

weather  
report

77°  
at noon

Today

• Sunset, 8:17 p.m.

Tomorrow

• Sunrise, 5:21 a.m.

• Sunset, 8:17 p.m.

Midday Conditions

• Soil Temperature 75 degrees

• Humidity 59 percent

• Sky mostly sunny

• Winds southeast 5 to 15 mph

• Barometer 29.90 inches and falling

• Record High 106° (1954)

• Record Low 47° (1964)

Last 24 Hours\*

High 89°

Low 61°

Precipitation trace

Northwest Kansas Forecast

Tonight: partly cloudy, 30 percent chance of thunderstorms, winds southeast at 5 to 15 mph.

Thursday: partly cloudy, 30 percent chance of thunderstorms, high 85 to 90, southeast winds 10 to 20 mph.

Extended Forecast

Friday: chance of thunderstorms, low near 60, high 90 to 95.

Saturday and Sunday: dry, lows near 65, highs near 90.

(National Weather Service)

Get 24-hour weather info. at 162.400 MHz.

\* Readings taken at 7 a.m.

local  
markets

Noon

Wheat — \$2.27 bushel

Posted county price — \$2.14

Loan deficiency payment — 31¢

Corn — \$1.79 bushel

Posted county price — \$1.85

Loan deficiency prmt. — 15¢

Milo — \$2.57 hundredweight

Soybeans — \$4.01 bushel

Posted county price — \$4.06

Loan deficiency payment — 83¢

Millet — \$4 hundredweight

Sunflowers

Oil current crop — \$7.45 cwt.

Loan deficiency prmt. — \$7.96

Oil new crop — \$7.85 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.

No-nits policy  
back in force

TOPEKA — The no-nits policy in Kansas will stand, health officials announced this week after school nurses argued that children with head lice and lice eggs should not be allowed in school.

Kansas Secretary of Health and Environment Clyde Graeber withdrew a state proposal that would have loosened restrictions on when children with head lice could return to school.

“Given the concern raised by schools and the public, I feel it’s best if we leave the current policy in place,” Graeber said.

The current policy means that no child will be allowed to attend school until the lice and nits (lice eggs) are removed.

State epidemiologist Gianfranco Pezzino had proposed allowing children to return to school after they had been treated for head lice, even if they still had nits.

# Sherman closing gap on Thomas

By Tom Betz  
*The Goodland Daily News*

Despite a soft farm market, the retail sales in Sherman County remain about 10 percent ahead of last year and continue to close the gap with Thomas County, state tax figures show.

The latest report from the Kansas Department of Revenue shows Sherman County with a 9.7 percent increase in state sales tax collections over the period July 1998 to February 1999, while Thomas County shows a .4 of 1 percent increase over the same eight months.

Comparing the figures for the same period the previous year, Sherman County’s state sales tax collections were up \$211,365 while Thomas County had a \$10,997 increase. However, despite the fact the gap continued to narrow, Thomas County remains the top county in the area with collections of \$2,761,948 to Sherman County’s \$2,389,626.

Ron Harding, executive director of the Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce, said the figures for both the state and local sales tax collections are encouraging. He said he is pleased to see the upward trend continuing despite the highway construction and the temporary closures of the interchanges on I-70.

“While the ramps were closed, the businesses saw a significant drop in business, but because the work was done quickly, the numbers have returned to near normal,” Harding said. “The influx of construction workers has also helped. It is hoped the trend will continue upward through the upcoming construction projects.”

While the state sales tax figures show a steady increase, the county sales tax figures look like a roller coaster ride, with wild swings up and down. The figures were way down in February, rebounded in March and appeared to surge ahead in April.

“We just know we have to divide it out and not get too excited with the monthly figures,” said County Treasurer Shelby Miller.

Somewhat like the old adage “figures never lie,” officials say the figures being reported by the Kansas Department of Revenue are as accurate as they can be. However, even Steven Brunkan, who works with the monthly reports, agrees there are some discrepancies, which he blames on processing problems in Topeka.

The latest figures show Sherman County with an increase of 124 percent in county sales tax collections for April 1999 over April 1998. The collections for the 10 months from July 1998 to April 1999 show Sherman County with a 23 percent increase over the previous year.

Miller says the long-term increase looks about right, adding that he is glad the county is on a calendar-year budget. The spikes caused by processing problems in Topeka can be frustrating, but Miller is hoping the figures will settled down in the future.

According to Brunkan, the April figures look out of balance because of a reporting problem the department had last April. At that time, processing of the sales tax was delayed by income tax processing.

“We distributed only \$27 million last April as compared to the \$40 million this April,” Brunkan said.

Over the past 10 months, the county and city sales tax has brought in \$1,082,921 which is shared by Sherman County, the City of Goodland and Kanorado. Part of the local sales tax is earmarked for health services and part for the old U.S. 24 resurfacing project.

Harding expected a larger increase in the county sales tax figures because of the one-quarter percent which was added in October to fund the road project, and thinks the increase shows both the addition of that as well as growth in local sales. He also said the employment from the Burlington prison is helping, and said the warden said the vast majority of employees are living in Goodland.

“We have been working hard on this, and hope it will help keep our school numbers so we don’t show a decline,” he said. “And when the new assisted living projects open, we expect to see a turnover in housing which should also help.”



The plumbing for the dressing rooms at the Max Jones Fieldhouse addition is in and the steel joists are up and waiting for the rest of the floor to be delivered. The building project is expected to be completed by the start of classes.

Photo by Charlie Baker/The Goodland Daily News

# Despite delay, Jones to open on time

By Charlie Baker  
*The Goodland Daily News*

Despite a few problems and delays, the Max Jones Fieldhouse addition is still projected to be completed by the opening of school.

The light-colored brick delivered for the upper portion of the addition was the wrong color, and had to be sent back, said Superintendent Marvin Selby. The replacements should be in about the first week of July.

Concrete block work on the north section is complete, and the darker brick for the lower part is already in place. The structure is waiting on steel for the roof and the replacement brick.

Installing the steel that will support the floor over the dressing rooms has been delayed. Part of the load was de-

livered, Selby said, but not all of the steel is in. The crew that is to do the work had to return to Garden City until all of the order arrives.

A state architect has given approval to the changes that will make the structure handicap accessible. There will be several areas where the bleachers will be cut out to allow 10 people in wheelchairs to sit.

An elevator will be at the east end of the present gymnasium near where the weight room is now.

The area where the weight room now is will be left without a permanent use, said Selby.

“We can use it for a classroom when needed,” he said, “overflow for the wrestling program, or a hospitality room during tournaments.”

Lockers for the dressing rooms are to be delivered and installed the last week of July.

Other work being done around the district includes replacing the linoleum in the upstairs halls at the high school.

“That is the original tile,” said Selby. “It has been down since the ’50s.”

Crews are also laying carpet in the band room and Selby also said he is meeting with a contractor to get a bid on replacing the roof at the high school. Principal Harvey Swager said at the last school board meeting that there are leaks in many of the classrooms.

The gravel and asphalt have been removed from the playground at Central School so the district can plant grass. A sprinkler system is scheduled to be installed later this week, then the

area will be seeded.

“Hopefully, the grass will be up enough by school,” said Selby. “If it isn’t, the students may have to play at Chambers Park for a short time until it’s ready.”

Selby added that a donation from Wal-Mart had helped improve the playground.

“They donated potting soil and fertilizer from damaged bags,” he said. “It’s top quality stuff, and we really appreciate it.”

New restrooms at the track are almost complete. The sheetrock is up, and painters and plumbers are expected to finish either this week or early next week.

Workers pouring concrete sidewalks should finish about the same time.

# Weather Service ‘hammered’

By Keith Lippoldt  
*The Goodland Daily News*

Goodland’s National Weather Service Office received a Hammer Award Tuesday at Sugar Hills Country Club, recognizing the staff’s commitment to a more effective and streamlined government and dedication to customer service.

Created by Vice President Al Gore, the Hammer is presented to federal government teams that are customer oriented, cut red tape, give employees decision-making power, and get positive results, all areas defined in Gore’s National Partnership for Reinventing Government.

The Hammer is symbolic of the way that the federal government is known to waste money. Instead of going to the hardware store for a \$6 hammer, government officials would authorize spending \$600 for the same tool.

“For the office, this award means that we have been recognized from the national level for the work we have done in the area of public service,” said Scott Mentzer, meteorologist in charge of the Goodland office. “At the same time it shows that we were spending the taxpayers money in a streamlined manner.”

Representing Gore at the presentation was Richard Augulis, director of the Central Region of the National Weather Service.

“This award is indicative of what they have done and indicative of what they will do in the future,” Augulis said. “We should be proud of them and they should be proud of themselves.”

Augulis pointed to several examples of how the Goodland office serves its 19-county tri-state area, including education programs for teacher and students, sponsorship of the Area Scholar Bowl, the Waterfest program which teaches how to conserve water, 4H programs and Martin Luther Scholar Days.

“This office is here to serve the taxpayers,” Augulis said. “More importantly, we are here to extend ourselves into the communities we are respon-



Richard Augulis, director of the central region of the National Weather Service, looked on as Goodland Meteorologist Melissa Claghorn held up the Hammer Award.

Photo by Keith Lippoldt/The Goodland Daily News

sible for. The visibility of the Goodland office is very evident.”

Mentzer said his staff is proud of the national recognition, but that isn’t the driving force behind their drive to excel.

“It is nice to be recognized nationally for doing a job well done,” Mentzer said.

“These people have a sense of pride. The award is nice but it is just as satisfying knowing that they are doing a

good job. This staff is creative and productive. Without them there would be no award.”

Dignitaries at the ceremony included state Sen. Stan Clark, state Reps. Jim Morrison and Gayle Mollenkamp and Mark Hillman, a state senator from Colorado.

The Hammer Award, which includes a note from the Vice President, is on display in the lobby of the Weather Service office.

# Hospital still talking of merger

By Keith Lippoldt  
*The Goodland Daily News*

The figures look better than they did two years ago, but the possible merger of Goodland Regional Medical Center and Rural Health Ventures still has some stumbling blocks to overcome.

Two years ago, discussions led to an auditor’s report that the merger could cost the hospital \$100,000 a year. Rural Health Ventures recruits doctors and operates a clinic aligned with the hospital.

At a hospital board meeting Tuesday evening, Roger Johnson, a certified public accountant with Wendling, Noe, Nelson and Johnson, said the findings of a new report showed that the deficit would be narrowed to around \$30,000.

“Based on the 1998 cost reports, my findings are that the net effects do not come out as well with a hospital-based rural health clinic,” Johnson told board members from both groups. “The bottom line is that you would not do as well with a hospital-based clinic.

“If the hospital could get designation as a hospital-based rural health clinic, and with the new changes coming in 2000 in outpatient reimbursement, that would likely be enough of a difference to make it feasible.”

The next stumbling block could be the assumption that the hospital could be certified. Currently, the hospital does not qualify because Sherman County is no longer designated as a physician shortage area.

“If you can’t pass that hurdle, the