger, Carolyn Reitcheck and Renee Tedford took a last-minute look in the mirror before lining up for the Promenade on Saturday night at Max Jones Fieldhouse. Later came the Prom dance, which was held at the Goodland Elks Lodge.

Photo by Janet Craft/Goodland Daily News

County workers get 3 percent average pay raise

By Tom Betz

Goodland Daily News

Sherman County commissioners voted Friday to give county employees raises averaging 3 percent, settling an issue that had been hanging since February.

Commissioners decided to approve the new wage schedule and salaries for department heads to be effective April 24.

Commissioner Chuck Frankenfeld first moved to rescind a motion on the wages and salaries he made at the Feb. 9 meeting making a new pay scale effective in February. While that motion had passed, the commissioners never actually approved any raises then. Commissioner Gary Townsend seconded that motion and it passed unanimously.

Frankenfeld then moved to approve pay raises as submitted by department heads for hourly employees to be effective April 24. Commissioner Kenny Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. A second motion approved department head raises submitted by County Administrator Mike Irvin and reviewed by the commissioners.

County Clerk Janet Rumpel said the average raise for the hourly employees is 3 percent and the department head raises were between 2 and 4 percent.

Prior to voting on the raises, the commissioners rejected a request from Mary Messamore, director of communications, to allow a split shift pay differential she had previously presented to the commissioners.

Earlier in the meeting, Messamore told the commissioners her department was nearly back to full staff, and she again urged the commissioners to approve the split shift proposal.

"When I came to you several months ago about this, you told me it was my department and I could do what needed to be done as long as it stayed within the budget," she said. "But when I asked the payroll clerk to implement the changes, she said it had to be approved by the commissioners. I have been waiting since then, and believe the flexibility of the split shift would be beneficial."

Before turning down the proposal, the commissioners went into executive session, and when they returned Commissioner Davis made the motion not to pay the split shift raise. It was seconded by Frankenfeld. The motion passed unanimously.

In discussing the split shift proposal, Commissioner Davis said he was concerned about the effect on the budget, and that he did not realize that new people had been hired in the communications department.

Commissioner Frankenfeld also said he was concerned about the budget, and did not feel it was the right time to approve such an increase until after there are several months of operations with the full staff to use to compare the effect such a change would have.

Doug Hilty, of the Sherman County Racing Association, met with the commissioners concerning the use of a water tanker at the fairgrounds. The racing association was under the impres-

Hearing set on park plan

A special public hearing to discuss the plans for Smoky Gardens will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday at Butterfly Aviation at Renner Field in Goodland.

Kenny Sanderson of the Smoky Garden Board said the group wants to know what people think about its plans for the county park and lake.

"We have moved the crane down to the lake, and have planted some trees," Sanderson said, "but we want to get the public's input on the plans we have."

He said ideas include removing silt from the lake and increasing the available fish habitat.

sion they had been given the tanker, but the lease indicated they were to pay the county \$50 for the use of the vehicle.

The racing association has been maintaining the water tanker for the past several years and it is also being used by the fair board during the fair.

Commissioner Townsend asked whether the county was still paying insurance on the vehicle, and was told that it is costing \$18 per year for liability insurance.

Davis made a motion to let the fair board and racing association use the water truck at no expense, but the county would retain ownership and pay the insurance. Townsend seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

County auditor Mark Bauer of Vonnelf, Bauer and Vonnelf, said the audit has been completed and presented a draft copy. He said printed copies would be sent by the end of May.

Bauer said the county was in fairly good shape financially, and that all the funds were underspent in the last year with the exception of the sheriff's reward fund, which had been created last year, and had no budget.

He noted the general fund had finished the year with a cash balance of \$168,251, which was over \$80,000 higher than anticipated.

The only concern Bauer raised was there appeared to be a couple of peak times in the past year when the county funds on deposit were not fully secured. He said the county had signed peak deposit agreements with the banks.

County Treasurer Shelby Miller said the agreements were for the middle of June to the middle of July and from the middle of December to the end of January, when most taxes are paid. She said with the agreement, the bank does not have to secure the county funds at 100 percent, just at 50 percent.

"I don't like to sign peak deposit period agreements," she said, "but sometimes it has been mandatory or the banks would not take the deposits because it was going to cost them

"I don't plan to use these unless they are mandatory. I would rather have the county funds secured at the 110 percent level, but we do have to work with the banks."

Fire investigators sifting through rubble of store office

By Keith Lippoldt

Goodland Daily News

A fire that swept the former Mosburg IGA store in downtown Goodland remains under investigation and the local police and fire departments are asking for the help anyone who saw anything unusual at the store.

"I am not saying that this is arson," said Police Chief Ray Smee. "We are just wanting to know what happened. If anybody saw anything or anybody out of the ordinary Friday afternoon, please give us a call."

The fire scene was busy Monday with investigators from the state fire marshal's office, the insurance company, plus the Goodland police and fire departments.

"We have had a lot of help with the investigation," Fire Chief Dean Jensen said. "Several heads together are sharper than one or two. There was a lot of investigating experience in there yesterday."

Investigator Melvin Dale from the state fire marshal's office completed his investigation and must now piece together the findings in his Garden City office.

"The marshal has taken samples and will send them into the lab," Chief Smee said. "This fire is still under investigation. We will be conducting a neighborhood canvass to see if anybody



Goodland firefighter Ken Jensen got a breath of oxygen from ambulance crew members at the fire which swept the old Mosburg IGA building Friday.

Photo by Keith Lippoldt

Goodland Daily News

saw anything."

It has been determined the fire originated in the upstairs office area on the

south wall of the building. An electrical short has been ruled out, officials said, and the investigation will be built around the lab samples.

"Naturally, we were looking for a possible electrical problem," Chief Jensen said. "There were no signs of that. Next we have to determine what was in the office that was combustible. Things have to be looked at piece by piece. It is a long, dirty job."

Goodland City Manager Ron Pickman told city commissioners on Monday night the damage estimate was high, but it could have been much worse.

"The fire marshal indicated to me that a very rough preliminary 'guesstimate' of the damage could reach as high as \$300,000," Pickman said. "He also said it could have been higher if not for the efforts of our fire department. He was very impressed with the way they fought this fire."

Jensen again gave his firemen a commendation for their efforts.

"This was a mighty, mighty hot fire," he said, "and these guys were in a possible life-threatening situation. I have never seen such hard work from a group of guys. I am extremely proud of them."

If anybody has information about the fire, they can contact Chief Smee at 899-4570 or Fire Chief Jensen at 899-4545.